

Julius Caesar in Latin Literature from Tiberius to Trajan

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I, Bridget England, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

A thesis on the literary reception of Julius Caesar from the reign of Tiberius to that of Trajan is needed because, until now, the main focus of scholarly attention has been on Caesar's place in the literature of the triumviral period and the Augustan age (44 BC – AD 14). Scholarship has also identified a seeming revival of interest in Caesar that took place during Trajan's reign (AD 98 – 117), with texts from this era and beyond seeming to portray Caesar (and not Augustus) as the founder of the Empire. The current investigation will address the relatively neglected period in between – neglected despite the introduction of Caesar as an epic character in Lucan's *Pharsalia* – and explore wider questions surrounding Caesar's textual representation, including its relationship with the many other ways in which he was being remembered in Rome. By conducting close readings of texts, and using the material culture and urban landscape of Rome as well as other evidence of the political use of Caesar to pose questions to the literature, this critical part of Caesar's early reception is carefully surveyed. Caesar appears as conqueror, writer, orator, assassinated tyrant, divine forefather and monstrous literary construct – to name just some of his depictions. A potentially dangerous point of reference given his fate, Caesar is relevant and valuable to the texts under discussion because in his evocation authors can tackle topics such as politics, statesmanship, religion, family relations, morality and even literature itself. Working chronologically through this period, key considerations include the relationship of text to state and between texts, the role of the reader in recognising traces of Caesar, and the impact that genre and narrative context (not just era) can have on an author's treatment of Caesar.

IMPACT STATEMENT

The central benefit of this study lies in its ability to increase readers' appreciation of the sensitivities surrounding the literary representation of Julius Caesar, one of the most famous and controversial people in history. Analysis of literary techniques (encompassing, for example, the role of the narrator and the use of intertextual allusion) gives rise to a better understanding of how valuable but how problematic writing about Caesar was during the period in question. Complemented by examination of numismatic, epigraphic and topographic evidence, this study makes accessible to the general public an informed historical understanding of the continued relevance of Caesar's legacy. It tracks how different events or episodes in history affected how Caesar was remembered, and it demonstrates that discussion of Caesar's actions and the actions of others towards him regularly carried a contemporary resonance. This thesis thus combines reputation studies and reception studies, focussing on the reader's (or viewer's) understanding and interpretation of the material in question.

My holistic approach to the topic represents a departure from the previous scholarly view that literary texts from a specific era all convey a uniform message about Caesar, and the idea that this, in turn, is a reflection of attitudes from the top down. There are in fact occasions on which completely different aspects of Caesar are brought to the fore by authors from the same period, and instances when Caesar's textual presence stands in contrast to his absence from the non-literary material. Moreover, my approach invites broader questions about memory and memorialisation, including the relationship between cultural familiarity and a reader's interpretation of a text. Might a person's awareness of Caesar's monumental legacy, for example, have rendered him/her more alert to Caesar's trace in literature? This study will continue and complement recent scholarship on the subject of memory, and will be valuable above all to those with an interest in literature's role in cultural memory. But it will also benefit anyone who uses literary texts as evidence for imperial attitudes about Caesar, since my analysis demonstrates that an author's treatment of Caesar depended on the time at which he was writing, the agenda and genre of each work, and, even within the same work, the topic in question and the flow of that particular argument. It is hoped that this study will lead to an improved understanding about the complexities of using literature to evaluate reputation.

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- RIC 2.1 Carradice and Buttrey (2007) (eds) *The Roman Imperial Coinage, Vol. 2, Part 1*. London: Spink.
- RPC Burnett, Amandry and Carradice (1999)(eds) *Roman Provincial Coinage, Vol. 2*. London: British Museum Press; Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale.

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- Caes. *BC.* Caesar, *Bellum Civile*, translated by C. Damon (2016), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Caes. *BG.* Caesar, *Bellum Gallicum*, translated by H. J. Edwards (1966), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cass. Dio Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, translated by E. Cary (1916-1917), 9 vols, Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cic. *Att.* Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum*, translated by D. R. Shackleton Bailey (1999), 4 vols, Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cic. *Brut.* Cicero, *Epistulae ad Brutum*, translated by D. R. Shackleton Bailey (2002). Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cic. *Fam.* Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, translated by D. R. Shackleton Bailey (2001), 3 vols, Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cic. *Marc.* Cicero, *Pro Marcello*, translated by N. H. Watts (1953), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Diod. Sic. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheke*, translated by F. R. Walton (1967), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hor. *Carm.* Horace, *Carmina*, translated by N. Rudd (2004), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
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- Plut. *Sull.* Plutarch, *Sulla*, translated by B. Perrin (1914), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Quint. *Inst.* Quintilian, *Instituto Oratoria*, translated by D. A. Russell (2001), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sall. *Cat.* Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, translated by J. C. Rolfe (1921) and revised by J. T. Ramsey (2013), Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
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- Sen. *Ben.* Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, translated by M. Griffin and B. Inwood (2011). Chicago, Ill.; London: University of Chicago Press.
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- Sen. *Ira* Seneca, *De Ira*, translated by R. A. Kaster (2010). Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.
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- Stat. *Theb.* Statius, *Thebaid*, translated by J. B. Hall (2007-2008). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.
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INTRODUCTION

Julius Caesar's depictions in literature have been shaping his reputation for over two millennia, but a crucial part of his early literary reception remains underexplored: the period between Tiberius and Trajan. Interest has tended to lie with the relatively small number of references to Caesar found in texts written under Octavian / Augustus and with their principal focus on his death and deification.¹ Caesar's comet appears in Virgil's ninth *Eclogue*, for instance; the portents that occurred after his death are detailed in Virgil's first *Georgic*; a link between Caesar's great deeds on Earth and his place among the divine is made by Diodorus – to cite a few examples of this apparent trend (discussed in detail below). Further, we will see that there is a history of reading these passages as entirely shaped by the regime, windows into Augustus' thoughts, with little interest in individual writers' agendas, the genre of the work, the use of intertextuality, and so on. Scholarship has also identified a seeming revival of literary interest in Caesar that took place during Trajan's reign (AD 98 – 117).² Texts from this era and beyond seem to portray Caesar (and not Augustus) as the founder of the Empire. Under Domitian (or perhaps Nerva), Plutarch had begun his *Lives of the Caesars* with Augustus. Under Trajan, he describes Augustus as 'the second who ruled' when he notes that the month Sextilis was renamed after him (ἀπὸ τοῦ δευτέρου μὲν ἄρξαντος, *Numa*, 19.4). A few years after Trajan's reign, Suetonius' *Lives* would begin with Julius Caesar. Later in the second century, Appian would state that Caesar founded the monarchy (*Proem* 6.22) and Dio would imply the same (44.2.1, 45.1.2).³ I propose to address the relatively neglected period in between – neglected despite the introduction of Caesar as an epic character in Lucan's *Pharsalia*⁴ – and to explore wider questions surrounding Caesar's literary reception, including its relationship with the many other ways in which he was being remembered in Rome during this time.

A thorough understanding of the role that Caesar's image and memory played in literature also demands consideration of certain rituals, monuments and inscriptions because these are indicators of his presence in Rome's cultural memory during the

¹ Three of the most important studies on Caesar's place in the literature of the triumviral period and the Augustan age (44 BC – AD 14) are Ramage (1985), White (1988) and Zarrow (2007) – discussed below.

² See, for example, Bowersock (1969), Harvey (2002), Levick (2009) and Geiger (2018).

³ See Pelling (2002) 213, Pitcher (2009) 271 and Hekster (2015) 186-187.

⁴ Lucan's text will be referred to throughout as *Pharsalia*, primarily to avoid confusion with the *Bellum Civile* of Caesar.

timeframe under discussion. Caesar's place in the calendar is undeniable, for example. The month of Quintilis had been renamed 'Iulius' in his honour (Suet. *Iul.* 76.1; Dio 44.5.2, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.12.34; Flor. *Epit.* 2.13.91);⁵ it had been decreed that meetings of the Senate were not allowed to be held on the anniversary of his death, renamed 'the Day of Parricide' (*parricidium*, Suet. *Iul.* 88); anniversaries of his military victories appear in various *Fasti* from Tiberius' principate;⁶ the Ludi Victoriae Caesaris, first celebrated at the conclusion of his triumph in 46 BC, lasted for ten days each July; and his birthday, also in July, was commemorated right up until the fifth century when it appears in the calendar of Polemius Silvius.⁷ A host of buildings and spaces in Rome were linked to his memory, including the Forum Iulium and the Aedes Divi Iulii – the latter being an important location for imperial funerals (it was where Tiberius delivered his eulogy at Augustus' funeral, for example).⁸ Further, imperial inscriptions have been found around the Empire which incorporate descent from Caesar: Tiberius was at times memorialised as Caesar's 'grandson', Drusus and Germanicus as his 'great-grandsons', and Caligula as his 'great-great-grandson', as we will see in Chapter 1. Finally, statues depicting Caesar stood in various prominent locations in Rome, such as the Temple of Venus Genetrix (Dio 45.7.1) and the Pantheon (Dio 53.27.3).⁹ Caesar's image was incorporated into the *pompa circensis*, the grand procession which preceded the circus games.¹⁰ This procession also featured in honours granted by emperors for deceased family members,¹¹ as well as in celebrations for an emperor's return to Rome.¹²

To illustrate how the broader ways in which Caesar was being remembered might influence our reading of a literary text, let us turn back to Virgil's fifth *Eclogue* and its historical context (discussed in more detail below). Though the poem does not name Caesar, the way that Daphnis' death is lamented has been calling Caesar to mind for

⁵ Although this honour was carried out after Caesar's death, it was probably decided beforehand. See Rüpke (1995) 394.

⁶ Wissowa (1912) 445 collates this series of *feriae publicae*: 17th March, victory at Munda; 27th March, fall of Alexandria; 6th April, victory at Thapsus; 2nd August, victory in Spain and in Zela.

⁷ See Weinstock (1971) 207.

⁸ For the suggestion that Caesar had planned for his name to appear in every major locale in the city, see Platner and Ashby (1929) 79.

⁹ For whether Caesar also featured in the triad of statues in the Temple of Mars Ultor, see Richardson (1992) 162.

¹⁰ Suetonius lists the inclusion of Caesar's image and chariot in the *pompa circensis* among the bestowed honours that were too great for mortal men (*ampliora etiam humano fastigio*, *Iul.* 76.1). Beard, North and Price (1998) 260-262 explain that Romans of every social rank would have been aware of, and affected by, such public festivals.

¹¹ For Caligula's games honouring his mother, which saw her image paraded in a carriage during the *pompa circensis*, see Suet. *Gaius* 15.1.

¹² See Arena (2009) 88.

centuries. David Meban effectively explains why the prevalence of the memory of Caesar in the years after his death must have a bearing on how we approach Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*:

The memory of Caesar became a fundamental social and political issue... Caesar's supporters, for instance, aimed to preserve and nurture his memory... The conspirators likewise took great interest in the issue but focused their attentions on limiting or obscuring, rather than fostering, Caesar's memory... How Caesar was to be remembered would define the recent past and decide the legitimacy of different aspects of his years in power. It would also determine ... the prestige of Caesar's supporters and the fate of the conspirators. These developments emphasize the role and importance of social memory at Rome and its power to unite or distinguish between factions such as Caesar's supporters, the conspirators, veterans, and the urban *plebs*. Efforts by various groups to ensure the survival and promotion of the memory of Caesar were also no doubt an attempt to achieve stability and continuity during an extremely turbulent period in Roman history. Caesar's memory, therefore, was a vital and far-reaching question in Roman culture in the years following his death.¹³

When it comes to ways of talking about social memory (as Meban does here) or how a society remembers people and events, a plethora of terms exists.¹⁴ The concept of 'collective memory' is usually traced back to Maurice Halbwachs who published *The Social Frameworks of Memory* in 1925, though the term was used by von Hofmannsthal as early as 1902.¹⁵ Halbwachs believed that people's personal memories were entirely shaped by social context (be it family, religion, social group, etc.). In their 1996 article 'Collective Memory – what is it?', Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam select the following example to illustrate this particular aspect of Halbwachs' theory (the social production of personal memory): 'whatever "individual image" one has of a certain person or an event in one's family, it cannot be dissociated from the general ideas, types, patterns that comprise the "family memory"'.¹⁶ While society undoubtedly has the ability to influence individuals' recollections

¹³ Meban (2009) 123-124.

¹⁴ In addition to the two terms outlined below pertaining to social memory studies (that is, collective memory and cultural memory), scholars have discussed the following: official memory, vernacular memory, public memory, popular memory, local memory, family memory. See Olick and Robbins (1998), especially 112.

¹⁵ See Olick and Robbins (1998) 106. Halbwachs' writings are collated in the 1992 volume *On Collective Memory*. Edited, translated, and with an introduction by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

¹⁶ Gedi and Elam (1996) 37 discussing Halbwachs (1992) 58.

of people and events, critics argue that Halbwachs' disassociation of memory from the individual is problematic. Fentress and Wickham, for example, describe 'a concept of collective consciousness curiously disconnected from the actual thought processes of any particular person'.¹⁷ Funkenstein argues that 'remembering is a mental act, and therefore it is absolutely and completely personal'.¹⁸ For the purpose of the current thesis, the main idea behind the phenomenon of 'collective memory' – that is, the importance of social context – remains vital. Numerous methods by which the figure of Caesar was ingrained into public consciousness came from the top down, as we have seen. But we must also be sensitive to individual authors' personal experiences (including their relationship to the regime) and the agendas of their work, not to mention the varying responses of their readers.

As a result of such unease with the term 'collective memory', scholars have moved towards the idea of 'cultural memory' which was first promoted by Jan and Aleida Assmann in the late 1980s and 1990s.¹⁹ Marita Sturken describes this as 'memory that is shared outside the avenues of formal historical discourse yet is entangled with cultural products and imbued with cultural meaning'.²⁰ Sturken analyses the ways in which memories of the Vietnam War were produced by popular culture (in particular film and television images) and objects (such as veterans' personal possessions that were left at public memorials). She explains that 'notions of culture' were explicitly attached to such 'objects of memory', and it is for this reason that she prefers the term 'cultural' rather than 'collective' memory.²¹ Ginsberg defines 'cultural memory' as 'a memory of a shared past marked by the community – and especially its elite authorities – as of constitutive significance to group identity'.²² She elaborates: 'Cultural memories stem both from the distant, mythologized past (e.g., the Trojan war) and more recent events which quickly develop a significance akin to a mythologized past, often in combination with political upheaval'.²³ Cultural memory is thus an interdisciplinary umbrella term, used to describe the interplay between present and past. Linked with notions of identity and items of material culture, and with the potential to fictionalise, it can be an illuminating lens through which to view periods of political

¹⁷ Fentress and Wickham (1992) ix-x.

¹⁸ Funkenstein (1989) 6. For an overview of the various critiques of Halbwachs' argument, see Castelli (2004) 19-24.

¹⁹ See Assmann, J. (1988) and (1992), and Assmann, A. (1995) and (1999).

²⁰ Sturken (1997) 3.

²¹ Sturken (1997) 3.

²² Ginsberg (2013) 638 n3.

²³ Ginsberg (2013) 638 n3.

upheaval, and the reputation of figures associated with them.²⁴ In this thesis, for example, we will see occasions where Julio-Claudian emperors define themselves through their descent from Caesar, and Flavian emperors (arguably) through their difference. We will see Caesar's sword paraded as a symbol of military prowess a hundred years after his death, and his image reappearing on coins later still.

Literature is part of the phenomenon that is cultural memory. Aleida Assmann has pioneered research into how literary texts act as vehicles for cultural memory, particularly when it comes to canonisation.²⁵ Another key figure in this field is Renate Lachmann who drives home the role played by intertextuality which, she asserts, is what 'produces and sustains literature's memory'.²⁶ Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney identify three prominent areas within the abundance of scholarship on literature and memory: 'literature's memory' (a term encompassing intertextuality and coined by Lachmann, as we have just seen), 'memory in literature' (how the phenomenon of remembering is presented in texts) and 'literature as a medium of memory'.²⁷ All three areas will find a place in this investigation into Caesar's role in the literature of first-century Rome.

When reading texts that refer or allude to Caesar, it matters that he was part of Rome's calendar, that his memory was connected to various public spaces and that his name featured in imperial inscriptions because it shows that he was ingrained in public consciousness. From the senators meeting in the Curia Iulia to the ex-slaves who played music at public events like the ones commemorating Caesar's victories, the memory of Caesar impacted upon the lives of people in Rome at this time. Thus what might to modern readers seem a subtle or even ambiguous allusion to Caesar is brought into sharper focus when we realise that Caesar was, at that time, part of Rome's cultural memory in a way that was truly unprecedented. No Roman before him had been memorialised to this degree. That is not to say that all ambiguous references were specifically designed to call Caesar to the mind of each and every reader. (An example of an ambiguous passage about which a huge amount of ink has been spilt is Jupiter's reference to 'the Trojan Caesar... a Julius' at *Aen.* 1.286 ff which is discussed in more detail below.) Rather, we will see that writers could harness such ambiguity, as the emperors themselves could; that there were blurred lines when it came to where Julius Caesar ended and Augustus, for example, began.

²⁴ On recent research into the fictional(ising) nature of cultural memory, in addition to its socially constructed nature, see Erll and Nünning (2005) 263.

²⁵ Assmann, A. (1995) and (1999). For more on the relationship between canonisation and cultural memory, see Grabes (2008).

²⁶ Lachmann (2008) 309.

²⁷ Erll and Rigney (2006) 112-113.

The very fact that Augustus had taken the name of his adoptive father is testament to this. We will also consider absences from texts which, for reason of their subject matter (be it deification or assassination, for instance), could have incorporated the figure of Caesar but did not exploit this (sometimes obvious) link. Lastly, what might references to other figures, such as Brutus or Cato, tell us about how Caesar was being remembered? In our initial survey of Augustan material we will see, for example, that Nicolaus of Damascus praises Brutus' character in the same text in which he praises Caesar's character, and that Sallust famously applauds Cato's – and pointedly not Caesar's – lack of corruption in his *Bellum Catilinae*. In addressing the question of how Caesar was remembered in literature produced between the reigns of Tiberius and Trajan, this thesis will focus on Velleius Paterculus' *Historia* (with Valerius Maximus' *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* providing a useful counterpoint), a selection of works by Seneca the Younger, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* (and parallels will be drawn with Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Statius' *Thebaid* and the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* when it comes to intertextual allusions to Lucan's Caesar), Statius' *Silvae* and Tacitus' *Agricola*, *Germania* and *Dialogus*. My choice of material will be discussed below.

0.1. Scholarship on Caesar's literary reception

In 1843, in an introductory note on Horace's *Carm.* 1.2, Johann Caspar von Orelli remarked that Julius Caesar was barely mentioned by the Augustan poets. Orelli posited that references to and praise of Julius Caesar were intentionally minimised by poets so as not to overshadow the achievements of Augustus.²⁸ Over the next century this apparent silence on the part of the Augustan poets when it came to the subject of Julius Caesar became a minor subject of scholarly interest,²⁹ with several scholars suggesting that the initiative came directly from Augustus rather than the poets themselves.³⁰ On numerous occasions Ronald Syme argued that the Augustan poets' 'silence' over Caesar was symptomatic of a wider discomfort that Augustus felt towards his adoptive father.³¹ The figure of Julius Caesar undoubtedly posed a problem for the Augustan regime when it came to the subjects of Caesar's alleged aspirations to kingship and his assassination, for example; but he was also vital for Augustus' self-legitimation (styling himself as the *divi filius*, stamping Caesar's

²⁸ Orelli (1843).

²⁹ See Ramage (1985) 223 n2 and White (1988) 334 n2.

³⁰ See Zarrow (2007) 4 n9.

³¹ See especially Syme (1939) 317-318 and (1958) 432-434.

image on coinage, recruiting Caesar's soldiers, and so on). Syme recognised that disparate strands of Caesar's legacy could be dealt with differently, famously calling Augustus' relationship to his adoptive father's legacy 'one of the essential Augustan ambiguities'.³² Syme summed up Augustus' treatment of the memory of Caesar as follows: 'He exploited the divinity of his parent and paraded the titulature of "Divi filius." For all else, Caesar the proconsul and Dictator was better forgotten'.³³ Syme used literature as a singular piece of evidence in a wider discussion about the discomfort felt by the Augustan regime towards the figure of Caesar. As an historian he did not set out to provide in-depth analysis of literary issues. Further, his approach suggested that Augustus himself had directly steered all literary production, leading Edward Zarrow to call Syme's contribution to the study of the literary reception of Caesar under Augustus 'no longer tenable'.³⁴ Nonetheless, he paved the way for further inquiry into Caesar's literary reception, since questions remained regarding the context, agenda and generic implications (for example) of the works he cited, not to mention broader questions regarding the relationship of literature to the state.

Syme's position served as a launch pad for Edwin Ramage's 1985 inquiry into Augustus' treatment of Julius Caesar. Ramage agreed that Augustus sought to emphasise only Caesar's divinity. He argued that for all other aspects of Caesar's legacy Augustus 'carried out a subtle programme of propaganda designed to suppress Caesar and to put a distance between himself and his father'.³⁵ However, unlike Syme who suggested that such a distancing started after Augustus had become sole ruler, Ramage asserted that this dissociation began at the very start of his rise to power. He suggested that Augustus invited comparisons with Caesar on coinage and monuments, but that he did so in such a way as to appear to supersede his adoptive father. Caesar's role in Augustan verse and prose formed only a small part of the study. Ramage stated that in texts from this period there is 'surprisingly little mention of the man and his achievements',³⁶ and that this corresponds with the wider picture of denigration detected in the material culture. Thus once again we see literary texts being grouped together as one piece of evidence, coupled with the assumption that the Augustan regime controlled Rome's literary production in the same way that it oversaw, for example, the minting of coins or the building of monuments. Further, to ask why Caesar appears in Augustan poetry so infrequently is to demand a

³² Syme (1958) 432.

³³ Syme (1951) 214.

³⁴ Zarrow (2007) 5-6.

³⁵ Ramage (1985) 223.

³⁶ Ramage (1985) 230.

subjective evaluation; that is, it is only 'surprising' when we approach texts with certain expectations, as Peter White underscored in his 1988 article:

The question is, 'expect' in comparison with whom, or in relation to what? If Augustus is the implicit term of comparison, the observation is true but trivial. That the living ruler should be more celebrated than a dead one is rather the norm than the exception, and it certainly cannot be equated with a conclusion that the predecessor's memory is under siege.³⁷

White's challenge to the theses of Syme and Ramage (who had asserted that Caesar's memory was systematically maligned) moved the discussion forward. As we will see, White's sensitive handling of the literary evidence greatly contributed to the validity of his argument. Central to White's hypothesis – that the memory of Caesar actually held an important role within the state – was Caesar's incorporation into civil religion. The temple of Divus Iulius served as White's primary example of a lack of discomfort on the regime's part when it came to Caesar's memorialisation. Featuring as it did in imperial funerals, including Augustus' own when Tiberius gave a eulogy from its projecting podium, 'the temple of Caesar ultimately became the seat of the family cult which was at the same time fully integrated into the state religion'.³⁸ White drew attention to other important monuments that perpetuated the memory of Caesar, such as the Julian senate house which had been named after him (Dio 47.19.1). Public *feriae* constituted another area of White's inquiry which scholars before him had largely overlooked when discussing Caesar's place in Augustan Rome. In sum, White described a fostering of the remembrance of Caesar that went alongside – and was not negated by – an understanding that Augustus, the living ruler, was to be emphasised as the more important of the two.

As well as including tables of references to Caesar's appearances in Augustan poetry (pointing out that Caesar is mentioned more often than anyone else),³⁹ White conducted close readings of certain literary passages which had previously been used – incorrectly, according to him – to illustrate a distancing from Caesar (including passages from Virgil and Horace which I shall discuss below). This sort of close reading constitutes an important step forward in our understanding of how Caesar could be written about at this time. White saw in them no evidence of hostility towards Caesar. He concluded that the literature in various ways reflected Augustus' development of Caesar's cult and that this

³⁷ White (1988) 348.

³⁸ White (1988) 347.

³⁹ White (1988) 347.

was what chiefly determined his position towards Caesar: 'if Augustus expected his countrymen to understand what the cult of a *divus* meant, he had to educate them'.⁴⁰ Thus, according to White, Caesar's function within Augustan literature was to educate readers about the cult.

Edward Zarrow, in his 2007 thesis, took issue with the trend in scholarship to view the literature, coinage, urban topography and epigraphy of Augustan Rome as all conveying a uniform message with regard to Caesar's reception. Zarrow contended that in fact a fragmented view of Caesar is revealed when these media are examined together, arguing that 'different ancient monuments, whether literary or figural, were intended to impress different associations upon their respective audiences'.⁴¹ This was a crucial development in research into Caesar's reception. Like White before him, Zarrow included a number of tables in order to illustrate the locations of references to Caesar in poetry. The most common themes when Caesar is mentioned are his divinity (Zarrow counted nineteen references), his relationship to Augustus (also nineteen references) and his civil wars (ten references). Of course, even just counting the number of references is tricky given the ambiguity of many of them. Zarrow gave more weight than previous scholars had given to the topic of ambiguity. He explored how authors could draw on shared cultural memories, such as the portents following Caesar's assassination, which might evoke Caesar without naming him (as noted above with regard to Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*).⁴² Ancient authors could, of course, be ambiguous intentionally given that Augustus had taken the same name as his adoptive father.⁴³

In addition to his idea of a fragmented view of Caesar and his important discussion about ambiguity, Zarrow's contribution towards our understanding of the literary reception of Caesar is, in my opinion, three-fold. First and foremost, like White before him, he demonstrated the benefits of exploring genre, intratexts and intertexts (and other contextual markers) in order to illuminate a passage's significance in relation to Caesar's reception. Secondly, he placed as a backdrop to his readings Caesar's ongoing presence in Rome's cultural memory, so that an allusion to portents following a man's death, for example, could conjure up memories of Caesar without naming him or providing any other details. Thirdly, he incorporated prose authors into his discussion: Nicolaus' *Bios Kaisaros*, Trogus' *Historiae Philippicae*, the fragments belonging to Asinius Pollio, the fragments belonging to Augustus' autobiography, Augustus' *Res Gestae* and Vitruvius' *Architectura*

⁴⁰ White (1988) 355.

⁴¹ Zarrow (2007) 10.

⁴² Zarrow (2007) 62.

⁴³ Zarrow (2007) 37.

(the preface of which credits both Augustus and Caesar with the expansion of the Roman Empire). The breadth and depth of Zarrow's inquiry revealed that 'diversity and ambiguity' characterise Caesar's role in the literature of this period.⁴⁴ Using coinage, urban topography and epigraphy to complement and support his inquiry into literature, he concluded that 'Augustus along with the poets and historians of the Principate neither sought exclusively to praise Caesar nor to denigrate his achievements and to expel the dictator while propping up the god. The issue is far more complex'.⁴⁵

The main focus of scholarly attention when it comes to Caesar's reception has been on the Augustan period. The next time we see a spike in scholarly interest in Caesar's reception is with regard to Trajan's principate (AD 98-117) which appears to have ushered in a sort of Caesarian revival. In 1975 Joseph Geiger looked at the broader ideological direction of Trajan's principate and suggested that Julius Caesar (as opposed to Augustus) was now being thought of as the first of the Caesars.⁴⁶ The focus of Geiger's investigation was the disparity between the *Lives of the Caesars* by Plutarch (which began with Augustus) and those by Suetonius (which began with Julius). He brought other types of evidence into his discussion to illuminate Caesar's reception, numismatic and epigraphic, and concluded that Plutarch must have written his *Lives* under Nerva since a fundamental change occurred under Trajan with regard to how Caesar was being remembered. In 2018 Geiger produced a further study entitled 'The First Emperor? Augustus and Julius Caesar as Rival Founders of the Principate', conceding that due to continued debate on this topic there was a need to survey evidence from the period between Augustus' reign and Trajan's.⁴⁷ The three pages he offers on this era centre upon Caesar's absence from the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* (the bronze tablet recording the grant of powers by Senate and people), the *Ius in Acta Principum* (the annual oath of obedience to imperial legislation) and the *Acta Arvalium* (the ritual worship of the Arval Brethren), as well as his absence from imperial coinage. Geiger also notes that Pliny the Elder does not mention Caesar when he describes Tiberius' eyes (*NH* 9.143) which is striking given that he does mention Augustus, Claudius, Caligula and Nero (in that order): 'the omission of Julius Caesar must have been deliberate and certainly not caused by that learned man's lack of information'.⁴⁸ Geiger's main concern is Caesar's role as founder, and how the 'official usages' of this aspect of Caesar's reputation compare with the starting points chosen by Plutarch and Suetonius.

⁴⁴ Zarrow (2007) 95.

⁴⁵ Zarrow (2007) 95.

⁴⁶ Geiger (1975).

⁴⁷ Geiger (2018) 79.

⁴⁸ Geiger (2018) 81.

As Christopher Pelling points out (with regard to the 1975 study), Geiger's contribution went further than the suggestion that Julius Caesar was now held to be the first: Geiger demonstrated that certain Caesarian themes 'had gone not hot but cold'.⁴⁹ The memory of Brutus as a liberator, for instance, had dimmed somewhat. He could be evoked in art (a friend of the emperor, Titinius Capito, kept a bust of Brutus in his family home)⁵⁰ and even on Trajan's own coinage, in the very same 'restoration' series which also commemorated Caesar. Had the memory of Caesar's assassination – now a century and a half in the past – lost some of its sting? Barbara Levick picks up on this idea that the passage of time affects Caesar's reception, commenting that under Trajan 'Caesar's political significance had faded, leaving the military aspect prime'.⁵¹ As we move ever further from Caesar's life and death, it is interesting to consider the relationship between Caesar's reception and that of other people (such as Brutus, Cassius, Pompey and Cato). How and why did different strands of Caesar's reputation, including figures with whom he was connected, wax and wane in literature over the course of the first century?

The idea that Trajan's coinage signified a wider revival of the memory of Caesar has been explored by several scholars, including Glen Bowersock who recognised that Caesar provided an effective model for Trajan's role as general.⁵² This was built upon by Brian Harvey in 2002 who, as well as re-examining the numismatic evidence, analysed other indicators such as Trajan's rededication of the Temple of Venus Genetrix (originally dedicated by Caesar in 46 BC) and his campaign in Parthia, the conquest of which had been a well-known ambition of Caesar's (Suet. *Iul.* 44.3).⁵³ Trajan also wrote a series of *commentarii* as Caesar had done.⁵⁴ Harvey compared Trajan's coins with the restoration coinage of other emperors, noting that Caesar had never appeared on any coin types between Augustus and Trajan. This included the Flavian emperors' reminting of several Julio-Claudian types.

When it comes to the literature of the end of the first century and start of the second, a limited amount of research has been done into more nuanced aspects of Caesar's

⁴⁹ Pelling (2002) 213.

⁵⁰ The Younger Pliny's comment at *Ep.* 1.17 that this (as well as busts of Cassius and Cato) had been set up in Capito's home *ubi potest habeat* suggests that Capito was not allowed to display them anywhere else but in the privacy of his own home. In contrast, earlier in the same letter, Pliny relates how the Emperor had given Capito permission to erect a statue of Lucius Silanus in the Forum. This raises the suggestion that the figures of Brutus, Cassius and Cato were, in fact, still somewhat controversial.

⁵¹ Levick (2009) 217. Levick is reluctant to use literary material in her study on Caesar's political and military legacy, noting that 'discussions of the practice of writers are not helpful' (see below).

⁵² Bowersock (1969).

⁵³ Harvey (2002).

⁵⁴ Wardle (2014) 9 speaks of 'a literary homage to Caesar'.

representation; the focus has tended to lie with the starting points of works such as Plutarch's. A crucial exception to this is Pelling's chapter in *Sage and Emperor* (Stadter and Van der Stockt: 2002) which looks at Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* and asks whether it is possible to see in the *Alexander-Caesar* (published c. 110) any hint of the apparent contemporary interest in Julius Caesar. Pelling's reading suggests that Plutarch actually avoids making connections between Caesar's epoch and Trajanic Rome, citing Plutarch's avoidance of the name 'Dacia' (instead referring to 'Germany's neighbours', *Caes.* 58.6-7) and his avoidance of the title *pater* (or *parens*) *patriae*:

It suggests that he is writing for an audience who, there was a danger, might seek (or at least include people who sought) to read him in that way: an audience who were on the look-out for such relevance, who unless he avoided the word 'Dacia' might think he had something to say about Trajan's campaigns, who might look for parallels to contemporary debates about *parens patriae*, and so on.⁵⁵

Just as Pelling considers the Plutarchian readership's sensitivity to potential parallels, he asks broader questions about the impetus behind Caesar's seeming renewed relevance. Was this something that was top-down (as the coinage might suggest) or springing from below (with people, like Plutarch's readers, being alert to Caesarian motifs in Trajan's policies and self-representation)? Pelling concludes that it was probably a combination of the two.⁵⁶ This two-way relationship is important to remember when we consider how Caesar was being commemorated in literature and material culture in the period after Augustus and before Trajan, as is the idea that what is not mentioned in a text can sometimes be as illuminating as what is included.

Barbara Levick asserts that the literary evidence does not point to a sudden change in Caesar's reception during Trajan's Principate.⁵⁷ She points out that Josephus – writing towards the end of Domitian's reign – presents Caesar as 'the first ruler' when he calls Augustus 'the second' (*AJ* 18.32), Tiberius 'the third' (*AJ* 18.33) and Gaius 'the fourth' αὐτοκράτωρ (*AJ* 18.224). She also draws our attention to the preface of Valerius Maximus (writing under Tiberius) where Caesar, Augustus and Tiberius are depicted as a series of three, connected in both familial and divine terms. She urges caution when using literature to gauge public opinion on Caesar's standing since 'each had his own agenda when on each

⁵⁵ Pelling (2002) 222.

⁵⁶ Pelling (2002) 213.

⁵⁷ Levick (2009) 217.

occasion he set pen to paper'.⁵⁸ Of course Levick is right that each writer has his own programme and strategy, and this thesis will not attempt to wade into the quagmire of authorial intent. That is not to say, however, that insights cannot be drawn from literary texts when it comes to the diverse ways that Caesar could be talked about across different genres and different principates. In fact it is the very chain of literary receptions which is so far under-explored. While it will be interesting to investigate how the literature relates to the material culture, this thesis will not assume that the literature is shaped by (or is even a reflection of) attitudes from the top down. Lastly, Levick urges us not to read too much into absences – a helpful flipside to Pelling's sensitive reading of Plutarch's avoidance of certain material in his *Caesar* (discussed above). To illustrate her point Levick describes how Caesar's *acta* would have been irrelevant to first-century emperors. A lack of reference to him in imperial oaths should therefore not be considered loaded or significant: it was simply not necessary to refer to him on these occasions.

Regarding Caesar's literary reception in the intervening period – that is, after the principate of Augustus and before Caesar's alleged resurgence under Trajan – critics offer snapshots of certain authors and certain emperors, but modern scholarship offers no clear picture of the development of Caesar's legacy that took place over the course of the first century AD.⁵⁹ Advancing our understanding of this period, especially regarding literature's role as a vehicle for cultural memory, the most fruitful work concerns texts written in the aftermath of Lucan's *Pharsalia* (composed during Nero's principate, in the 60s). Critics understand this to be a crucial moment in Caesar's literary reception: Caesar now becomes an epic character, a literary entity in whom we might see echoes or inversions of Virgil's Aeneas as well as other epic predecessors. Lucan's Caesar features in important articles by Andreola Rossi, Emma Buckley and Lauren Donovan Ginsberg whose approaches, methods and readings have strengthened our grasp on Caesar's literary reception. I will evaluate their approaches here, as well as that of Tim Stover, in order to illuminate the sorts of glimpses into this period which will serve as a foundation for my broader investigation.

Andreola Rossi analyses a section of Lucan's *Pharsalia* where the character of Julius Caesar stops off at the site of Troy. The action takes place towards the end of book 9, after the Battle of Pharsalus when Caesar is pursuing (the already dead) Pompey (*Phars.* 9.964-999). Caesar is depicted as interested in the Trojan ruins though arguably insensitive towards them and unable to make much sense of them. Rossi takes a narratological

⁵⁸ Levick (2009) 217.

⁵⁹ Snapshots include chapters by Toher ('Augustan and Tiberian literature') and Leigh ('Neronian literature: Seneca and Lucan') in Griffin (2009) (ed), and Marks ('Julius Caesar in Domitianic literature') in Kramer and Reitz (2010).

approach in her investigation into this passage and makes insightful connections regarding memory, history, selectivity and reader responsibility. The character's highly selective memory is revealed by the fact that he recalls tales which relate positively to the direct ancestors of the *gens Iulia*, and he actively ignores or denigrates other branches of the family. Of course, for this reading to work Lucan must rely on his reader's literary memory to 'fill in the blanks' with regard to those people and stories that the character of Caesar either hints at or ignores. Thus the reader's active participation in the scene is a particularly important strand of Rossi's work. She concludes that 'Caesar's role as a founder is bound to mirror his role of writer. As Caesar the writer has fashioned from the ruins of the past a Julian history, so, from these same ruins, Caesar the founder will build a Julian Rome'.⁶⁰ While of course we must take care to distinguish between the historical man and the fictional character, Rossi invites us to ponder the implications of Caesar's literary presence on the ways in which Caesar the writer and Caesar the founder were being remembered in Neronian Rome.

Literature as a mode of cultural memory is explored by Emma Buckley and Lauren Donovan Ginsberg in relation to the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*.⁶¹ Buckley explores the *Octavia's* sustained engagement with Lucan's *Pharsalia* and so propounds the idea that intertextuality and allusion can make a text become about Caesar when it is not explicitly so. She shows that '*Octavia's* Nero has been reading Lucan', with Nero's language and imagery demonstrating that Lucanian Caesarism has shaped the direction of his rule.⁶² She understands the character of Nero to be 'a Julius who ... confirms his Caesarian identity with civil war against his own people and wife',⁶³ and she reads Octavia as a Pompey to Nero's Caesar. Ginsberg likewise suggests that the struggle between Nero and Octavia evokes the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, with Nero cast as a Caesar-figure, and Octavia (as well as Agrippina) cast as a Pompey-figure. She explores aspects of Octavia's speech which call to mind both Caesar the historical man and Caesar the Lucanian character. She also points out that the character of Nero himself appears to be mindful of Caesar's fate, alluding in direct speech to Caesar's clemency towards Brutus which ultimately cost him his life. She identifies echoes of references to Caesar's death and its aftermath found in Horace (*Carm.* 1.2), Virgil (*Georg.* 1) and Ovid (*Met.* 15.824). As further evidence of Caesar's place in Rome's cultural memory at this point, she draws our attention to the 'cap and dagger' coin minted to mark Vindex and Galba's rebellion which casts the

⁶⁰ Rossi (2001) 325.

⁶¹ Buckley (2012) and Ginsberg (2013).

⁶² Buckley (2012) 142.

⁶³ Buckley (2012) 151.

revolution against Nero in terms which are identical to the assassination of Caesar. She uses the literary-historical memory of Caesar's civil wars to argue for a date of composition for the *Octavia* that falls within Galba's brief reign or the start of Vespasian's – the civil war of 69 reigniting memories of Caesar's.

Lucan's *Pharsalia* also forms the intertextual backbone to Tim Stover's investigation into Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*. He argues that Lucan's deconstructive approach acts as a 'poetic point of departure'⁶⁴ for Valerius' narrative of renewal and recovery. While the extent of Valerius' engagement with Lucan is debated by scholars, with many favouring Virgil and Apollonius Rhodius as the primary intertexts, Stover convincingly demonstrates that Lucan frequently appears in the tapestry of source material that Valerius draws upon for his *Argonautica*. What might this mean for the figure of Lucan's Caesar? Stover's focus is not on characterisation (but on broader themes such as civil war and rebirth). Nonetheless his work invites us to wonder whether, for Valerius' readers, Lucan's Caesar serves as a sort of anti-example for the *Argonautica*'s epic heroes.

What is emerging here is the importance of intertextuality to understanding Caesar's reception and the central role of Lucan in the chain of receptions. We have come a long way from the idea that a small number of literary references to Caesar points to Augustus' unease about how to convey his relationship with the memory of his adoptive father. Scholars now appreciate that to talk about 'fewer references than we might expect' means reading a text with preconceived notions of what we anticipate seeing – a dangerous and misleading way of both approaching literary material and charting Caesar's reception. Instead of focusing on the number of references to Caesar (and in fact he is mentioned in Augustan poetry more than any other figure bar Augustus), scholars now conduct close-readings of texts which pertain to the memory of Caesar, exploring the context of such passages and asking questions about (for example) genre and intertextuality. Prose authors are being given more attention, and the breadth of non-literary material which can support and illuminate Caesar's literary reception is also growing. In the past, literature was often grouped together to form one strand of Caesar's reception. It is now understood that not only is Caesar's role in Rome's cultural memory fragmented (insofar as different messages are conveyed by different media), his role within Latin literature itself is also fragmented. No consistent picture emerges of his role in Augustan literature.

⁶⁴ Stover (2012) preface.

The rejuvenation of the memory of Caesar that supposedly took place during the reign of Trajan is usually based upon two facts: his re-appearance on coinage (for the first time since Augustus' principate) and the tendency of writers to class Caesar as 'the first' when previously Augustus had been considered as such. Scholars have investigated the stimulus behind this re-emergence (did it come from above or below?), looked for patterns across literature and material culture, and even questioned the role of literature in ascertaining the extent of this re-emergence (seeing as some previous authors had also treated Caesar as the 'first'). More recently Olivier Hekster has suggested that a renewed interest in Caesar, which he predominantly dates to the latter half of Trajan's reign, might have sprung from increased attention to the subject of succession – 'much as it caused wider attention to (imperial) lineage'.⁶⁵ The ways in which the memory of Caesar was handled during and after the principate of Trajan is a subject of continued scholarly interest, but the focus tends to be less on literature (which, in contrast, continues to play a large role in discussions on Caesar's place in the Augustan regime) and more on coinage and policy.

In sum, the period between the principates of Augustus and Trajan has so far been under-explored with regard to Caesar's reception generally but especially when it comes to his treatment in literature. It is only in recent years, for example, that the canonisation of Lucan's *Pharsalia* has been shown to provide a new and important dimension to Caesar's part in Rome's cultural memory. As well as founder, conqueror, writer and assassinated tyrant (to name just some of his 'hats'), he now also appears as a fictional epic character that could be utilised by later authors wishing to draw on the character's associations with tyranny, brutality and civil war. The approaches of Emma Buckley and Lauren Donovan Ginsberg in particular open the door to a broader investigation into Caesar's role in the Latin literature of first-century Rome, encompassing the relationship between works and the idea that there is a kind of series of writings about Caesar that gathers its own momentum and is not necessarily controlled by the regime in which it is produced.

0.2. Approach, aim and structure

Analysing Caesar's place in literature produced between Tiberius and Trajan and building upon the scholarship discussed above, my approach encompasses reception, reputation, intertextuality and genre studies. By 'reception' I mean the transmission and interpretation

⁶⁵ Hekster (2015) 186.

of material (here pertaining to Caesar, principally literary material).⁶⁶ This is vital for my analysis because of the focus on the reader. That is, how Caesar's role in Rome's cultural memory, including his place in previous literary texts, might impact upon a reader's understanding. The reception of Caesar is a vast topic and until now the main focus of scholarly attention has been on his later reception. Maria Wyke, for example, has illuminated the enormous impact that Caesar has had on the spheres of literature, art, politics and popular culture, particularly within Europe and North America in the twentieth century.⁶⁷ The field of drama has received particular attention in recent years. Domenico Lovascio, for instance, investigates Caesar's place in the English theatre in the early modern age, and Miryana Dimitrova explores how Caesar's own writings have influenced his depiction in English drama between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁸ His immediate reception – which might impact upon his later reception – remains understudied.⁶⁹ The early reception of Cicero, in contrast, is now being explored: Thomas Keeline examines the ways in which early imperial politics and Cicero's schoolroom canonization impacted upon his later reception in his monograph entitled *The Reception of Cicero in the Early Roman Empire: The Rhetorical Schoolroom and the Creation of a Cultural Legend* (2018).⁷⁰

Research into how individuals are remembered (rather than how they actually lived) is known as 'reputation studies'. A key idea here is the concept of reputational malleability; that is, how the varying representations of figures are related to the shifting requirements of different times and places. For example, Olick and Robbins explain how over the course of many years the image of Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate States Army, 'acted as a palimpsest on which contemporary concerns could be written and rewritten'.⁷¹ Reputations are defined by Bromberg and Fine as 'cultural objects' which 'connect historical events to shared values'.⁷² As we progress chronologically, then, key considerations will be the ways in which discussion of Caesar's actions and the actions of others towards him carry a contemporary resonance, and the relationship between

⁶⁶ For comprehensive overviews of reception studies, see Willis (2018), Hardwick and Stray (2008) and Martindale (2006).

⁶⁷ Wyke (2006) and (2007).

⁶⁸ Lovascio (2015); Dimitrova (2018).

⁶⁹ An exception to this is Dimitrova (2018) who discusses how Caesar's depiction in ancient historiography and in Lucan's epic serve as 'important intermediators' (p14) within the network of receptions.

⁷⁰ See also the chapter by Dressler (2015) in *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Cicero: 'Cicero's Quarrels: Reception and Modernity from Horace and Tacitus'*. On Cicero's later reception, see Manuwald (2016).

⁷¹ Olick and Robbins (1998) 131, discussing Connelly's 1997 study of Robert E. Lee.

⁷² Bromberg and Fine (2002) 1137.

Caesar's literary reputation and his external (i.e. non-literary) reputation. The types of non-literary material I will look at include epigraphic evidence (such as plaques honouring members of the imperial family which incorporate their descent from Caesar); numismatic evidence (for instance coins which incorporate the *sidus Iulius*), and monumental evidence (including the topographical relationship of Domitian's equestrian statue to the Aedes Divi Iulii).

To ensure depth of coverage I have confined my analysis to texts in Latin and to 'Roman' receptions, and have had to be selective even among them. The texts I discuss serve as case studies used to illuminate the benefits and problems involved in writing about Caesar across a range of genres. This thesis does not claim to be comprehensive: Petronius' *Satyricon*, for example, appears only fleetingly due to the fact that the reign in which it was written remains the subject of intense debate (chapter 3); Caesar's appearances in Frontinus' *Strategemata* are used to exemplify contemporary interest in Caesar's military legacy, but not discussed in detail (chapter 4); and Quintilian is mentioned briefly to confirm that it was not just Tacitus who was interested in Caesar as a man of letters at this time (chapter 5). Future research into Greek material would be welcome; Josephus, in particular, would be of interest given his insinuation that Caesar was 'the first ruler' (as noted above) and given that the Ides of March loom large in his account of Caligula's assassination (see chapter 2). When the breadth of material so demands, the focus of a chapter will be shared between different texts or authors. Lucan's *Pharsalia*, however, demands its own chapter due to the amount of material concerning Caesar – the protagonist of this ten-book epic – and the text's pivotal role in the chain of receptions.

In my choice of material, I have endeavoured to include a range of genres in order to convey the variety of Caesar's appearances and uses in the Latin literature of this period. Particular issues to be discussed include generic boundaries, readers' generic expectations, and the ways in which authors might turn generic models upside down via 'dislocations of genre'.⁷³ Each genre brings its own problems with regard to how Caesar might be incorporated. Velleius Paterculus was chosen, for example, because his *Historia* demonstrates how a historiographer in the early 30s, whose account culminates in the glorious principate of Tiberius, could deal with major historical events such as Caesar's Rubicon crossing and assassination.⁷⁴ These episodes were so full of controversy due to the implications of, for example, illegality and aspirations to kingship, but simply unavoidable in

⁷³ A term used throughout the edited collection of Papanghelis, Harrison and Fragoulidis (2013).

⁷⁴ The text of Velleius is that of Watt in the Teubner series (1988). As noted above, translations are by Yardley and Barrett (2011).

a survey of Tiberius' rise to power. Examining this text will allow us to glimpse how Caesar could be shown to fit into the continuum of history under Tiberius. The author Valerius Maximus was writing at a similar time but in a different format and did not have to incorporate Caesar at all.⁷⁵ He does, however, include Caesar on numerous occasions in his collection of morally edifying tales, often as the climactic exemplum of a chapter, and so serves as useful counterpoint to Velleius Paterculus (the focus of chapter 1).

In chapter 2 I will explore various texts written by Seneca the Younger who is particularly valuable for this investigation because he wrote across so many different genres.⁷⁶ The dialogues, for example, reveal the value Caesar could bring to the realm of exemplarity (exemplary in his handling of grief and exemplary in his control of anger) but they also exhibit the difficulty he posed: Seneca could not, for example, incorporate Caesar into his treatise on the benefit of clemency (addressed to the Emperor Nero) because of the association between Caesar's *clementia* and assassination. But elsewhere in the Senecan corpus we do see Caesar's clemency celebrated (*Ira* 2.23.4, for example). For Seneca, Caesar was a figure whose equivocal reputation was sometimes harnessed and sometimes suppressed, and this had a lot to do with which genre Seneca was writing in at the time. Regularly included in declamation exercises, Caesar was central to certain ethical questions regarding, for example, the topics of generosity and ingratitude. Many of Caesar's actions (and of those towards him) were politically very highly charged and open to interpretation, and so philosophically of great interest.

The focus switches to epic when we turn to Lucan in chapter 3.⁷⁷ I will consider the political associations of Lucan's chosen genre and the unavoidable spectre of Virgil's *Aeneid*. 'An interface between history and fiction',⁷⁸ I will also reflect on what can be gained from viewing the text historiographically, the timeframe of its subject matter being so recent when compared with the remote setting of, say, the *Aeneid*, not to mention the lack of divine machinery. When it comes to questions of voice and temporality, a narratological approach will prove particularly useful, especially when it comes to the gap between internal characters' (above all the Lucanian Caesar's) interpretation of a scene versus that

⁷⁵ The text of Valerius Maximus is that of Briscoe in the Teubner series (1998). As noted above, translations are by Shackleton Bailey (2000).

⁷⁶ The text of Seneca's dialogues is the Oxford Classical Text of L. D. Reynolds (1977) and the text of Seneca's *Epistulae* is the Oxford Classical Text of L. D. Reynolds (1965). As noted above, translations of *Ad Marciam* are by H. M. Hine (2014); translations of *De Ira* are by R. A. Kaster (2010); translations of *De Beneficiis* are by M. Griffin and B. Inwood (2001), and translations of the *Epistulae* are by M. Graver and A. A. Long (2015).

⁷⁷ The text of Lucan's *Pharsalia* is that of A. E. Housman (1927). As noted above, translations are by S. Braund (1992).

⁷⁸ Dimitrova (2018) 14.

of the external reader. This variance in reading is often illuminated by consideration of which epic poems each has previously read.

Epic intertextuality will be important for chapter 4. Here I will show that, post-Nero, the literary reception of Caesar is shaped largely (but not exclusively) by Lucan's Caesar. I will consider recent scholarship on the trace of Lucan's Caesar in Silius Italicus' *Punica* and Statius' *Thebaid* (epics) as well as the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* (*fabula praetexta*), before discussing in detail the ways in which Valerius Flaccus calls Lucan's Caesar to mind in his *Argonautica*.⁷⁹ A key part of this discussion will be Hercules' visit to Troy – a location so imbued with literary memories – and its relationship to Caesar's visit to Troy in book 9 of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. This merger of literary space and physical space will inform my subsequent examination of two of Statius' occasional poems: *Silvae* 1.1 highlights Caesar's monumental legacy and *Silvae* 2.7 incorporates his Lucanian character.⁸⁰ The theme of contrast and departure will be important to my analysis of both the literary and the non-literary material; that is, a reader / viewer being invited to remember but reject an unfavourable predecessor. As such, I explore the relationship between places, monuments and poems as means of memorialisation.

Finally, chapter 5 looks into Caesar's reputation as a man of letters through discussion of Tacitus' minor works, the *Agricola* (a text honouring his father-in-law), *Germania* (an ethnographic work) and *Dialogus* (a fictionalised discussion on the decline in eloquence).⁸¹ The first two engage with Caesar as a literary man in practice through intertextual allusions to his commentaries, and the third engages with Caesar as a literary man in theory through discussion of his place in the rollcall of great Roman orators. My intention in this chapter is to explore texts written at the dawn of Trajan's reign and so before Caesar's reappearance on imperial coinage, before Trajan rededicated Caesar's Temple of Venus Genetrix and before he realised Caesar's plans to conquer Parthia.⁸² Did these texts anticipate the top-down interest in Caesar that would become apparent later? Items of material culture from later in Trajan's reign will be used to illustrate Trajan's strong pull towards Caesar as his chosen model of military excellence and *pietas*, but later texts –

⁷⁹ The text of Valerius Flaccus is that of W. W. Ehlers in the Teubner series (1980). As noted above, translations are by J. H. Mozley (1934).

⁸⁰ The text of Statius' *Silvae* is the Oxford Classical Text of E. Courtney (1990). As noted above, translations are by D. R. Shackleton Bailey and C. A. Parrot (2015).

⁸¹ The text of Tacitus' *opera minora* is the Oxford Classical Text of M. Winterbottom and R. M. Ogilvie (1975). As noted above, translations of *Agricola* are by M. Hutton and R. M. Ogilvie (1970); translations of *Germania* are by M. Hutton and E. H. Warmington (1970); and translations of *Dialogus* are by W. Peterson and M. Winterbottom (1970).

⁸² Questions regarding the sequence of these texts' composition will be discussed in chapter 5.

including Tacitus' major works (*Histories* and *Annals*) – will not be discussed here. This is because it is Caesar's literary reputation at the period of transition between Nerva and Trajan, and the early years of Trajan's reign, which form the end-point of my thesis. This is the end-point of what has been an underexplored era of Caesar's early reception, the period after Augustus and before the apparent revival of interest that took place under Trajan.

0.3. Caesar's literary reception under Octavian / Augustus

How was Caesar memorialised in literature under Octavian / Augustus? What was fair game? Were there any linear themes? These questions need to be asked because of the relationship between cultural memory, intertextuality and the chain of literary receptions. There follows an overview of the most relevant material from the age of Octavian / Augustus which would have been accessible to authors of the first century AD. Of course, these authors would also have read earlier texts, written in Caesar's lifetime. The works of Cicero and of Caesar himself, for example, would have been readily available; indeed intertextual allusions to Cicero and Caesar will form an important part of this study. However, since the focus is on how Caesar was being remembered, it is important to start with Caesar's reception in texts written under his son and heir – texts which provided a springboard for the authors from Tiberius' principate and beyond, examined in the main body of this thesis.

One of the main texts regularly alluded to in literary portrayals of Caesar is Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, written less than five years after Caesar's death in 44 BC. The climax of this historiographical account is an exchange in the Senate between Caesar and Cato, with Caesar's speech arguing against the execution of the Catilinarian conspirators and Cato's arguing for it. Sallust's Caesar encourages his senatorial audience to clear their minds of anger, hatred, pity and other passions when making such an important decision, and he cites examples where their Roman forefathers had suppressed their emotions and as a result acted 'properly and in due order' (*recte atque ordine*, 51.4). As well as advocating emotional detachment, Caesar warns that the death penalty – which in any case would give the conspirators an escape from their suffering – might be remembered more than the crimes themselves (51.15-20). He thus urges against execution, anticipating his policy of

clementia,⁸³ and he shows himself acutely aware of the importance of memory and reputation. He advises consideration of existing legal and historical precedents, citing the actions of *maiores nostri* three times over the course of his speech (51.4, 51.5 and 51.37). Having warned against creating a precedent which could have devastating consequences for future generations (51.25-27), he concludes by proposing confiscation and imprisonment as a more suitable form of punishment (51.43). Sallust presents Caesar as a knowledgeable and rational man of great rhetorical ability. He is characterised by the qualities of 'mildness and compassion' (*mansuetudo et misericordia*, 54.2), and he is described as 'a refuge for the unfortunate' (*miseris perfugium*, 54.3), regularly putting other people's needs before his own (54.4).⁸⁴

Cato, on the other hand, urges the senators to choose the death penalty. 'Unshakeable... with a rock-like conviction',⁸⁵ he says that the senators should concentrate on preventing future threats rather than dwelling on the form of punishment, giving a sense of urgency to his speech: Catiline and his army are described as 'at our throats' (*faustibus urget*, 52.35). He asserts that any sign of weakness will spur on further threats (52.18). Like Caesar, he uses the actions of their elders to bolster his argument: Cato cites Titus Manlius Torquatus' execution of his own son for disobeying orders (52.30), and in the final sentence of his speech he urges the senators to act in the manner of their ancestors (*more maiorum*, 52.36). Sallust characterises him by the qualities of uprightness and austerity (*integritas, severitas*, 54.2-3).

Sallust's representation of Caesar is complex and controversial. Does Sallust's emphasis on Caesar's generosity and kindness lie in his personal and professional connections with the dictator? These are issues which of course only affect the first generation of receptions of Caesar. Would such references have seemed ironic to an audience who remembered Caesar's arrogance after his proconsulship in Gaul?⁸⁶ Perhaps criticism of Caesar's character is implied in Sallust's comment that Cato 'preferred to be, rather than merely to seem, virtuous' (*esse quam videri bonus malebat*, 54.6). Myles McDonnell identifies several signs of Sallust's disillusionment with Caesar, including the

⁸³ The term *clementia* is notably absent, perhaps since it has connotations of a superior showing mercy to an inferior in war. See further Ramsey (2007) 215.

⁸⁴ Ramsey (2007) 215 draws a parallel with Catiline's self-presentation at 35.3 where he describes in a letter to Quintus Catulus how he 'took up the general cause of the unfortunate'. See below regarding negative interpretations of Caesar's characterisations. Suetonius would later describe how anyone in legal difficulties or in debt flocked to Caesar (*Iul.* 27.2).

⁸⁵ Meier (1995) 175.

⁸⁶ Toher (2009) 226.

attribution of *munificentia* (54.2) – ‘a Sallustian word decidedly negative in connotation’.⁸⁷ He also draws our attention to parallels in Caesar’s characterisation with previous depictions of Catiline, including by Sallust himself.⁸⁸ William Batstone suggests that difficulties in ascertaining the tenor of Sallust’s representation of Caesar and Cato stem from an effort to read the passage as a comparison of characteristics that are mutually exclusive.⁸⁹ Rather, he suggests that the very fragmentations and uncertainties that derive from our readings provide an invitation to the reader to experience for themselves the nature of conflict: ‘the formal and logical problems of the *synkrisis* itself become an image or emblem of this crisis in the late Republic’.⁹⁰ The failure of modern scholarship to unpick Sallust’s illustration of Caesar is testament to the fact that it is ‘pervaded by doubts and ambiguity’, as Ronald Syme asserted over fifty years ago.⁹¹ Most interesting for this thesis is the idea that ambiguous representations of Caesar could be produced during this time. On the one hand, along with Cato he is praised as one of only two men in Sallust’s memory who exhibited great virtue (53.6). Yet on the other hand, praising Cato’s lack of corruption opens the door to questions about Caesarian bribery and dishonesty. Sallust’s portrayal of Caesar is thus neither wholly positive nor wholly negative. It also introduces into the literary canon Cato’s role as a counterpoint to Caesar, and it will be interesting to see as we progress chronologically the ways in which their qualities and virtues continue to be contrasted.

Also written in the aftermath of Caesar’s assassination, a period of great political turmoil, were Virgil’s *Eclogues*. A collection of ten poems set in a pastoral and highly fictive world, the *Eclogues* have been described as a ‘key text for the study of memory’,⁹² not least because the herdsmen in the poems rely on memory for their recollection of songs.⁹³ *Eclogue* 9, a dialogue between Lycidas and Moeris who discuss recent changes in their community, features an explicit mention of the *Caesaris astrum*. Lycidas remembers one of Moeris’ songs regarding the appearance of Caesar’s comet (*ecce Dionaei processit Caesaris astrum, Ecl. 9.47*), the reference to Dione (Venus’ mother) reminding the reader of the divine lineage of the *gens Iulia*. The song recalled by Lycidas describes Caesar’s comet

⁸⁷ McDonnell (2006) 380. Toher (2009) 226 sees in the reference to *munificentia* a pointed contrasted with ‘the murder and rapacity of the recent proscriptions instituted by those wishing to inherit Caesar’s mantle’.

⁸⁸ For references and bibliography see McDonnell (2006) 381 n144. See also n2 above.

⁸⁹ Batstone (1988) 1.

⁹⁰ Batstone (1988) 2.

⁹¹ Syme (1964) 117.

⁹² Meban (2009) 99.

⁹³ On the importance of memory in bucolic poetry, Meban (2009) 99 n1 directs us to Putnam (1970) 314.

bringing fertility to crops for generations to come: wheat grows in the fields, grapes deepen their colour and fruits planted now will continue to be harvested by their descendants (*Ecl.* 9.48-50). In addition, as noted above, there is arguably an allusion to Caesar's death and apotheosis in *Eclogue* 5 when the death of the shepherd Daphnis is lamented by Mopsus and Menalcas in terms which have been reminding readers of Caesar's death for centuries (and which was first noted by Servius). Daphnis' mourning mother has been said to represent Caesar's divine mother, Venus; the reference to Carthage to evoke Caesar's restoration of that city; the image of the tomb to call to mind Caesar's monument in the Forum.⁹⁴ Daphnis is exalted *ad astra* (*Ecl.* 5.52), his new place in the heavens and the ensuing golden age described by Menalcas at lines 56 to 80. This passage is used by Edward Zarrow to illustrate 'how ancient authors could direct their audiences to consider shared memories and historical circumstance even while avoiding specific references to persons or events'.⁹⁵ Indeed Robert Coleman asserted in his commentary on this *Eclogue* that 'it is incredible that anyone in the late 40s could have read a pastoral poem on this theme without thinking of Caesar'.⁹⁶ Thus once again we see a text becoming about Caesar when it is not overtly so.

Virgil explicitly mentions Caesar in the *Georgics*, a didactic poem written in the 30s and 20s (a period of ongoing civil strife) which ostensibly deals with the topic of agriculture but which also has a strong political dimension.⁹⁷ In book 1 Virgil depicts the Sun veiling his face in distress at Caesar's death and a host of portents heralding disaster (*Georg.* 1.466-492). The passage culminates in the gruesome imagery of Philippi, twice the location of civil war, with farmers digging up rusty weapons and human remains in the years to come (*Georg.* 1.489-497). Similarly Tibullus 2.5, which draws heavily on Virgil's first *Georgic*, evokes the portents that followed Caesar's assassination (including the darkening of the Sun) but without naming Caesar. In Tibullus, consultation of certain Sybilline verses reveals that a comet foretells bad portents and civil war (2.5.71). This reminds us that the appearance of a comet could be understood in more than one way.⁹⁸ Even seemingly straightforward references to the *sidus Iulium* cause debate. Horace, for example, praises a host of figures (divine, mythical and historical) culminating in Augustus: 'among them all

⁹⁴ Leach (1974) 188.

⁹⁵ Zarrow (2007) 62.

⁹⁶ Coleman (1977) 173.

⁹⁷ See Miles (1980) 1-63.

⁹⁸ That a comet was traditionally interpreted as a negative sign is seen in a host of sources. See, for example, Pliny *NH* 2.91-2 and Seneca *QNat.* 7.1.5. See also Zarrow (2007) 59: 'Even if the comet portended Caesar's newfound divinity, it also portended the horror of civil conflict which Romans would have to endure before any ancient prophecy of Rome's destiny to rule could come to pass'.

the Julian star shines out like the moon among the lesser lights' (*Carm.* 1.12.46-48). Ronald Syme asserted that Caesar had now been conveniently metamorphosed into a comet.⁹⁹ Peter White countered this by pointing out that Caesar – or rather his *sidus* – does not appear among the gods but among the 'earthly strivers':¹⁰⁰ it is his achievements while alive that are being praised. The star 'epitomizes Caesar's career; it does not expunge or supersede it, any more than "the noble death of Cato" excludes the life preceding it'.¹⁰¹ Despite this reading, White readily agreed that Horace may still have borne hostility towards the memory of Caesar. (He had, after all, fought on the side of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi almost twenty years before.) Yet White maintained that in alluding to Caesar's earthly achievements and referring to his divinity, Horace conveys a compliment to Caesar 'grudgingly or not'.¹⁰² Thus references in literature to comets and the *sidus Iulium*, in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination, are often difficult to unpick. Augustus, of course, harnessed the comet as an entirely positive symbol of Caesar's deification.

The points at which Caesar appears in Virgil's *Aeneid* are also not clear-cut. The epic's opening book features an ambiguous reference which could refer to Julius Caesar or Augustus. In his prophecy Jupiter tells Venus that 'from this noble line shall be born the Trojan Caesar, who shall extend his empire to the ocean, his glory to the stars, a Julius' (1.286-288). Engaging heavily with Robert Dobbin's 1995 article ('Julius Caesar in Jupiter's Prophecy'), Zarrow argued for the identification of Julius Caesar and not Augustus, basing his case on three points.¹⁰³ Firstly, nowhere in extant Augustan poetry or prose does *Iulius* refer to Augustus; it only ever denotes Julius Caesar. Secondly, at line 289 *Iulius* is described as 'laden with Eastern spoils'. Could this really refer to Augustus' Parthian victory when news of the victory reached Rome only a few months before Virgil's death ('it makes sense that Virgil composed at least a draft of the first book of the *Aeneid* before 19 BCE... any allusion to the Parthians in the *Aeneid* may have been decidedly premature').¹⁰⁴ Instead, the reference to 'Eastern spoils' could apply to Caesar's victory at Zela in 47 BC. Thirdly, argued Zarrow, the part of the prophecy that looks to a golden age after the apotheosis of *Iulius* (1.289-290) makes more sense if we understand *Iulius* to be Julius Caesar and not Augustus (as the golden age would correspond to Augustus' rule and not the aftermath of his death). Zarrow followed this with a look ahead to Lucan and the trace of Jupiter's

⁹⁹ Syme (1939) 318.

¹⁰⁰ White (1988) 352.

¹⁰¹ White (1988) 353.

¹⁰² White (1988) 353.

¹⁰³ Zarrow (2007) 62-71.

¹⁰⁴ Zarrow (2007) 69.

prophecy that is found in book 1 of the *Pharsalia*, in order to show how an ancient reader might have understood the Virgil passage to pertain to Julius Caesar. Looking at thematic and textual echoes, Zarrow suggested that the formula used by Virgil (the death of Julius Caesar prefiguring a happier / golden age) is mirrored in Lucan (the death of Nero prefiguring a happier / golden age): ‘Thus, in his capacity as Nero’s personal *vates*, Lucan offers a prophecy in which Nero’s apotheosis and prerequisite death inaugurate an age of peace’.¹⁰⁵ Understandably, because his remit is the period between 44 BC and AD 14, Zarrow did not look at what this echo (or the *Pharsalia* as a whole) might suggest about Julius Caesar’s reception in the 60s. Rather, he used it to bolster his claims about Caesar’s presence in Virgil’s *Aeneid*.

Another passage that has received much scholarly attention is Virgil’s depiction of the shades of Caesar and Pompey in the Underworld (6.826-835). Peter White, for example, proposed that the civil war between Caesar and Pompey (who are only referred to by their familial relationship through Pompey’s marriage to Julia: *socer* and *gener*) here represents civil war generally and ‘the climactic manifestation of a destructive tendency’.¹⁰⁶ He pointed out that that the details that Virgil focuses on – ‘the marital tie, the alliance that ended in rivalry, and especially the clash of East and West’ – easily map on to the later contest between Octavian and Antony.¹⁰⁷ Lastly, he opened up his discussion to include Virgil’s treatment of Caesar elsewhere in the corpus, directing us back to *Eclogue* 9 in particular (where the *Caesaris astrum* brings fertility to crops for generations to come, *Ecl.* 9. 46-50). White thus advised against reading the *Aeneid* 6 passage as thoroughly anti-Caesarian given that such a reading would go against the ‘fundamentally sympathetic view of Caesar’ seen in Virgil’s earlier works.¹⁰⁸ We do not see Caesar in the roll call of Roman heroes in book 6 of the *Aeneid* (though he is present in the reference to Augustus as *divi genus*, 6.792) or on Aeneas’ shield in book 8 (though he is evoked via the reference to his comet: *patrium sidus*, 8.681). Thus where he is and is not incorporated into Virgil’s *Aeneid* can be hard to ascertain, let alone the tenor of the references or allusions. Just as we saw with Sallust, ambiguity appears to characterise Virgil’s representations of Caesar, particularly when it comes to the *Aeneid*.

There is no room for ambiguity in the depiction of Caesar by Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian whose *Bibliothēke* (‘Library of History’) was written between 60 and 30

¹⁰⁵ Zarrow (2007) 73-74.

¹⁰⁶ White (1988) 350.

¹⁰⁷ White (1988) 350.

¹⁰⁸ White (1988) 351.

BC.¹⁰⁹ It was a vast text stretching from mythic history all the way up to 60 BC across forty books, many of which are no longer extant. It is therefore a different sort of historiography from that of Sallust whose *Bellum Catilinae* concerned only the conspiracy of 63 BC. Diodorus seems to admire Caesar greatly. In conquering Britain, for example, Caesar surpassed Dionysus, Heracles and all other heroes and leaders who did not campaign there (5.21.2).¹¹⁰ When relating the destruction of Corinth in 146 BC, Diodorus describes how Caesar rebuilt the city nearly a hundred years later, moved by compassion and acting with great energy (32.27.3). Diodorus uses the restoration of Corinth to expand on Caesar's personal qualities: he cites Caesar's rhetorical ability, his military leadership and his indifference to money, before concluding that 'in the magnitude of his deeds he surpassed all earlier Romans' (32.27.3). Diodorus is unmistakable in his praise for Caesar. It is thus particularly intriguing that Diodorus appears to have altered the end point of his history during the course of its composition, meaning that Caesar's career after 60 BC is not incorporated into the work. In his introduction Diodorus states that he will end with the year 46 BC but in fact ends with the year 60 BC (1.5.1-1.4.7). Scholars have speculated that recent history might have proved too controversial to be detailed with frankness. Kenneth Sacks posits that 'contemporary forces' may have influenced Diodorus' composition: Caesar's divinity, for example, was being questioned by some (including the philosopher Philodemus) and exploited by others (namely Octavian, towards whom Diodorus may have felt hostile following the destruction and disenfranchisement of Sicily, Diodorus' homeland).¹¹¹ In addition, as far as we know, Diodorus was not well-connected socially, perhaps contributing to the change in the *Bibliothèque's* end-date:

It is possible that as the Triumviral era unfolded and Diodorus composed his history at Rome, the idea of providing an account of Caesar's accomplishments and generosity became daunting for a Greek émigré who lacked the protection and prestige of a senatorial network and career.¹¹²

Of course, we can never be certain about the reasons for the end-date of Diodorus' *Bibliothèque*. But it seems reasonable to speculate that general praise of Caesar's character (in particular his generosity and military prowess) may have gone alongside a sense of

¹⁰⁹ Passage 1.44.1-4 shows that Diodorus had started his work by 56 BC (he discusses the number of years that Egypt was under the control of foreigners). Passage 16.7.1 is the last datable reference (Tauromenium in Sicily receiving a Roman colony) which took place in 36 BC or soon after.

¹¹⁰ See Sacks (1999) 74.

¹¹¹ Sacks (1999) 183-4. On Diodorus' hostility towards Octavian / Augustus and the *Bellum Siculum*, see in particular p. 191-203.

¹¹² Toher (2009) 227, following Sacks (1999) 169-191.

unease when it came to certain details of his political life, including the topics of civil war and assassination.

We know from Horace's ode to Pollio, who had just written a new history, that civil war was considered a controversial and potentially dangerous choice of topic. In *Carm.* 2.1, writing about the civil wars is described as 'a dangerous gamble at every point; you walk over fires still burning beneath the treacherous ash' (*periculosae plenum opus aleae tractas et incedis per ignis suppositos cineri doloso*, 2.1.6-8). Pollio wrote his history soon after the Battle of Actium (where he had declared himself neutral). The text, now lost, covered the years 60 BC to probably 42 BC. In correspondence with Cicero in 43 BC Pollio declared that he had been wholly devoted to Caesar: 'As for Caesar, I loved him in all duty and loyalty, because in his greatness he treated me, a recent acquaintance, as though I had been one of his oldest intimates' (*Ad. Fam.* 10.31.3). He had served under Caesar in Gaul and fought for him at Pharsalus. Given his self-proclaimed devotion and the years that the *Historiae* covered (60 BC to 42 BC), it seems more than likely that Caesar would have had a prominent part in Pollio's lost *Historiae*.

It seems that Pollio's feelings about Caesar were not always wholly positive. Different Caesarian elements appear to have elicited different opinions. For example, Pollio is said by Suetonius to have been critical of Caesar's commentaries: 'Asinius Pollio thinks that they were put together somewhat carelessly and without strict regard for the truth' (*Pollio Asinius parum diligenter parumque integra veritate compositos putat*, Suet. *Iul.* 56). Edward Zarrow rightly points out that 'Pollio's suggestion that Caesar provided false military accounts, whether by design (*consulto*) or not, would have been a dangerous affair if there were truly no free speech under the early Principate'.¹¹³ To comment negatively about Caesar at this time appears to have been tolerated. In the same letter in which he proclaims his devotion to Caesar, Pollio states his hostility to anyone who becomes sole ruler of Rome (*Ad Fam.* 10.31.3). He also likens Balbus' unconstitutional behaviour to Caesar's conduct at Rome (*Ad Fam.* 10.32.1-2). So hostile are some of Pollio's sentiments regarding Caesar that many scholars have read Pollio's rebuking of Caesar as evidence of his part in the Augustan opposition.¹¹⁴ In Tacitus' *Annals*, the character of Cremutius Cordus relates that Pollio provided an 'exceptional memorial' of the assassins in his work (*egregia memoria*, Tac. *Ann.* 4.34.4). Finally, Suetonius tells us that Pollio ascribed the following words to Caesar: 'I, Gaius Caesar... should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my

¹¹³ Zarrow (2007) 87.

¹¹⁴ Zarrow (2007) 86 directs us to Syme (1939) 482-486 and (1958) 136-138, and Gabba (1956) 79, 229.

army for help' (*Gaius Caesar condemnatus essem, nisi ab exercitu auxilium petissem*, Suet. *Jul.* 30.4), implying that Pollio had viewed Caesar's invasion of Italy as entirely for the purpose of avoiding prosecution.¹¹⁵

While we cannot know what Pollio wrote in his *Historiae*, these snapshots suggest a most varied portrait, pointing to a degree of freedom when it came to how Caesar could be written about at this time. It appears that he was already a fragmented and complex figure; attitudes and assessments about him were by no means uniform. Devotion and criticism were not mutually exclusive, nor it seems was praise of Caesar and praise of his assassins. Crucially, criticism of his extra-constitutional behaviour, his commentaries and his motivation for civil war *could* be transmitted under Augustus. That Pollio's career and historical account were familiar to (and perhaps had an influence on) later historians is without question. Velleius Paterculus, for example, was aware of Pollio and his role in the civil wars, describing him as the only neutral party at Actium, even quoting him at *Hist.* 2.86 ('*ero praeda victoris*').

The treatment of Caesar's life and career by Livy was considerable, taking up most of fourteen books now lost (books 103-116). It is generally held that Livy began writing his history of Rome in the 20s, encompassing Roman history from the time of Aeneas up to Augustus' principate.¹¹⁶ Can we ascertain anything at all about Livy's treatment of Caesar? According to the younger Seneca, Livy reported that people had wondered whether it would have been better if Caesar had never been born:

Nunc, quod de Caesare maiori vulgo dictatum est et a Tito Livio positum, in incerto esse, utrum illum magis nasci an non nasci reipublicae profuerit, dici etiam de ventis potest.

It could be said of winds what was commonly said of Julius Caesar, as reported by Titus Livy; it is uncertain whether it was better for the state that Caesar had been born or not.¹¹⁷

Seneca, *Questiones Naturales* 5.18.4

¹¹⁵ Zarrow (2007) 89.

¹¹⁶ With regard to the end-point of Livy's narrative, the last known book, book 142, includes the death of Drusus in 9 BC, though later books may have existed in which Livy took his narrative up to Augustus' death in AD 14. See Le Bohec (2015) 123.

¹¹⁷ The text of Seneca's *Questiones Naturales* is that of A. Gercke in the Teubner edition of 1907. Translations, as noted above, are by Corcoran (1972).

This passage is unable to tell us much (if anything) about how Livy viewed Caesar, not least given the fact that Livy is apparently only reporting what other people have frequently said. Peter White points out that the overall tenor of the passage is not necessarily critical ('Seneca's point about the wind is that it is a blessing in itself, and brings harm only because it is exploited for bad ends').¹¹⁸ He adds that Livy's comment may well have followed a description of Caesar's death, in which case it is entirely in keeping with the sort of anecdotes that close such a passage, usually both positive and negative. Thus, concludes White, it is impossible to deduce Livy's judgement on Caesar from the younger Seneca's remarks. Mark Toher asserts that it only shows that Livy could ask quite a reasonable question.¹¹⁹ Crucially, the original manuscript may not have pertained to Caesar at all, but Marius instead, making it irrelevant to our investigation into attitudes towards Caesar.¹²⁰

The other passage which might have a bearing on our interpretation of Livy's portrayal of Caesar appears in Tacitus' *Annals*. Cremutius Cordus, defending his commemoration of Brutus and Cassius, explains that their *res gestae* have been described as honourable by numerous writers before him (*nemo sine honore memoravit*, *Ann.* 4.34.3). Before the character of Cremutius Cordus refers to Pollio (see above), he discusses Livy:

Titius Livius, eloquentiae ac fidei praeclarus in primis, Cn. Pompeium tantis laudibus tulit, ut Pompeianum eum Augustus appellaret; neque id amicitiae eorum offecit. Scipionem, Afranium, hunc ipsum Cassium, hunc Brutum nusquam latrones et parricidas, quae nunc vocabula inponuntur, saepe ut insignis viros nominat.

Titus Livius, quite brilliant as he is for eloquence and credibility, first of all elevated Cn. Pompeius with such praises that Augustus called him 'a Pompeian'; and that was no obstacle to their friendship. Scipio, Afranius, this very Cassius himself, this very Brutus – nowhere did he name them as 'bandits' and 'parricides' (the designations which are now imposed) but often as distinguished men.¹²¹

Tacitus, *Annals* 4.34.3

¹¹⁸ White (1988) 343.

¹¹⁹ Toher (2009) 233.

¹²⁰ Canfora (2007) 344-348 argues that Seneca's use of Livy definitely points to Caesar and not Marius, and that this introduced a new angle into ways of thinking about Caesar. His association with natural phenomena is later mirrored in Lucan's thunderbolt simile (discussed below). See also Walde (2006) 51 and Williams (2005) 441-442.

¹²¹ The text of Tacitus' *Annals* is the Oxford Classical Text of C. D. Fisher (1906). Translations, as noted above, are by A. J. Woodman (2004).

According to this passage, Livy was able to compliment Caesar's opponents. Perhaps the phrase 'a Pompeian' suggests that his account of the civil wars favoured Pompey's cause over Caesar's.¹²² Livy could even compliment Caesar's assassins: Brutus and Cassius could be memorialised as men of distinction. (Velleius Paterculus, on the other hand, writing under Tiberius, would stress that the conspirators' virtues were undone by the assassination, 2.72.1-2).¹²³ The terminology surrounding Caesar's assassination has changed; the 'current' (Tiberian) trend is for derogatory and emotive terms like *latrones* and *parricidae*. The use of the passive *inponuntur* implies that this fashion is enforced rather than organic. Of course, Tacitus may also be using Livy to set the freedom of speech from the past against the restraints of his own time. Nonetheless, Tacitus suggests that in the four or five decades that had elapsed between the writings of Livy and Cremutius Cordus, ways of describing Caesar's assassination had changed.

Livy's views on Caesar are impossible to discern from these passages, and yet they have both been used to suggest that Livy's presentation of Caesar was antagonistic.¹²⁴ At best they provide an insight into how unstraightforward Livy's presentation of Caesar was. Allusive (and not just explicit) references to Caesar can also be intriguing. It has been noted, for example, that Livy's account of Rome's ancient kings in book 1 begins and ends with evocations of Caesar.¹²⁵ Broader questions come out of the Cremutius Cordus reference to Livy's text regarding the changing ways in which Caesar and his opponents could be memorialised. This of course relates to a theme running throughout Tacitus' *Annals*: the theme of freedom of speech.

Augustus' own autobiography may have influenced later portrayals of Caesar but this text is no longer extant.¹²⁶ Had the memoirs survived we would have an infinitely better understanding of how Augustus presented his relationship with his adoptive father. It was written in thirteen books and gives an account of Augustus' life up to the Cantabrian War (Suet. *Aug.* 85.1).¹²⁷ The only direct quotation is preserved by Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*. Pliny writes that Rome is the only place in the world where a comet is worshipped, having appeared shortly after Caesar's death during the *Ludi Victoriae Caesaris*. He then quotes Augustus directly, describing the time, place and appearance of the comet, before reaching its symbolic significance: 'The common people believed that the

¹²² Yes, according to Strasburger (1983) 268-269 and Donié (1996) 48-49. See Toher (2009) 232.

¹²³ See Shotter (1989) 165.

¹²⁴ See Toher (2009) 232 who notes, for example, certain scholars' 'imaginative use' of the summaries of lost books.

¹²⁵ Smith (2006) 418.

¹²⁶ On the genre of these memoirs, see Pelling (2009a).

¹²⁷ The Cantabrian War lasted from 29 to 19 BC.

star signified the soul of Caesar received among the spirits of the immortal gods' (NH 2.94). Pliny's Augustus emphasises that Caesar's apotheosis was the will of the gods, and interpreted as such by the *vulgus*. Contemporary iconography advertised Caesar's newfound divinity and his paternity of Octavian / Augustus, the *divi filius*. It is not surprising that Augustus' autobiography should provide a positive representation of Julius Caesar and one which highlights his divinity and paternity since these were crucial aspects of Octavian / Augustus' self-representation at this time.

The most extensive Augustan characterisation of Caesar that survives comes from the *Bios Kaisaros* ('Life of Augustus') of Nicolaus of Damascus, a Greek historian and philosopher born in the 60s BC. Holding a senior position in the court of Herod the Great, Nicolaus was well-informed about many of the events that he wrote about, and as envoy to Rome he developed a personal relationship with Augustus.¹²⁸ Thus he was familiar with events at Rome but also somewhat removed from them.¹²⁹ While much of the work is lost (making it difficult to speculate about its overall form, purpose or date of composition),¹³⁰ a substantial section on Caesar and his assassination remains intact. It has been suggested that Nicolaus' knowledge about power struggles and conspiracy in Herod's court may have contributed to his interest in the complexities surrounding the conspiracy that killed Caesar.¹³¹ Caesar's fatherly affection for Octavian-Augustus also features heavily. Even before his adoption, according to Nicolaus, Octavian had been like a son to Caesar 'owing to their close kinship by nature' (17). At one point Caesar is so consumed with worry when he is told that Octavian has become dangerously ill that he jumps up from his meal and runs barefoot to be by Octavian's bedside (20). Nicolaus' Caesar is thus a very human figure whose paternal love for Octavian is one of his defining characteristics.

Nicolaus provides just one reason for why Caesar fell victim to the conspiracy: his inexperience in political cunning which was due to his foreign military campaigns (67). It has been suggested that this characterisation is demeaning to Caesar and part of a wider programme of denigration of Caesar's memory that took place under Augustus.¹³² Mark Toher counters such a claim with the suggestion that Caesar's political naivety serves as a lesson to Octavian who later faces a potentially similar conspiracy at the hands of Antony. Alert to the danger (unlike his father), Octavian decides to retreat to Caesar's colonies: 'He

¹²⁸ For the anecdote that Augustus named some cakes that Nicolaus had given him after Nicolaus himself, see Photius *Bibl.* 189. Athenaeus 14.652 and Plutarch *Sympos.* 824 state that the gift was of dates rather than cakes.

¹²⁹ Toher (2006) 32 attributes to Nicolaus' account 'the perspective of an "outsider"'.

¹³⁰ See Toher (2009) 234 and (2017) 22-28.

¹³¹ Toher (2006) 32.

¹³² Toher (2009) 234 directs us to Doni  (1996) 61-62, 68.

considered this to be much better and more just than to be thrust aside from the position he had inherited from his father by outsiders who had no appropriate claim to it, and then also to be killed violently and unjustly in the manner of his father' (131). Thus perhaps the flaw in Caesar's (very human) character simply serves the purpose of emphasising the political astuteness of (the heroic) Octavian.¹³³ The closeness between Octavian / Augustus and his adoptive father rules out an overtly negative portrayal of Caesar: Caesar is an important part of his heir's rise to power. Even when Octavian withdraws to Caesar's colonies, Nicolaus points out that Octavian's presence would remind the people of Caesar's beneficence to this area (131).

Nicolaus presents the motives of Caesar's conspirators as diverse: some had hopes of becoming leaders in his place; some resented the losses they had suffered in war; some disagreed with one man holding such great power; some begrudged being saved by him; some had not been given a share of the glory that they had helped Caesar attain; some thought he was becoming obnoxious and arrogant with all his success (60-65). Interestingly, Brutus is praised on more than one occasion. He convinces his fellow conspirators, caught up in the tumult and keen to kill others who might oppose them, that it is not right to kill for the sake of vague suspicion (93). Later, Nicolaus tells us that Brutus 'was honoured throughout his life for his restraint, the glory of his ancestors and his reputation for fairness was honoured throughout his whole life because of his discretion, his fairness, and the renown of his ancestors' (100).

Nicolaus' thus provides a fascinating portrait of Caesar in his *Bios Kaisaros*, a text written 'before time and perspective created the heroic and tragic figure that emerges from the biographical tradition at the beginning of the second century'.¹³⁴ He depicts a very human Caesar who is a devoted father, an uncalculating (even naïve) politician and a successful general. His account proves that Brutus' positive qualities could be included, the assassins' numerous motives could be discussed in detail, and the topic of Caesar's divinity did not need to be incorporated.

One final text which must be mentioned here is Augustus' *Res Gestae*. Inscribed at the entrance to Augustus' mausoleum after his death, its literary genre has long perplexed scholars.¹³⁵ Caesar is not named in this complex piece of propaganda, but he is alluded to on certain occasions. At the start, for example, Augustus relates how he drove into exile

¹³³ Toher (2009) 234.

¹³⁴ Toher (2006) 31-32.

¹³⁵ See Ramage (1987) and Bosworth (1999).

those who killed *parentem meum*, 'exacting retribution for their crime' (*RG* 2.1).¹³⁶

Augustus thus presents his avenging of Caesar's assassination as a primary illustration of his constitutional authority.¹³⁷ Caesar as father is also mentioned later with regard to his will (*RG* 15.1). Here, Augustus highlights his own generosity, describing all the money and food he gave to the Roman plebs over the course of his career. The very first example, the gift of three hundred sesterces per man, was given 'in accordance with my father's will' (*ex testamento patris mei*). Augustus' choice to open this section in such a way has the effect of tying his own generosity to Caesar's example.

Some scholars have seen in the *Res Gestae* an attempt to suppress or malign the memory of Julius Caesar. Edwin Ramage, for example, reads the rejection of a dictatorship as a tacit dig at Caesar, so too the regular emphasis on justice, legality and legitimacy.¹³⁸ He notes that when Caesar is mentioned in the *Res Gestae*, it is in fact Augustus' achievements that are being described and that no achievement of Caesar's is ever included for its own sake.¹³⁹ That this points to an attempt on Augustus' part to denigrate Caesar's memory is later dismissed by Peter White and others due to the very nature of the document, its function being solely to advertise Augustus' own achievements. Other key figures such as Agrippa and Tiberius also receive very few mentions and certainly no advertisement of their individual achievements.¹⁴⁰ What Augustus' *Res Gestae* confirms (as do his memoirs, as far as we can tell) is that Augustus presented the avenging of Caesar's death, the ratification of Caesar's will and the phenomenon of Caesar's apotheosis as significant features of his early career.

The passages discussed above provide an overview of the diverse ways of writing about Julius Caesar under or just after Octavian / Augustus – an important starting point for this thesis since this rich and varied tapestry of material was what was available to (and what provided a springboard / foundation for) authors from the Tiberian period and beyond who chose to depict the figure of Caesar in their texts. Firstly, it is immediately obvious that Caesar per se was not a taboo subject: several lengthy treatments existed, including the fourteen now lost books of Livy's history. The multi-dimensional nature of his character is also clear. Criticism could be implied, as we saw with Sallust's references to Cato's (and not Caesar's) lack of corruption as well as Pollio's suggestion that Caesar's

¹³⁶ The text and translation of Augustus' *Res Gestae* are that of A. E. Cooley (2009) unless otherwise stated.

¹³⁷ Zarrow (2007) 92.

¹³⁸ Ramage (1985) 226.

¹³⁹ Ramage (1985) 230.

¹⁴⁰ White (1988) 341.

commentaries cared little for the truth. His adversaries – even assassins – could be praised, as we saw in Nicolaus (where Brutus’ discretion and fairness are applauded) and Livy (who, according to Tacitus’ Cremutius Cordus, regularly called Brutus and Cassius *insignis viros* in his writings). Elsewhere – sometimes in the very same text – Caesar is unambiguously praised. Nicolaus’ Caesar is a caring father to Octavian whose only crime was to possess a trusting disposition. For Diodorus he is the most admired of all contemporary figures, his depiction of Caesar sharing with Sallust’s the qualities of generosity and compassion. Sometimes his divinity is brought to the fore (as we saw in Diodorus); sometimes very human characteristics are emphasised (as we saw in Nicolaus). His divinity did not need to be incorporated into literary texts, even though this was a vital part of how Caesar’s memory was being cultivated by Augustus, the self-styled *divi filius*. In sum, there was no consistent way by which to represent Caesar.

Certain difficulties regarding Caesar’s memorialisation were already apparent, however. Even allusions to the *sidus Iulium* were not always straightforward. The controversial nature of Caesar’s career post-60 BC may have contributed to Diodorus’ decision to end his history with that year (rather than 46 BC). In particular, writing about civil war – a crucial dimension to Caesar’s rise and ultimate fall – was ‘a dangerous gamble’, according to Horace. Nonetheless, Caesar did continue to be associated with the topic of civil war: as we have seen, while the most common themes when Caesar is mentioned in Augustan verse are his divinity and his relationship to Augustus, the next most common theme is civil war.

Finally, examination of the Tacitus passage suggested that between the eras of Livy (writing under Augustus) and Cremutius Cordus (writing under Tiberius) the terminology by which Caesar’s assassination could be communicated had changed. Of course, Tacitus was writing with the benefit of hindsight and viewed the dawn of Tiberius’ reign as a brand new era, choosing this as the starting point for his *Annals*. Nonetheless the idea that ways of writing about Caesar were fluid / adaptable is important for this study. As we turn to our first text, Velleius Paterculus’ *Historia*, it is important to remember that what counts as a ‘fashionable’ or perhaps even just ‘acceptable’ term could change from one reign to the next, just as it could change from one genre to the next.

TIBERIUS:

Velleius Paterculus' presentation of Caesar's place in history

This chapter uses the *Historia* of Velleius Paterculus to explore Caesar's literary reception during the reign of Tiberius, and it examines how Caesar's textual representation relates to the many other ways in which he was being remembered. My concern here is to explore how the disparate aspects of Caesar's life are treated by Velleius, the only contemporary historian of Tiberius whose work survives, and how Velleius' treatment relates to other representations from Tiberius' principate. Caesar was important for Tiberius' legitimacy (the divine forefather of the regime) but he was also dangerous (the assassinated tyrant who had aspired to be king). The difficulties of claiming to be a relation of Caesar are neatly illustrated by the events surrounding the funeral of Augustus in AD 14. On the one hand, Tiberius delivered his eulogy from Caesar's temple, the *Aedes Divi Iulii* (Suet. *Aug.* 100.3); on the other hand, Tiberius urged the people of Rome not to repeat the fervent behaviour that had disrupted the funeral of *Divus Iulius* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.8.5). Under Tiberius, Caesar appeared in inscriptions that honoured members of the imperial family, was memorialised in the *fasti* and evoked in coinage. There is a host of material evidence available, such as plaques that describe Tiberius' sons as 'great-grandsons of *Divus Iulius*' and coins that depict the *sidus Iulium*, illustrating the advantages and dangers of remembering Caesar at this crucial juncture in Roman history – evidence which provides a framework for a better understanding of Velleius' literary representation of Caesar.

In the *Historia* Velleius tells us that he experienced and participated in elite Roman life under both Augustus and Tiberius. In AD 4, for example, Velleius went to Germania to serve as *praefectus equitum* under Tiberius (which he relates at 2.104.3) and in AD 13 he and his brother took part in Tiberius' triumph (2.121.3). In AD 15 he and his brother were elected to the praetorship, their candidacy put forward by Augustus before his death the previous year, and approved by Tiberius on his accession (2.124.3). This is not to say that Velleius' work was entirely shaped by Tiberius' administration, as if his literary representations were manifestations of the emperor's thoughts. Of course, Velleius would have been influenced by previous literary texts (we see nods to Cicero, Sallust, even Caesar

himself) as well as his own experiences, given that he was close to, at times part of, the events that he narrated. What this means for research into literary representations of Caesar is that almost two thousand years on we can tease apart the different strands of Caesar's legacy – his place within the family line, his military accomplishments, the crossing of the Rubicon, the horrors of the civil war, his triumphal return to Rome and the circumstances surrounding his assassination – as they were recounted among the Roman nobility of AD 30, when all these aspects of Caesar still had a fundamental political importance.

The only other literary representation of Caesar from the reign of Tiberius appears in Valerius Maximus' *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*. Written at roughly the same time as Velleius' *Historia* (the early 30s), this is a collection of almost a thousand *exempla*, morally edifying tales, which are presented under a variety of topic-headings across nine books.¹ Valerius Maximus was not a member of Rome's elite. Described by one scholar as 'just an ordinary Roman who belongs to the mainstream of ancient Rome and enables us to enter it'², he provides an interesting counterpoint to Velleius, the soldier and senator. However, nearly all the stories that Valerius Maximus incorporates come from the Republican era. We do not see the same forward momentum that we see in Velleius, who continually reminds us of the present (discussed below). It is Velleius' *Historia* that offers a unique glimpse into how Caesar could be shown to fit into the arc of Roman history under Tiberius, and we can compare the ways in which the Tiberian regime itself utilised Caesar in its narrative of the past and the construction of the emperor's identity. We will see, for example, that Velleius provides a strong sense of continuity between Caesar, Augustus and Tiberius. We will compare this with the (sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit) link back to Caesar (via Augustus) that we see in some of the external evidence from Tiberius' reign.

In order to illuminate Velleius' approach through parallels or contrasts, on certain occasions it will be beneficial to bring Valerius Maximus into the discussion. Both texts illustrate that Caesar was important, both in terms of their narrative and his wider role in Rome's cultural memory during the period in which those narratives were produced. Caesar has a central role to play in Velleius' presentation of Rome's history, and his words and deeds are frequently held up as examples to follow in Valerius Maximus' collection of anecdotes. In Velleius, the character of Caesar famously 'grabs' the author's pen, forcing Velleius to linger upon Caesar for longer than the author's intended *brevitas* would

¹ An exact date of composition remains uncertain but the frequent references to Tiberius as the living emperor make it clear that it was written during Tiberius' reign. See Wardle (1998) 1-6. On the subject, form, purpose and intended audience, see Skidmore (1996).

² Walker (2004) xviii.

otherwise allow (2.41.1). In Valerius Maximus, Caesar is referred to in the preface and subsequently mentioned over thirty times (this is considerably more frequently than Octavian / Augustus or Tiberius, unsurprising given the author's preference for the Republic), and Caesar regularly serves as a chapter's climactic exemplar.³ Caesar's divinity and his relationships with Pompey and Cato are the main areas where Valerius Maximus provides an interesting counterpoint to Velleius Paterculus. The subject of civil war and the characterisation of Brutus and Cassius will also be brought into sharper focus through comparison with Valerius Maximus.

I will begin by providing relevant background information regarding Velleius' work: the date of composition, the state of the text, the subject matter, structure, genre and narrative style. This will enrich our appreciation of the place that Caesar has in Velleius' text. I will then explore the external (i.e. non-literary) evidence for Caesar's place in Rome's cultural memory, encompassing epigraphic, monumental, calendrical and numismatic material. What function does Caesar have in Tiberius' principate and in Velleius' *Historia*? Regarding the relationship of literature to the state, specific questions include: what can be inferred from the regular inclusion of Caesar's divine status in the non-literary material when this aspect is absent from Velleius' characterisation of Caesar?

After establishing that different strands of Caesar's legacy survive in the non-literary material, I will conduct close readings of particularly illuminating passages of Velleius' *Historia*. Caesar's first appearances in Velleius' text see him depicted as Pompey's adversary, a man of letters and a general, before he seizes Velleius' pen and enters the narrative proper. I will concentrate on what are arguably the two most iconic and controversial events attached to his legacy: the civil war and his assassination.⁴ With regard to the build-up to the civil war (related at *Historia* 2.49), I will look at the fanfare with which Velleius introduces the year 49 BC and the syncrisis of Pompey and Caesar. These are the issues to which Velleius gives priority. I will then pause to compare how Valerius Maximus treats Pompey, before turning to Velleius' brief description of the Rubicon crossing. The final part of the chapter concerns the assassination (related at *Historia* 2.55-56). Velleius' Caesar is at the pinnacle of success when he is killed by his friends. I will explore Velleius' presentation of the assassins and their motives, with Valerius Maximus providing an interesting comparison, and I will discuss Velleius' decision to follow his account of Caesar's

³ Julius Caesar receives thirty-five references, Augustus receives thirteen, Tiberius receives six. See Wardle (1997) 324, and Gowing (2005) 51 n54 for references.

⁴ That his treatment of Caesar would be a legitimate concern for Velleius can be inferred from the recent case of Cremutius Cordus, a fellow historian who was forced to commit suicide, and his work destroyed, ostensibly because he had praised Caesar's assassins – see chapter 2.

assassination with the Lupercalia episode. My approach will therefore incorporate close readings of the literary material as well as invite wider questions about the relationship of literature to the Tiberian state regarding the memorialisation of Julius Caesar.

1.1. Background to the *Historia*: the text and Caesar's relevance

The people and events encompassed by the surviving parts of Velleius' short history, named by Beatus Rhenanus in the sixteenth century *Historia Romana ad M. Vinicium consullem* (a rather misleading title given that the earlier part of the work also contains non-Roman material), stretch from the aftermath of the Trojan War to the death of Livia in AD 29.⁵ A great deal of the first book is lost; for example, apart from a single line preserved by Priscian, there is a missing period of nearly six hundred years that spans Romulus' foundation of Rome (8th century BC) to the Third Macedonian War (171-168 BC). Apart from a lacuna at 2.29.5 that goes from Pompey's introduction to the end of the Sertorian War (72 BC),⁶ the second book remains largely intact which means we are able to construct a comprehensive picture of the place that Caesar has in Velleius' *Historia*. That said, the text is not without corruptions and uncertainties. Describing how the original Murbach manuscript has to be read alongside Amerbach's copy and Beatus' text, and supplemented by Burer's list of emendations, Yardley and Barrett call it 'one of the most problematic of any surviving classical author'.⁷

Covering the immense period between the Trojan War and the principate of Tiberius in two books, Velleius must choose his material carefully and he must move on quickly. Throughout the text he regularly refers to the intended pace of the narrative and its consequently limited scope. Early on, for example, he likens the fast pace to 'a wheel or a cascading, swirling stream [which] never permits me to stop' (1.16.1). Elsewhere he directs the reader looking for particular details to the accounts of other historians. With regard to the outset of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, for example, Velleius explains that 'these and the earlier events are set forth in order in the full-length books of others, and an account of them will, I hope, also be given in my full-length treatment; for now, let me return to the scope of this particular work' (2.48.6). It is clear, then, that Velleius does not view his current opus as functioning in the same way as the more

⁵ On the title see Sumner (1970) 280 and Woodman (1977) 95.

⁶ On this lacuna see Rich (2011) 76.

⁷ Yardley and Barrett (2011) xlvi.

comprehensive accounts of others, or indeed the comprehensive account that he himself will write in the future.

Velleius' historical survey is characterised by the principles of *festinatio* and *brevitas*.⁸ He regularly draws attention to details which will not have a place in this fast-moving text. The argument that the form of the work is what prevents him from giving a theme the space it deserves can also serve to flatter. Velleius describes Caesar's military successes in Gaul, for instance, as 'enormous successes that one could scarcely cover in several volumes' (2.46.1). Such self-conscious selectivity provides us with a unique insight into what this author considered to be important, suitable and relevant for AD 30. That year, as we will see, is constantly put before the reader's eyes through frequent references to Vinicius' accession to the consulship. Further, when Velleius does admit to slowing down the pace in order to elaborate on a certain topic, it is particularly striking. The first time an individual causes him to adjust the narrow scope of his work it is Julius Caesar at 2.41.1.⁹ Why is the narrative form overtly adapted for Caesar when this is not the case for anyone else? This also has implications for Velleius' chosen genre. Christopher Pelling discusses how challenging it is for a history which covers the ascent of Caesar – an era which is so much about one-man-rule – not to topple over into the realm of biography.¹⁰

Velleius composed his *Historia* at a time when Tiberius was particularly unpopular. Seager points out that 'the unpopularity of Tiberius and Seianus, which had been increasing since the death of Drusus, had reached its height'.¹¹ Sumner goes further back, noting 'a background of hostility to the Princeps which had been growing since the death of Germanicus'.¹² It should also be noted that when Velleius was writing, Tiberius was not in Rome. He had been in Capri since AD 26. We have, then, Velleius' personal attachment to Tiberius (through his and his family's military service and political elevation) juxtaposed with the suggestion that the absent *princeps* was particularly unpopular at Rome, where Velleius' text would have been read out among the elite.¹³ It is therefore clear that the *Historia* offers a compelling and complex demonstration of ways of thinking, speaking and writing at this point in Tiberius' principate.

⁸ See Lobur (2007).

⁹ Other instances occur at 1.16.1 (to discuss men with excellent minds who were born at similar times, such as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides), 2.66.3 (to express his indignation at Antony), 2.99.4 (to relate the respect shown to Tiberius while he was on Rhodes) and 2.108.2 (to describe the figure of Maroboduus).

¹⁰ See Pelling (2006b) for Caesar as a breaker of boundaries, both physical and figurative.

¹¹ Seager (2005) 242.

¹² Sumner (1970) 270, directing us to Tac. *Ann.* 2.43.5, 3.5.3f., 3.14.4 and 3.16.1.

¹³ Sumner (1970) 270 describes Velleius' text as 'a corrective to a biased and distorted view that had become regrettably prevalent'.

Augustus' death and Tiberius' subsequent accession would come to be viewed as a new phase of Roman history. At the end of the first century AD, Tacitus would start the *Annals* with the year AD 14. Tacitus, looking back, could see that this was a decisive moment of transition.¹⁴ Quite simply, before Tiberius there had never been a succession of one *princeps* after the death of another. While a later perspective might view this as a key moment of change, Velleius' text suggests that he, living through it, saw continuity. This continuity would appear to encompass not just Augustus but also Julius Caesar. At several points in Velleius' text, Tiberius, Augustus and Caesar are spoken of in terms which are similar if not identical. At 2.94.3, for example, Velleius writes about Tiberius *quantus evasurus esset, eluceret* ('he made it clear ... how great a man he was going to be'), inviting readers to cast their minds back to similar sentiments about Augustus (*tanti mox viri*, 'a man soon to be so great', 2.59.6) and about Caesar (*tanti mox evasuri viri*, 'the man's greatness soon to come', 2.42.1).¹⁵

One other important element of the narrative is its strong forward momentum. Building on the 1952 study of Italo Lana, scholars such as W. Martin Bloomer explore the subject of teleology, where all of Velleius' historiography – first universal history and then Roman history – culminates in the glorious principate of Tiberius.¹⁶ Using Vinicius' present-day consulship to measure how long ago certain events took place (including the foundation of Rome at 1.8.4) underpins this sense of forward momentum.¹⁷ Pelling, however, points to Velleius' final summaries of the achievements of Augustus and Tiberius (2.89.3-4 and 2.126.2-4 respectively) to illustrate the theme of restoration, with Velleius employing such words as *revocata* and *restituta*: 'It is not a culmination, it is a reversal, of the way Roman history was heading'.¹⁸ Given Caesar's Janus-like position at the end of the Republic and the start of the Principate, how then does Velleius view Caesar's role within the continuum (or the reversal) of Roman history? I hope to show that Velleius offers both a forward perspective that starts with Caesar – whose supporters are themselves characterised as 'forward-looking/thinking' (*prudens*) at 2.49.3 – and later, primarily through linguistic echoes, a glance backwards from Tiberius, through Augustus, to Caesar.

¹⁴ On Tacitus' presentation of the Principate as a hereditary monarchy, due to the author's 'perfect vision of hindsight', see Kraus (2009) 100-103 (quotation from p102). See also Woodman (1977) 222-223.

¹⁵ Woodman (1977) 100.

¹⁶ Bloomer (2011) 95-96 argues that 'All the history that is fit to be condensed is all the history that has teleological significance. It is not incidental but purposeful'. See also Lobur (2007) 10.

¹⁷ See Bloomer (2011) 97.

¹⁸ See Pelling (2011a) 171.

In discussing Velleius' Caesar, I have the opportunity to draw on a fresh wave of scholarship, including the translation by Yardley and Barrett (2011) and the edited collection by Eleanor Cowan (2011). The latter features a particularly insightful paper by John Alexander Lobur who discusses how Velleius' text can illuminate our understanding of Roman culture. He focuses on the value of perspective – 'Unlike other, canonical texts, that *create* the cultural universe... Velleius' provides a unique perspective on how elites *understood*, assimilated and reproduced their system in its totality'.¹⁹ He notes in passing the problem of writing about Caesar, especially in light of Cremutius Cordus' prosecution, and he also makes comparisons with Valerius Maximus (though not when it comes to Caesar).²⁰ Other papers in this collection examine memory, genre and intertextuality.²¹ This volume thus combines an understanding that Velleius' opus is a cultural product of its time, with regular and detailed instances of textual analysis. Crucially, Pelling's chapter shows that unpicking Velleius' treatment of Caesar requires consideration of genre, narrative structure and focalisation, as well as an understanding of the Caesarian material that is absent from Velleius' account.²² My investigation works to continue and develop this holistic approach, regularly zoning in on the minutiae of Velleius' language, as well as stepping back to explore Caesar's non-literary reception.

1.2. External evidence: the co-existence of different strands of Caesar's legacy

The role that the memory of Julius Caesar played at the transition from Augustus' principate to Tiberius' principate is complex and multi-dimensional. The events surrounding Augustus' funeral in AD 14 provide a case in point. Tacitus, writing a century later (but nonetheless our earliest surviving source), relates that Tiberius warned the *populus* by edict not to repeat the over-zealous behaviour that had disrupted the funeral of Divus Iulius (*Ann.* 1.8.5).²³ Augustus was to be cremated in the Campus Martius and not, as Caesar had

¹⁹ Lobur (2011) 210-211.

²⁰ Lobur (2011) 206-216.

²¹ On memory see especially Bloomer (2011) and Pitcher (2011), on genre see Rich (2011) and Pelling (2011a), and on intertextuality see Rich (2011) and Pagán (2011).

²² Pelling (2011a).

²³ For the unanimous tradition that on the day of Caesar's funeral popular sympathy ultimately lay with Caesar (and no longer with the liberators), see Woodman (2002) 631 who directs us to Suet. *Iul.* 84-85, Plut. *Caes.* 68, App. *B. Civ.* 2.143-148 and Dio 44.36-50.

been, in the Forum.²⁴ Recollections of Caesar would also have affected those bystanders who had either witnessed Caesar's death themselves over fifty years earlier or heard about it from their fathers: 'when the slaughter of the dictator Caesar seemed to some the worst of acts, to others the finest' (*Ann.* 1.8.6). Caesar's monumental legacy is also at play. It was at Caesar's temple in the Forum Romanum, the Aedes Divi Iulii, that Tiberius stood to deliver his funeral oration for Augustus (*Suet. Aug.* 100.3).²⁵ He addressed the congregation from its rostra (*Frontin. de aq.* 129, *Dio* 56.34.4.), with Drusus delivering a speech from the old rostra located directly opposite (*Dio* 56.34.4, *Suet. Aug.* 100). This followed the precedent set by Augustus who had delivered the eulogy at his sister's funeral in 11 BC from the Aedes Divi Iulii, with Nero Drusus delivering the additional eulogy from the old rostra.²⁶ The ideological significance behind Tiberius' choice to use the Caesarian rostra for Augustus' funeral is clear: he was not only continuing an Augustan tradition, he was communicating tangibly a dynastic relationship back (through Augustus) to Divus Iulius himself.²⁷

The dynastic function of the remembrance of Caesar can also be seen in inscriptions from Tiberius' principate, from both within the city of Rome and beyond it.²⁸ A plaque in Rome written by the *plebs urbana*²⁹ honours Drusus (Tiberius' biological son) as the great-grandson of Divus Iulius:

plebs urbana qui<n>que et / triginta tribuum / Druso Caesari Ti. Aug. f., / Divi
Augusti n., / Divi Iulii pronepoti, / pontifici, auguri, sodal(i) Augustal(i): co(n)s(uli)
iterum, tribunic(ia) potest(ate) iter(um): aera conlato.

²⁴ Zarrow (2007) 2 makes the point that if Augustus had been cremated in the Forum, the precedent of Caesar's cremation would have necessitated the building of a temple to Augustus on this site when there was very little space available.

²⁵ The temple had been begun by the triumvirs in 42 BC (*Dio* 47.18.4) and completed and dedicated by Octavian in 29 BC (*Dio* 51.22.2; *Aug, RG* 19). See Platner and Ashby (1929) 286-288 and Richardson (1992) 213-214.

²⁶ In addition, the body of Augustus' sister (Octavia) had lain in state in the Aedes Divi Iulii (*Dio* 54.35.4-5) whereas Augustus' own body was placed on the old rostra (*Dio* 56.34.4). For the question of whether or not the funerals of Marcellus (in 23 BC) and Agrippa (in 12 BC) incorporated a double eulogy and the Aedes Divi Iulii, see Sumi (2011) 225. White (1988) 337 n14 points out that Dio's emphasis on the parallels between the funeral of Agrippa and that of Augustus suggests that there was a double eulogy (*Dio* 54.28.3-5).

²⁷ See Sumi (2011) 225 for how the integration of Caesar's rostra into imperial funerals actively kept alive the memory of Caesar.

²⁸ An inscription from a bridge near Ariminum in AD 21 describes Tiberius as the son of Augustus and the grandson of Caesar (*CIL* XI 367), and so does an inscription from Oneum (Dalmatia) from AD 33 (*L'année épigraphique* [1922] 40).

²⁹ On the allegiance of the *plebs urbana* to the imperial house, see Rowe (2002) 85-86.

The urban plebs of the thirty-five tribes to Drusus Caesar, son of Tiberius Augustus, grandson of Divus Augustus, great-grandson of Divus Julius, pontifex, augur, sodalis Augustalis, twice consul, twice holding the tribunician power, with collected funds.³⁰

CIL VI 910

The inscription puts on display a ruling house which spans four generations and which locates Julius Caesar as its starting point. It seems to be from a statue base, perhaps from one of the (possibly triumphal) statues that are described in a fragment of a senatorial decree of AD 23 which details posthumous honours for Drusus (CIL VI 31200).³¹ The senatorial decree of AD 23 shows a clear parallelism with the content of the *Senatus Consultum de Memoria Honoranda Germanici Caesaris*, suggesting, as Lott points out, 'that the content of the decree for Drusus was closely modelled on the decree for Germanicus',³² Tiberius' (adopted) son who died in AD 19. This idea of parallelism between the honours and the language used for Drusus and Germanicus is important because the inscription cited above (CIL VI 910) is part of a pair of dedicatory inscriptions gifted by the *plebs urbana*, the other one honouring Germanicus (CIL VI 909).³³ But while the inscription for Drusus incorporates Julius Caesar, the one for Germanicus does not.

Elsewhere, perhaps unsurprisingly given such parallelism with Drusus, we do see Germanicus memorialised as 'great-grandson of Divus Iulius'.³⁴ The Arch of Germanicus in Saintes (Aquitania), erected in AD 18-20, describes Germanicus, Drusus and Tiberius as descendants of Divus Iulius (CIL XIII 1036). An arch in Umbria, possibly constructed after Drusus' death in AD 23, also groups Germanicus and Drusus together and describes them as great-grandsons of Caesar (CIL XI 4776 = 4777). The absence of a reference to Julius Caesar in the inscription of the *plebs urbana* to Germanicus (CIL VI 909) is therefore remarkable

³⁰ Translation by Rowe (2002) 89. The emphasis is mine. For another inscription citing Caesar as Drusus' great-grandfather and spanning all four generations, this time from near Caudium, see *L'année épigraphique* (1925) 94. On such giving of gifts by collective parts of the Roman community, the most frequent contributors being the *plebs urbana*, see Ferguson (1918).

³¹ No reference to Julius Caesar (or Augustus) occurs in CIL VI 31200. On this *senatus consultum*, as well as fragments of a *rogatio* in honour of Drusus known as the Tabula Ilicitana, see Lott (2012) 159-173 and 311-317. See also Lebek (1993) 101 and 117.

³² Lott (2012) 312.

³³ CIL VI 909: plebs urbana quinque et / triginta tribuum / Germanico Caesari / Ti(beri) Augusti f(ilio) / divi Augusti n(epoti) / auguri flamine Augustali / co(n)s(uli) iterum imp(eratori) iterum / aere conlato.

³⁴ See, for example, CIL II 3104 (from Hispania Citerior, AD 12-14).

since it accompanies an inscription to Drusus which does incorporate Caesar as ‘great-grandfather’. Elsewhere Germanicus and Drusus are often treated in comparable terms.³⁵

It must be noted that Caesar does not feature in all surviving inscriptions for Drusus. *CIL* II 2338, for example, which comes from Baetica and which can be dated to AD 23, only refers to Drusus’ descent from Tiberius and Augustus.³⁶ Furthermore, just as we find with Germanicus, Drusus can be described as *divi Iulii pronepos* before his death as well as after.³⁷ Thus reference to Caesar could be included or excluded when it came to inscriptions for Drusus and Germanicus, be it during their lifetimes or posthumously. Did the inclusion of their divine great-grandfather serve to strengthen, and crucially legitimise, their political position? If so, why was it not included every time? When it comes to the factors which determined Caesar’s inclusion – that is, the precise context or agenda of any given memorial – we can only speculate. What we can determine, however, is that there was no fixed rule about whether or not to incorporate a reference to Divus Iulius in inscriptions for Germanicus and Drusus. It is impossible to know whether inclusion or exclusion of Divus Iulius served a specific political purpose, or whether it was simply not deemed necessary. Interestingly, however, Dio would later mention Tiberius’ omission of customary titles for Sejanus in a letter to the Senate (58.8.4), illustrating that the presence or absence of usual honorific titles in official documentation might not go unnoticed in antiquity.

As we have seen, Caesar was also memorialised in the *Fasti*. These were calendars which detailed the days of the month on which it was permitted to transact legal and public business. Displayed in public places, they listed official, religiously-sanctioned events or anniversaries. The anniversaries of Caesar’s military victories appear in various *Fasti* from Tiberius’ principate.³⁸ Most of these anniversaries were declared a *dies nefastus publicus* (indicated by the letters *np*) which meant a holiday for all citizens, reserved for public worship. It was not just the elite who participated in official religion. Taking into account the ex-slaves who provided the expertise necessary for the most fundamental Roman rituals (the playing of musical instruments, the killing of sacrificial animals, and so on), the

³⁵ Immediately before Tacitus describes the ancestral images at Drusus’ funeral, he cites as precedent those memorials that had previously been decreed to Germanicus (*memoriae Drusi eadem quae in Germanicum decernuntur*, Tac. Ann. 4.9.2).

³⁶ *CIL* II 2338: Druso Caesari / Ti(beri) f(ilio) divi Aug(usti) n(epoti) pontif(ici) / [augur(i)] co(n)s(uli) II trib(unicia) potest(ate).

³⁷ See Géza Alföldy’s comments on *CIL* VI 40353.

³⁸ Wissowa (1912) 445 collates this series of *feriae publicae*: 17th March, victory at Munda; 27th March, fall of Alexandria; 6th April, victory at Thapsus; 2nd August, victory in Spain and in Zela.

unmonitored crowds of spectators who poured into the streets,³⁹ and the fact that certain activities were forbidden from taking place on festival days, Beard, North and Price reason that 'at least in theory (for rules affecting private conduct are always especially hard to enforce), religious festivals made a difference to the lives of the city's inhabitants'.⁴⁰ It is, of course, impossible to know how much emphasis worshippers placed on Caesar specifically, how engaged they were in the origins or the rituals of these public festivals. Nonetheless it is clear that the figure of Julius Caesar – his birth, his name, his military accomplishments, his death – had a place in the Roman calendar, regularly affecting people's schedules and leisure time.

Lastly, the dynastic advertisement of the *gens Iulia* generally, and Julius Caesar specifically, can be seen in Tiberian coinage.⁴¹ Tiberius minted a series of coins which recalled the 'Divus Iulius' type minted by Octavian in around 38 BC. The earlier coin (fig. 1) depicts on the obverse a portrait of Octavian coupled with the legend 'Caesar divi f[ilius]'. On the reverse is a portrait of Julius Caesar with the words 'divos Iulius'.⁴² The Tiberian coin (fig. 2) depicts on the obverse a portrait of Tiberius and the legend Ti[berius] Caesar Divi Aug[usti] f[ilius] and on the reverse a portrait of Augustus, with a star above it and the wording 'divos August[us] divi f[ilius]'. As well as the style of the Tiberian coin, the language it uses also provides a typological link back to its predecessor. 'Divi f[ilius]' is used to describe both Tiberius and Augustus, advertising Tiberius' link to Augustus and Augustus' link to Caesar, thus implicitly linking Tiberius back to Caesar. Not only is Julius Caesar evoked by the reference to Augustus' father on the Tiberian coin, he is present in the depiction of the *sidus Iulium*, the comet which had appeared during the Ludi Victoriae Caesaris in July 44 BC and which was interpreted as a sign of Caesar's apotheosis and came to be depicted on top of his statues (Suet. *Iul.* 88).

This introductory overview suggests that different strands of Caesar's legacy were being put on display in different forms (architecture, inscription, ritual and coinage), to be either suppressed (such as the commotion of his funeral) or evoked (such as his role as divine forefather of the imperial dynasty). As we turn to the text of Velleius Paterculus we will explore how these disparate aspects of Caesar are treated, and how this corresponds to the external evidence from Tiberius' reign. For example, given that Velleius includes the

³⁹ Beard, North and Price (1998) 261 n51 note that although participation would normally have applied specifically to Roman citizens, it was not necessarily monitored.

⁴⁰ Beard, North and Price (1998) 262.

⁴¹ See Grant (1950) 92-98 for the 'numismatic début' of the term *gens Iulia* appearing on Tiberian coinage from Corinth at some point before AD 22.

⁴² For the physical likeness of father and son on these coins, see Zanker (1988) 36.

funeral and apotheosis of Augustus (2.124), it seems remarkable that he does not mention Caesar's funeral or divinity – all the more remarkable because of the emphasis placed on the latter by the Tiberian regime.

1.3. Caesar's first appearances in Velleius' *Historia*

Approaching Velleius' text sequentially is in keeping with the forward momentum that permeates the narrative as we move ever closer to Tiberius' principate. We come across Caesar three times before his 'physical' entry into the text at 2.41.1. At 2.30.3 Velleius relates Pompey's Spanish triumph and subsequent accession to the consulship in 70 BC (even though Pompey was still technically an *eques* and not a senator).⁴³ In an 'anachronistic side comment',⁴⁴ our author then jumps forward twenty years to recount Pompey's reaction to Caesar's desire to be elected for a second consulship *in absentia*:

Quem virum quis non miretur per tot extraordinaria imperia in summum fastigium evectum tulisse animo, C. Caesaris <absentis> in altero consulatu petendo senatum populumque Romanum rationem habere?

Who could not feel surprise that this man, who rose to the top by so many extraordinary commands, should have been aggrieved over the Roman senate and people officially recognizing Gaius Caesar's candidacy, <in absentia>, for a second consulship?

Historia Romana 2.30.3

Velleius appears to offer a defence of Caesar, expressing surprise that Pompey – who himself had secured numerous privileges – should have begrudged Caesar's demand for the privilege of standing for the consulship *in absentia*.⁴⁵ The reader is encouraged (through the phrase *quis non miretur*) to share in Velleius' disapproval of Pompey's view. Velleius goes on to state that it is 'a common human inclination to forgive oneself anything but overlook no failing in others' (2.30.3) before returning to Pompey's consulship of 70 BC (2.30.4). Catherine Steel argues that this 'character flaw' of Pompey's 'contributes to the outbreak of

⁴³ Yardley and Barrett (2011) 47 n92.

⁴⁴ Volker (2012) 65.

⁴⁵ For this paradoxical situation with regard to each man's neglect of procedural rules, see Elefante (1997) 276-277.

civil war through his specific jealousy of Caesar⁴⁶ and at 2.33.3 this ‘character flaw’ reappears: Velleius relates that ‘Pompey could not abide competition, and in spheres where he should simply have been the leader, he instead wished to be unopposed’. In addition to prefiguring one apparent factor in the conflict between Caesar and Pompey, this passage sets up an important strand of our author’s treatment of Caesar: Velleius’ tendency to mention Caesar when discussing Pompey.

The second two references incorporate Caesar’s reputation as a man of letters, first explicitly and then implicitly.⁴⁷ At 2.36.2 his name occurs in a list of eminent men from the worlds of literature and oratory, with Velleius ranking Caesar close to Cicero chronologically and, it is inferred, in talent (*proximum Ciceroni Caesarem*).⁴⁸ Caesar appears as a link with the next generation – we consider once again his Janus-like position at the end of one era and the start of another – when his name is juxtaposed with the phrase *eorumque velut alumnos* (‘along with the men who were virtually their pupils’) and the names of Corvinus, Asinius Pollio and Sallust. At 2.39.1, Velleius refers to Caesar’s military feats in Gaul: ‘It is here that the achievement (*opus*) of Gaius Caesar is to be seen in all its glory’. It is striking that Velleius chooses the term *opus* since this is a word that Velleius uses to denote literary texts, including his own, suggesting that Velleius here alludes to Caesar’s *commentarii* and not just to the military achievements themselves. Coming so soon after the reference to his literary predecessors, Caesar’s *opus* appears even more impressive.⁴⁹ In all three of these early references, the emphasis is not on Caesar in Rome: in the first, he is pointedly absent (2.30.3); in the second, no location is specified (2.36.2); in the third, the focus is on Gaul and the commentaries (2.39.1).

In amongst these three early references, Velleius relates Cato’s speech in the Senate in 63 BC where he pressed for the execution of the Catilinarian conspirators (2.35). As we have seen, Sallust’s famous account of this senatorial debate, which features an address by Caesar arguing for leniency then a reply by Cato urging execution, introduced into the literary canon Cato’s role as a counterpoint to Caesar. Indeed there are certain Sallustian echoes in Velleius, such as the structure (Velleius explicitly states that Cato’s speech served as a reply to what came before), and the pronouncement of Cato’s virtue: he did not act virtuously for appearance’s sake but because decency was innate in him (2.35.2 cf. *Cat.* 54.6). One major difference, however, is that in Velleius the figure of Caesar is

⁴⁶ Steel (2011) 274.

⁴⁷ We will see this strand of Caesar’s reputation throughout this investigation, but it will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

⁴⁸ See Elefante (1997) 297.

⁴⁹ Elefante (1997) 305.

absent. The argument for leniency is simply attributed to 'others' (*alii*, 2.35.3). Narratively located among those first appearances of Caesar – a candidate for the consulship *in absentia* (2.30.3), an orator (2.36.2), and a conqueror and writer of Gaul (2.39.1) – and with Sallust's account of this senatorial debate perhaps in the reader's mind, the absence of Caesar is intriguing. Annika Domainko situates this passage within a wider discussion about the elimination of rivalry; specifically, a lack of competing voices, both actual and narrative.⁵⁰ She sees the absence of debate between Cato and Caesar as analogous to the lack of direct speech across the whole of Velleius' opus (with only one instance of *oratio recta* being longer than one sentence). Domainko posits that public speeches and competing voices had less of a place in Tiberian Rome than they had in Republican life, and that 'the missing polyphony of the *History* can be understood as a narrative mirror of this development'.⁵¹ Thus the narrator's voice is the only one we hear.

Jaime Volker is also drawn to the Velleian account of Cato's speech; he too notes the neglect of Caesar in this passage.⁵² He sees a pattern with regard to Velleius' presentation of Cato, namely that when Cato is praised, Caesar is absent. Cato is never singled out to compete with Caesar and vice versa, perhaps because of the chasm between what Cato had come to symbolise and the Imperial system of government under which Velleius lived and worked (which had changed unrecognisably from Sallust's time):

To Sallust ... 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... 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.⁵³

Thus even prior to Caesar's 'physical' entry into the text at 2.41 (when – now in Rome – he enters upon the consulship of 59 BC), Velleius' treatment of Caesar raises a host of

⁵⁰ Domainko (2015).

⁵¹ Domainko (2015) 104.

⁵² Volker (2012) 115-117.

⁵³ Volker (2012) 116-117.

questions, including: How does a reader's literary memory affect their reading of Velleius' Caesar? And to what extent does Velleius' contemporary political climate affect which of the narrative's characters are linked with Caesar?

As we will see, it is Pompey and not Cato with whom Velleius tends to pair / compare Caesar. At 2.40 Velleius provides us with details of Pompey's military achievements between 66 and 61 BC, returning to Italy 'a greater man than his fellow citizens or he himself could have hoped he would be, after transcending human fortune in all that he did' (2.40.1-2). The suggestion that Pompey was excessively great is unmistakable; he had been raised by fortune to a supra-human height.⁵⁴ Velleius relates that the Lex Aelia Fabia, a law established in 63 BC, had allowed Pompey to wear a crown and triumphal regalia at the circus games, as well as a crown and toga *praetexta* at theatrical performances.⁵⁵ Pompey had worn them once (*id ille non plus quam semel*) but Velleius declares in *propria voce* that this was once too often (*et hoc sane nimium fuit*),⁵⁶ before repeating the idea that Pompey was raised by fortune to the highest possible degree (*huius viri fastigium ... fortuna extulit*) (2.40.4). The term *fastigium* reinforces the idea that he had reached a kind of boundary.⁵⁷ Our author thus expresses disapproval at the wearing of a crown, and describes how fortune can elevate men to potentially dangerous heights. Just as he had told us at 1.9.6 that *invidia* is an inseparable companion of good fortune, he tells us at 2.40.4 that eminence is never without *invidia*.⁵⁸ It is at the start of the very next chapter (2.41.1) that Julius Caesar grabs hold of Velleius' pen.

Velleius opens 2.41 with the words *secutus deinde*, an echo of the opening to 2.40 which had related to Pompey (*secuta deinde*). This is the only time in the whole text that these two words appear together, suggesting that the leitmotifs that we have just seen – *fortuna*, supra-human greatness, the wearing of a crown, the danger of *invidia* – may reappear. When Caesar physically enters the text at the point of his first consulship in 59 BC and snatches Velleius' pen (2.41.1), Velleius 'establishes him as the dominant personality of the next fifteen years'.⁵⁹ Notes of Caesar's supremacy abound: superlatives punctuate the chapter (*nobilissima, excellentissimus, acerrimus, effusissimus, simillimus, coniunctissimus,*

⁵⁴ Seager (2011) 292.

⁵⁵ Dio (37.21.4) relates that these honours had been granted through the cooperation of Caesar (and against the advice of Marcus Cato). Dio (*ibid.*) also writes that the crown was a laurel crown, whereas Velleius (2.40.4) describes it as golden.

⁵⁶ See Elefante (1997) 310 for a sense of irony here.

⁵⁷ *Fastigium*, Lewis and Short, B. 1: the extreme part, extremity of a thing.

⁵⁸ Hillard (2011) 226 places this sentiment within the context of the early Principate: 'Velleius stood between two worlds. In the old Republic, resentful competition had led to emulation and higher achievement; in the new world, the superiority of the victors required moderation'.

⁵⁹ Woodman (1983) 51.

2.41.1-2); his lineage is traced back to Anchises and the goddess Venus; his beauty surpasses all citizens, and he possesses courage which exceeds human nature and belief (2.41.1). Velleius here alludes to Caesar's divinity without being explicit about it.⁶⁰ This is not in line with the contemporary promotion of Caesar's divinity as seen in some of the honorific inscriptions for members of the imperial family. Perhaps it is more in line with the allusion to Caesar's divinity that we found in the depiction of the *sidus Iulium* on coinage. Valerius Maximus, in contrast, regularly refers to Caesar's divinity and he does so using a wide range of vocabulary: *deus, divus, divinitas, divinus, caelestis, numen* and *sidus*.⁶¹ We can deduce therefore that a certain freedom existed in Tiberius' principate when it came to the treatment of Caesar's divinity. It could be conveyed in a variety of ways: explicitly, implicitly or not at all.

Illustrating 'the man's greatness soon to come' (*tanti mox evasuri viri*, 2.42.1), Velleius relates a handful of Caesar's early exploits – including his capture by (and subsequent crucifixion of) pirates, his indictment of Dolabella⁶² and his restoration of Marius' monuments⁶³ (2.41-2.43) – before returning to Caesar's first consulship. He draws attention to the sharing of power between Caesar, Pompey and Crassus, calling it 'deadly (*exitiabilis*) for the city, for the world, and no less, at different times, for the men themselves' (2.44.1). The emphasis that Velleius places on Caesar's first consulship is important. Asinius Pollio famously dated the start of the civil wars to 60 BC (Horace, *Carm.* 2.1.1-4), the year that Caesar sought and won this first consulship for the following year, having formed what we know as the First Triumvirate with Pompey and Crassus.⁶⁴ R. E. Smith drives home the ramifications of Caesar's first consulship, emblematic as early as Pollio of the beginning of the end of the Republic:

Pollio knew the facts and lived through the times; he had sound reasons for the date he chose; he knew that Caesar's consulship had inaugurated the Republic's end in 59; that 49 was but a logical continuation of that consulship, and that the

⁶⁰ See also 2.47.1 regarding Caesar's victory at Alesia: 'almost no-one but a god could achieve this' (*paene nullius nisi dei fuerit*). On Velleius hinting at Caesar's divinity, see Volker (2012) pp. 63-68.

⁶¹ See Wardle (1997) 337.

⁶² See also Tac. *Dial.* 34.7, discussed in chapter 5.

⁶³ For Caesar's resurrection of Marius' monuments, see chapter 3.

⁶⁴ On Horace's reference to Pollio, see Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 7-8. Plutarch would go on to write that this alliance changed the form of government and brought about the civil wars (*Caes.* 13). See Pelling (2011b) 186-192.

whole decade must be seen as one vast complex event, whose end was the end of the Republic.⁶⁵

It is difficult to balance Velleius' explicit lingering on Caesar at the moment of his first consulship with the argument that Velleius somehow 'bridges and even masks the transition from republic to principate',⁶⁶ given the immeasurable significance of what Caesar's appointment as consul meant for Rome's political and historical landscape. Velleius presents this as a moment in history of extraordinary importance. For Velleius the alliance was emphatically destructive; the strength of feeling in the word *exitiabilis* is irrefutable. According to our author, then, Julius Caesar and the events of 60-59 BC represent a pivotal point whereby the direction of Roman and indeed world history was altered. Therefore, as well as being central to textual questions relating to genre and narrative structure, Caesar must be a crucial part of any wider discussion about how Velleius relates Tiberius' principate to what has gone before.

1.4. Civil war

Caesar's foreign victories are presented as unproblematic by Velleius. He makes no reference to the complaints made in the Senate that Caesar behaved inappropriately abroad (Suet. *Iul.* 24.3) and his successes in Gaul and Britain are celebrated (2.46.1).⁶⁷ To relate Caesar's feats overseas, the active voice appears to be favoured (*ageret... traiecisset*, 2.46.1). This has the effect of mirroring the very force and authority being described, and compares with the narrative strategy of Caesar in the *Bellum Gallicum*. As Velleius moves away from Caesar's foreign exploits, however, and closer to events at Rome, we witness a subtle shift in Velleius' language. Velleius opts for passive (or impersonal) verbs and participles (2.47.2-5).⁶⁸ The deaths of Julia and her child are attributed to fortune (2.47.2) and the subsequent overview of the murder of Publius Clodius contains no mention of Caesar (2.47.4-5). Having introduced Caesar as an outstanding general, almost godlike in his ability, Velleius chooses to 'zoom out', as it were, from the actions of Caesar the individual. He minimises Caesar's physical appearance in the narrative and he subtly refocuses the reader's attention onto a higher plane of fate and fortune. Velleius undoubtedly faced a

⁶⁵ Smith (1964) 303.

⁶⁶ Gowing (2007) 411.

⁶⁷ Caesar's crossing of the Channel is discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

⁶⁸ As Pelling (2011a) 164 notes, the only verb of which Caesar is the subject is *morabatur* – 'the "delay" which is so uncharacteristic of the generalship and of the man'.

difficult task in deciding how to narrate such a politically sensitive matter as civil war. As D. Wardle points out regarding Caesar and the civil wars, 'a fundamental problem was the attribution of guilt for what could not be presented as other than a disastrous episode of Roman history'.⁶⁹ As we approach the outbreak of civil war, then, it would appear that Velleius might be about to reduce Caesar's role, appearing to divest him of blame for the dreadful events that he is about to describe.⁷⁰

It is at chapter 2.49 that Velleius introduces the events of 49 BC: 'the civil war burst into flame' (*bellum civile exarsit*, 2.49.1). He underscores the momentous nature of this chapter by not just citing the consuls of that year, but also the number of years that had passed since Rome's foundation and the number of years that were still to come before the present-day consulship of Marcus Vinicius. Straightaway this tells the reader that (s)he is about to meet a truly momentous point in history.⁷¹ It is the first time Velleius has used this three-fold system of dating – the foundation of Rome, the consuls, and the present-day consulship of Vinicius – and it appears on only one other occasion in the entire text: Octavian's first consulship in 43 BC (2.65.2).⁷² After the outbreak of Caesar's civil war, Velleius uses the consuls to date other key moments in the accumulation of power by the Julio-Claudian dynasty, stopping altogether at the brink of Tiberius' accession (Augustus' death at 2.123.2).⁷³ The time that has elapsed since Rome's foundation is mentioned just twice in addition to the outbreak of the civil war: Octavian's first consulship in 43 BC (2.65.2) and his adoption of Tiberius in AD 4 (2.103.3). The time that will pass before the present-day consulship of Vinicius is used for several events in the narrative,⁷⁴ the last of

⁶⁹ Wardle (1997) 330.

⁷⁰ Velleius does not exclude every individual from responsibility. Soon afterwards, for example, he pinpoints Gaius Curio's role in the civil wars: 'no one provided a more intense and incendiary stimulus than the plebeian tribune Gaius Curio' (2.48.3), suggesting that some individuals were indeed blameworthy.

⁷¹ For this method of dating being used to underline the *gravitas* of the moment, see Elefante (1997) 330 and Woodman (1983) 83.

⁷² Rich (2011) 82 cites Augustus' adoption of Tiberius as the third and final time that Velleius uses this three-fold method of dating. However, the adoption of Tiberius is in fact not explicitly dated using Vinicius' consulship like it is the first two times (2.49.1, 2.65.2: *tu, M. Vinici, consulatum inires*). While a direct address to Vinicius can be found earlier on in the chapter which contains Augustus' adoption of Tiberius (*patre tuo*, 2.103.1), when dating the adoption itself Velleius uses the milder, less specific term *abhinc* ('from now') (2.103.3).

⁷³ These moments are: Pompey's death in 48 BC (2.53.2), Octavian's first consulship in 43 BC (2.65.2), the battle of Actium in 31 BC (2.84.1), the adoption of Tiberius by Augustus in AD 4 (2.103.3) and Augustus' death in AD 14 (2.123.2).

⁷⁴ The other events are the foundation of Rome and the establishment of the Olympic Games (1.8.4), the destruction of Carthage and Corinth (1.12.6-1.13.1), the consulship of Opimius (2.7.5) and Octavian's first consulship (2.65.2). The start of the civil war (2.49.1) is the only instance when Vinicius' consulship dates a difficult and destructive moment in Rome's history.

which is Octavian's first consulship.⁷⁵ None of the three methods of dating is used for Tiberius' principate. Velleius' system of dating thus reveals that something has changed since the time of Caesar.⁷⁶

Immediately after this dating fanfare, Velleius presents us with a syncrisis of Pompey and Caesar (2.49.2-3). The relationship between these two figures is a subject clearly of interest to Velleius. When Pompey is mentioned, the reader regularly finds Caesar 'lurking in the background'.⁷⁷ In the opening character sketch of Pompey (2.29.2-4), for example, Velleius writes that Pompey was handsome (*forma excellens*) which will later be surpassed by Caesar's great handsomeness (*forma excellentissimus*, 2.41.1). We have already seen the reference to Caesar's desire to stand for the consulship *in absentia* in a passage about Pompey's consulship twenty years earlier (2.30.3), and the echo of *secuta deinde* (2.40.1, regarding Pompey) in the phrase *secutus deinde* (2.41.1, regarding Caesar). Velleius now contrasts the two side by side:

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.

The one protagonist's cause appeared better, the other's more powerful; on the one side everything looked impressive, the other had the real strength; Pompey's chief weapon was the authority of the senate, Caesar's the devotion of his soldiers. The consuls and the senate conferred supreme power on Pompey's cause, not on Pompey himself. No effort was spared by Caesar in his attempts to preserve the peace; no offer was accepted by Pompey's supporters.⁷⁸

Historia Romana 2.49.2-3

Straightaway the reader notices the difference in Velleius' choice of verbs in the first sentence: the ambiguous *videbatur* ('seemed') is used for Pompey and his cause; the

⁷⁵ Rich (2011) 82 cites Augustus' adoption of Tiberius as the third and final time that Velleius uses this three-fold method of dating. However, the adoption of Tiberius is in fact not explicitly dated using Vinicius' consulship like it is the first two times (2.49.1, 2.65.2: *tu, M. Vinici, consulatum inires*). While a direct address to Vinicius can be found earlier on in the chapter which contains Augustus' adoption of Tiberius (*patre tuo*, 2.103.1), when dating the adoption itself Velleius uses the milder, less specific term *abhinc* ('from now') (2.103.3).

⁷⁶ That a method of dating could serve as a tool to imply continuity or discontinuity can be seen in the *Annals* of Tacitus; Tacitus' choice of an annalistic format has been interpreted as illustrating a conflict between the theory and reality of the early Principate. See, for example, Ginsburg (1981).

⁷⁷ Volker (2012) 108, who notes examples on p104-108.

⁷⁸ I have slightly adapted Yardley and Barrett's translation.

decisive *erat* ('was') is used for Caesar and his.⁷⁹ This evokes Sallust's syncretism of Cato and Caesar, in particular the statement that 'Cato preferred to be, rather than merely to seem, virtuous' (*Cat.* 54.6).⁸⁰ In Sallust, the implication was that Caesar represented a façade; in Velleius, however, it is Caesar whose power is tangible or concrete (*esse*) and Pompey's that appears abstract or illusive (*videri*, further underscored by *speciosa*).

Velleius points out that the power was conferred not on Pompey the individual but on his cause, suggesting an undercurrent of anxiety on Velleius' part about power being conferred on an individual. Indeed Shackleton Bailey posits that 'a balancing clause' may have originally been part of this passage, such as *Caesar sibi bellavit*.⁸¹ In other words, while Pompey represented the Senate and did not use the power for personal gain, Caesar went to war for himself. Even without this addition, it is hard not to read a level of criticism towards Caesar here since Velleius explicitly aligns the *auctoritas senatus* with Pompey, thus laying bare the unconstitutional status of Caesar and his soldiers. The question of culpability continues, however, when Velleius states that 'no effort was spared by Caesar in his attempt to preserve the peace; no effort was accepted by Pompey's supporters' (2.49.3). Velleius draws attention to Caesar's efforts at peace by changing the order of the sequence and placing Caesar before Pompey. Velleius' treatment of Caesar here is thus complicated and fragile; he shows both the illegality of Caesar's position and Caesar's attempts to resolve the conflict peacefully.

Velleius' depiction of Pompey is equally complex. To a certain degree he exonerates Pompey, though possessing a worthy cause, by illustrating his lack of power: the offers are rejected by the Pompeians (plural).⁸² A subsequent allusion to Marcellus' belligerence and Lentulus' debts illustrates discord within the camp;⁸³ and Cato's avowal that death is preferable to being governed by a citizen appears to place him outside of either faction (2.49.3) – a stance that will be reiterated by Seneca the Younger (see chapter 2). The idea that Lentulus' well-being is incompatible with the well-being of the state is an ironic inversion of Cicero's words in 46 BC about Caesar himself, upon whose safety Rome relies: 'Only through your safety, Gaius Caesar... can there be any safety for ourselves' (*Marc.*

⁷⁹ While the delay of names could create some uncertainty for the modern reader, Woodman (1983) 83 points out that the phrase *causa melior* regularly described the *optimates*.

⁸⁰ Woodman (1983) 84.

⁸¹ Shackleton Bailey (1984) 449.

⁸² Seager (2011) 295.

⁸³ See Volker (2012) 112. In his commentary, Caesar himself relates the internal strife of the Pompeian camp. At *BC* 3.83, for example, we see Domitius, Scipio and Lentulus Spinther argue on a daily basis about who will replace Caesar as *pontifex maximus*. For Caesar's presentation of the factional discord among the *nobiles*, see Grillo (2012) 138-139.

32).⁸⁴ Thanking Caesar for his *clementia* in pardoning the former consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus, Cicero's speech has been interpreted by some as replete with irony: Cicero's suggestion that the immortality of the Republic hinges on the immortality of Caesar has been called by Robert Dyer 'the dominant ironic theme' of the *Pro Marcello*.⁸⁵ A trace of this speech would, of course, have troubling implications for Velleius' presentation of Caesar (due to the themes of autocracy and restricted speech, and the granting of *clementia* to fellow citizens) – but this is only one reading of Cicero's *Pro Marcello*, and it has not found favour with many scholars.⁸⁶ Nonetheless, as we turn back to Velleius, it is a helpful reminder that a reader's understanding of a text can be enormously affected by their recollections and interpretations of earlier literary works.

Velleius continues to contrast the two sides:

Vir antiquus et gravis Pompei partes laudaret magis, prudens sequeretur Caesaris, et illa gloriosa,⁸⁷ haec terribiliora duceret.

A dignified gentleman of old would have been more inclined to praise the party of Pompey, and a shrewd man more inclined to follow that of Caesar, considering Pompey's the glorious one but Caesar's the more fearful.

Historia Romana 2.49.3

The term *prudens* suggests foresight regarding Caesar's victory; to support Caesar is thus depicted as a pragmatic choice for the future.⁸⁸ In contrast, the concepts of *antiquitas* and *gravitas* root Pompey firmly to the past, but they also carry moral weight. By describing the supporter of Caesar as *prudens* at 2.49.3, Velleius indicates that Caesar represents discontinuity within Roman history: a break with tradition and the start of something new. Significantly, Velleius later attributes the virtue of (military) *prudencia* to Tiberius. On the subject of Tiberius' handling of the Pannonian and Dalmatian revolts, for example, Velleius writes: 'What great opportunities our leader's foresight (*prudencia ducis*) granted us to escape the fury of their united forces... What prudence (*prudencia*) went into the organization of the winter camp' (2.111.4). The word reappears a short time later, again with reference to Tiberius' military foresight: 'What foresight (*prudencia*) he displayed in summoning to Rome Rhascupolis' (2.129.1). Velleius thus equates *prudencia* with forward

⁸⁴ Woodman (1983) 84.

⁸⁵ Dyer (1990) 29.

⁸⁶ See Duggan (2013) 213-214.

⁸⁷ For the reading *gloriosiora*, see Gowing (2007) 417.

⁸⁸ Contrast Seager (2011) 295-296, who reads this phrase as uncomplimentary to Caesar.

thinking and sound decisions. The declaration of Tiberius' *prudencia* provides a link back to Caesar's supporters, and it suggests that the 'new era' embodied by Caesar has served as a blueprint for certain (military) policies of Tiberius.

Two other key words in this passage are *gloriosa* and *terribiliora*. The former, while summoning memories of Pompey's past achievements, may also be a subtle nod to the concept of boasting.⁸⁹ Caesar himself uses this word in his commentary during his narrative on Dyrrachium when he describes Pompey misjudging Caesar's strategy and viewing victory as inevitable: Pompey is shown boasting to his men (*glorians*, BC 3.45.6).⁹⁰ The full meaning of *terribilis* is also hard to pin down. Prior to this point in Velleius' narrative, its only appearance had been to describe Mithridates who, after seizing Asia and putting to death Roman citizens in 88 BC, was considered a threat (*terribilis*) to Italy (2.18.3). The result of the ensuing First Mithridatic War was a Roman victory (although Mithridates himself was not crushed until 63 BC by Pompey). The second two appearances of *terribilis* in the text also relate to the defeated side: one concerns Gnaeus Pompey and the Battle of Munda (2.55.2) and the other describes the appearance of Antony's ships at the Battle of Actium (2.84.1). Seager interprets the Caesar / Pompey passage as suggesting that Caesar is going to win, despite Pompey's moral superiority ('implying that the principal reasons for supporting him [Caesar] were self-interest and fear').⁹¹ Its appearance elsewhere to describe the conquered party suggests that in fact the word does not point directly to Caesar's victory, but it may be suggestive of the fear that Caesar could inspire. Caesar himself uses the word *terror* in his commentary to denote the reaction at Rome to news of his approach (BC 1.14.1).⁹² Perhaps Velleius also suggests the damage that Caesar could do to Rome, just as we saw earlier with the use of *exitabilis*. Crucially, in using *terribilis*, Velleius does not shy away from an unfavourable term – used elsewhere to denote enemies of Rome – to describe how a Roman might have viewed Caesar's cause.

The references to appearance (*videri, speciosa*), the allusions to other texts and the possibility of double meanings all make for a complicated and multi-layered passage. This mirrors the complexities and sensitivities of writing about this period of history from the vantage point of Tiberian Rome. Woodman summarises the dilemma faced by men like Velleius:

⁸⁹ Volker (2012) 113 directs us to Plautus' play, *miles gloriosus*.

⁹⁰ Peer (2015) 131.

⁹¹ Seager (2011) 295-296.

⁹² Volker (2012) 26.

By instinct conservative and traditional... they tended naturally to sympathise with Pompey, the senate's man; yet they lived under a government made possible by Pompey's victorious opponent and the latter's adopted son. The dilemma was resolved... by glorifying Pompey himself, the 'soldier-citizen' whose death was a tragedy, but by criticising the *Pompeiani* in general.⁹³

Just as we saw with Cato, then, Pompey poses a difficult figure for an author in Imperial Rome to handle. With Cato, Velleius never singles him out for direct competition (though in the syncrisis he appears as part of the group that opposed Caesar); with Pompey, Velleius regularly places him side by side with Caesar. Relating the civil conflict, however, Velleius has shifted the focus from Caesar versus Pompey to Caesar versus the Pompeians.

Velleius' contemporary Valerius Maximus is also interested in comparing Pompey and Caesar. When Pompey is mentioned, Caesar appears. W. Martin Bloomer provides several examples to illustrate Valerius' characterisation of Pompey – 'great in himself, no match for Julius Caesar'⁹⁴ – and the climactic place that Valerius gives Caesar in these comparisons.⁹⁵ For example, in the chapter on 'modesty' (*de verucundia*), Valerius enters the text to give his opinion (in the first person) about Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus:

Dicerem non dignus qui vinceretur, nisi a Caesare esset superatus; certe modestus in calamitate: nam quia dignitate sua uti iam non poterat, usus est verecundia. Quam praecipuam in C. quoque Caesare fuisse et saepenumero apparuit et ultimus eius dies significavit.

I should say he did not deserve to be conquered had he not been defeated by Caesar. Certainly he behaved well in misfortune. Since he could no longer employ his dignity, he employed modesty. That C. Caesar too had this quality in no ordinary measure was often evident and the last day of his life showed it.

Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* 4.5.5-6

We find here a two-fold example of Pompey being good but Caesar being better: on the battlefield and in the virtue of modesty. Each time, Pompey is the original focus before being trumped by Caesar. Caesar's *verucundia* at his death (covering the lower part of his body as he collapsed) leads Valerius to conclude this climactic example with a reference to Caesar's divinity. He describes Caesar's 'divine spirit' being separated from his 'mortal body'

⁹³ Woodman (1983) 85.

⁹⁴ Bloomer (1992) 210.

⁹⁵ Bloomer (1992) 207-226.

before closing the whole chapter (bar the external anecdotes which serve as a sort of appendix to each chapter) with the following statement: 'in such a fashion men do not expire but immortal gods return to their abodes' (4.5.6).

Just as we see in Velleius Paterculus, Cato does not serve as a point of comparison for Caesar in Valerius Maximus' text. Examination of Cato's appearances in Valerius shows that there is a consistent lack of political detail; Valerius instead offers us abstract ideas.⁹⁶ At 2.10.8, for example, we hear that 'anyone who may wish to indicate a blameless, excellent citizen [used] Cato's name as a definition'. At 6.2.5 Valerius stresses how Cato has become synonymous with *libertas*: 'what then? Freedom without Cato? No more than Cato without freedom'. Yet references to *libertas* such as these are rooted in no real political context. Valerius has removed any factional struggles – so much so that Bloomer labels Valerius' Cato, as well Valerius' Cicero, an 'ornamental figure, marched out to illustrate apolitical themes' (my emphasis).⁹⁷ The result of partisan politics being excluded from Cato's characterisation is that he does not appear as a counter to Julius Caesar. Even when we hear of Cato's arrest and imprisonment at the hands of Caesar, the illegality of this act and the bitter conflict that this was a part of are completely absent.⁹⁸ Like we see in the text of Velleius Paterculus, then, it is Pompey whom Valerius presents as a counterpoint to Caesar; Cato's role in the political turmoil of the late Republic, as a chief antagonist of Caesar, is absent.

Velleius' description of Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon takes up just one sentence, mirroring Caesar's famous *celeritas*: his demands are rejected;⁹⁹ he judges that he should fight,¹⁰⁰ and he crosses the Rubicon with his army. Pelling pairs Velleius' 'barest mention of the Rubicon' with other absent or barely-developed episodes, including the lack of reference to Caesar's words at Pharsalus ('they would have it so') which feature in the accounts of Suetonius (*Iul.* 30.4) and Plutarch (*Caes.* 46.1-2).¹⁰¹ Further, Velleius says almost nothing about Dyrrachium and Pharsalus.¹⁰² About Dyrrachium, Velleius simply states that 'there followed battles with mixed results, but one of them particularly favoured the

⁹⁶ See Pecchiura (1965) 56.

⁹⁷ Bloomer (1992) 191.

⁹⁸ Bloomer (1992) 217.

⁹⁹ The ablative absolute *spretis omnibus* might recall the language of Caesar's commentaries given that this is such a common Caesarian device. See, for example, Goldhurst (1954) 302: 'He uses it more facily (and possibly more often) than any other Latin writer, so much so that it becomes the obvious mark of his style'.

¹⁰⁰ Velleius' *bellandum* is later echoed by Suetonius' *agenda* (in Caesar's direct speech) at the banks of the Rubicon (*Iul.* 31.2).

¹⁰¹ Pelling (2011a) 166.

¹⁰² Woodman (1983) 91.

Pompeians, with Caesar's men suffering a serious defeat' (2.51.3). About Pharsalus, Velleius declares that 'the restricted scope of my composition does not allow a detailed account' (2.52.3). Velleius often omits what we might on first glance expect him to dwell on, as noted earlier with regard to Caesar's absence from the Catilinarian debate.

While Velleius, writing a history, could hardly have omitted all allusions to Caesar's civil wars, Valerius Maximus was telling selected anecdotes for moral improvement and so did not necessarily need to include them. It is interesting to note, then, that Valerius incorporates several references to Caesar's civil wars (though he does not mention the Rubicon crossing).¹⁰³ Like Velleius, Valerius does not explicitly blame Caesar. For example, during the description of the gruesome aftermath of the Battle of Munda (7.6.5) – when Caesarian troops attached the bodies of their slain (Roman) opponents to spears fastened into the earth in order to provide a makeshift wall for their camp – Valerius appears to shift responsibility away from Caesar: it is the soldiers themselves who are responsible for this deed and not Divus Iulius (7.6.5), as Wardle points out.¹⁰⁴ What we do not have in the works of Velleius Paterculus or Valerius Maximus when it comes to potentially the most problematic episodes of the civil wars is blanket silence. Velleius in particular presents the civil war as a crucial moment in both Roman history and his historiographical survey, but it is undeniable that a lot of material which might have been there is not – including more on the events at the banks of the Rubicon, the river's status as a boundary, and facts about individual battles of the ensuing civil wars.

1.5. Assassination

Arguably even more controversial than his civil wars was Caesar's assassination. As noted above, it had been decreed soon afterwards that meetings of the Senate were not allowed to be held on the anniversary, renamed a 'day of parricide' (*parricidium*, Suet. *Iul.* 88). Over seventy years later, the case of Cremutius Cordus demonstrates what could be at stake for a historian choosing to relate this historic event. We will find that Velleius sets up Caesar's death by depicting him at the absolute pinnacle of human success, that he presents Brutus and Cassius as inextricably linked to the topic of Caesar's assassination (even before it takes

¹⁰³ Wardle (1997) 329 explores how Valerius incorporates Caesar's civil war into his text, including using it as an unspecified setting for noteworthy incidents (such as the bravery of Caesius Scaeva) and as a temporal device.

¹⁰⁴ Wardle (1997) 329. This is despite other sources (Dio, Florus and Plutarch) suggesting that Caesar played a particularly prominent role in this battle. See Woodman (1983) 108 for references.

place within the narrative), and that he chooses to follow the assassination episode with the crown incident at the Lupercalia which had actually happened a month beforehand.

In the chapter before the assassination, Velleius relates Caesar's victories at Thapsus in April 46 BC and at Munda in March 45 BC. As well as emphasising his famous *celeritas* (his victory at Thapsus occurring just one sentence after his arrival, for example), Velleius draws attention to Caesar's command over *fortuna*:

Sequens fortunam suam Caesar pervectus in Africam est quam occiso C. Curione, Iulianarum duce partium, Pompeiani obtinebant exercitus. Ibi primo varia fortuna mox pugnavit sua inclinataeque hostium copiae... Sua Caesarem in Hispaniam comitata fortuna est, sed nullum umquam atrocius periculosiusque ab eo initum proelium, adeo ut plus quam dubio Marte descenderet equo consistensque ante recedentem suorum aciem, increpata prius fortuna, quod se in eum servasset exitum, denuntiaret militibus vestigio se non recessurum.

Following up his good fortune, Caesar sailed over to Africa, which Pompeian troops had held in their power since Curio, leader of the Julian party, had met his end. There he fought, with mixed fortunes initially, but he was then attended by his usual good fortune, and the enemy forces were driven back... Caesar's usual good fortune went with him into Spain, but never did he engage in any battle more fierce or perilous. In fact, when the outcome was more than doubtful, he got off his horse, stood in front of his retreating battle line, and, after denouncing Fortune for having preserved him to face such an end, declared to his men that he would not take a single step back.

Historia Romana 2.55.1-3

While a general *fortuna* is often the subject of a verb, the only time in the whole opus that *sua fortuna* is the subject of a verb is here with Caesar: *sua Caesarem in Hispaniam comitata fortuna est*.¹⁰⁵ It is only Caesar's fortune which is substantial enough to govern a verb and relegate its owner to the accusative case. Furthermore, while elsewhere in the text fortune is described as changeable,¹⁰⁶ here we see that Caesar's 'usual fortune' is not (at this point) considered (at least by Caesar) to be unpredictable. Just as we saw with Velleius' Rubicon episode, Caesar exhibits no trace of self-doubt. When the outcome of the battle seems uncertain, Velleius uses epic phraseology (*dubio Marte*) to raise the stakes

¹⁰⁵ On the *Fortuna Caesaris*, see Weinstock (1971) 112-127.

¹⁰⁶ This is a motif seen at several points in Velleius' work, including with regard to Pompey. See, for example, 2.53.3: 'Fortune was in the case of this man [Pompey] so capricious that, recently lacking land to conquer, he was not lacking land for his burial'.

even higher – a rhetorical construction focalised through Caesar to match the *gloria Caesaris*.¹⁰⁷ Caesar becomes all the more resolute and exerts an arrogant authority over fortune by chastising it (*inrepatā fortunā*). Velleius thus builds a picture of an almost supra-human figure, swiftly gaining ever more glory, and able to manipulate both fortune and his troops alike. The use of focalisation and *oratio obliqua* allows the reader to observe what Caesar thinks is the right thing to say to his men, and the outcome suggests he is right: the battle line is re-established by the end of the chapter (2.55.4).

His victory at Munda in March 45 BC, which would be his final military engagement, is presented as the most brutal and dangerous of all his battles. The use of *atrox* (2.55.3) is particularly intriguing since elsewhere Velleius uses this word to relate disturbances with a ‘civil’ dimension: the killing of Tiberius Gracchus (2.7.2) and the Social War (2.15.2, 2.16.4, 2.21.3). Velleius therefore does not shy away from using vocabulary which emphasises the civil and brutal nature of the Battle of Munda. We found similarly emotive terms earlier with *exitiabilis* to describe Caesar’s pact with Pompey and Crassus, and *terribiliora* to refer to Caesar’s cause. Moreover Velleius had used this word to refer proleptically to Caesar’s death: Gaius Cassius was described as *atrocissimi mox auctor facinoris* (‘soon to be the perpetrator of a most atrocious crime’, 2.46.5). This linguistic echo here at 2.55.3 subtly prefigures the description of the assassination itself which occurs in the very next chapter, 2.56.

Velleius opens 2.56 with the words *Caesar omnium victor* (‘victorious over all his opponents’, 2.56.1). Caesar is at the peak of his military success. He pardons all who had borne arms against him, an act which surpasses human belief (2.56.1). The idea of exceeding mortal standards recalls his introduction into the text at 2.41.1 (‘his courage transcended human nature and surpassed human belief’).¹⁰⁸ He seems to be more than human which has the effect of raising the imminent crime to an almost sacrilegious level as well as looking proleptically towards Caesar’s deification (though this is not something that is included in Velleius’ text).¹⁰⁹ His return to Rome is then presented as stunningly elaborate and he entertains the city to repletion. Spectacles include a gladiatorial show, mock battles,

¹⁰⁷ See Elefante (1997) 345.

¹⁰⁸ At almost the very end of the opus, Velleius writes about Tiberius ‘With what dutiful generosity, a generosity beyond human belief, is he now constructing a temple to his father’ (*quam pia munificentia superque humanam evecta fidem templum patri molitur*, 2.130.1) – *evecta* picking up on *evectus* for Caesar at 2.41.1. It should be noted that the concept of surpassing human belief does not occur in Velleius before Caesar. Interestingly, it is not Caesar or Tiberius themselves who surpass human belief but their virtues, *fides* and *munificentia* respectively.

¹⁰⁹ For a sacrilegious dimension to Caesar’s death in the text of Valerius Maximus, see Wardle (1997) 336.

mounted elephants and a public banquet lasting several days (2.56.1). In his subsequent account of Caesar's five triumphs, Velleius makes no reference to the disturbingly civil (familial even) aspect of any victories; instead he highlights the exotic / foreign materials of each triumph's emblem (2.56.2).¹¹⁰ Velleius fails to mention that Caesar returned to Rome in October 47 and July 46 'since references to Caesar's domestic activities would detract from his military image'.¹¹¹ Further still, he places all of Caesar's five triumphs at his final return to Rome in October 45 when in reality only the Spanish triumph took place then; the previous four were all held earlier, in August or September 46, in the space of a single month (Suet. *Iul.* 37.2).¹¹² Locating them all at the start of chapter 56 – closer in time to the assassination than they actually were and physically closer in the text – makes for a heightened sense of *peripeteia* at his demise:

Neque illi tanto viro et tam clementer omnibus victoriis suis uso plus quinque mensium principalis quies contigit. Quippe cum mense Octobri in urbem revertisset, idibus Martiis, coniurationis auctoribus Bruto et Cassio, quorum alterum promittendo consulatum non obligaverat, contra differendo Cassium offenderat, adiectis etiam consiliariis caedis familiarissimis omnium et fortuna partium eius in summum evectis fastigium, D. Bruto et C. Trebonio aliisque clari nominis viris, interemptus est.

But it fell to this great man, who had been so merciful in all his victories, to have peaceful enjoyment of supreme power for no more than five months. He returned to the city in the month of October and was murdered on the Ides of March in a conspiracy led by Brutus and Cassius, the first of whom he had not managed to conciliate with the guarantee of a consulship, while Cassius he had alienated by postponing that office. There were even a number of Caesar's closest friends involved in the plot to kill him, who had been elevated to the highest positions thanks to the good fortune of his party – Decimus Brutus, Gaius Trebonius, and others of great renown.

Historia Romana 2.56.3

¹¹⁰ In fact, depictions of Roman adversaries had been exhibited during these triumphs although their names were not included; Caesar refrained only from displaying Pompey's image (App. *B. Civ.* 2.101). See Beard (2007) 123-124.

¹¹¹ Woodman (1983) 104.

¹¹² Woodman (1983) 104.

Caesar's death in March is the culmination of one long sentence which had started with the month of October, implying that ever since Caesar's return to Rome and his spectacular triumphs as detailed at 2.56.2, time was in some way leading up to his assassination. The focus on mercy and peace at the start of this passage is intriguing given that elsewhere Velleius refers to Caesar's plans in 44 BC to engage in war against the Parthians (see 2.59.4).¹¹³ Nonetheless *clementia* was a virtue very much associated with Caesar.¹¹⁴ A temple was voted to him and his clemency, for example, shortly before he died (Dio 44.6; App. *B.Civ.* 2.106). Tiberius also promoted this virtue. It appeared on Tiberian coinage (fig. 3), the image of a shield calling to mind Augustus' *clipeus virtutis* which also celebrated *clementia*,¹¹⁵ and later it appeared in a decree concerning Tiberius' treatment of Agrippina the Elder.¹¹⁶ Further, in AD 28, just two years before Vinicius' accession to the consulship, an altar of clemency was dedicated by the Senate (Tac. *Ann.* 4.74). The inclusion of *clementia* on Tiberian coinage provides a sense of continuity between Caesar, Augustus and Tiberius, mirrored in Velleius' use of this virtue in his text to relate to Caesar, Augustus and Tiberius. By linking clemency to greatness and peace, Velleius also underscores the brutality (and perhaps irrationality) of Caesar's assassination. Finally, *principalis quies* is an unusual phrase given that *principes* conventionally demonstrated not *quies* but wakefulness / attentiveness: *vigilantia*.¹¹⁷ The term *principalis* looks proleptically to the Principate itself and so presents Caesar as a forefather of the current system of government.¹¹⁸ Immediately after Augustus' death, for example, we see the word again: 'the first of Tiberius' imperial acts (*principalium operum*) was the reorganisation of the voting assemblies on the pattern that the deified Augustus had left behind in his own handwriting' (2.124.3).

Velleius focuses on the assassins and not on the details of Caesar's death.¹¹⁹ He does not attribute principled, constitution-related motivations to Brutus and Cassius, and he says nothing at all about the motivations of the other assassins; there is no reference to

¹¹³ Elefante (1997) 346 and Woodman (1983) 110.

¹¹⁴ On Caesar's famed clemency, see Weinstock (1971) 233-243, Griffin (2003) and Konstan (2005).

¹¹⁵ Velleius regularly notes Augustus' *clementia*. See, for example, 2.87.2, where he also refers to Augustus' *fortuna*.

¹¹⁶ The decree offered thanks to Tiberius and bestowed a golden gift on Jupiter Capitolinus. Tiberius had shown *clementia* towards Agrippina the Elder insofar as he did not have her strangled or her body thrown down the *scalae gemoniae* (Suet. *Tib.* 53; Tac. *Ann.* 6.25.3).

¹¹⁷ See Elefante (1997) 346 and Woodman (1983) 110.

¹¹⁸ Contrast Seager (2011) 303.

¹¹⁹ Lobur (2011) 214 notes the contrast with Velleius' account of the deaths of Brutus and Cassius (2.70.1-2.72.2). Velleius describes precisely how they die and even includes direct speech.

the interests of the Republic here.¹²⁰ The conspirators are depicted as *ingrati*, a word Velleius himself uses to describe them in the following chapter (2.57.1). The sentence structure is uncomplicated to reflect the apparent simplicity of the conspirators' motives: *promittendo ... non obligaverat... differendo ... offenderat*. Velleius places their intentions on a lowly level, the juxtaposition of *caedis* and *familiarissimis* really driving home this sense of ingratitude and betrayal. While Cassius was motivated by personal reasons (*offenderat*), Brutus was not, though the implication is that personal obligation should have been enough to restrain him. The reader had first met Brutus five chapters earlier, within the context of Caesar's magnanimous show of mercy towards his opponents – including Brutus – following the Battle of Pharsalus. In an epic-sounding interjection Velleius had exclaimed: 'Immortal gods, what a price this merciful man later paid for his kindness to Brutus!' (2.52.5).¹²¹ Cassius' introduction into the text had also anticipated the assassination, as we have seen: when praising Cassius' military success in Syria, Velleius noted the 'atrocious crime' he would later commit (2.46.5). Of course Cassius too had opposed Caesar and then been pardoned by him. It is clear that in Velleius' account, the figures of Brutus and Cassius are fused to the events of the Ides of March.¹²²

We see a similar trend in the text of Valerius Maximus since in all appearances of Brutus and Cassius, the reader is reminded of their crime.¹²³ Valerius describes how Brutus destroyed all his own virtues by killing the father of his country: 'by a single act he hurled them [his virtues] into the abyss and drenched all memory of his name with inexpiable abhorrence' (6.4.5). Valerius also writes that Cassius 'is never to be named without prefix of public parricide' (1.8.8). Out of the eight references to Caesar's assassination in Valerius, five describe it as 'parricide' (1.6.13, 1.7.2, 1.8.8, 4.5.6 and 6.8.4).¹²⁴ The assassins are emphatically maligned and the paternal bond of Caesar to the state is emphasised.¹²⁵ According to Valerius, the result of Caesar's assassination is not the end of Caesar's life but his apotheosis. His death regularly occasions a reference to Caesar's divine status while still alive. For example, concluding an anecdote about Cassius fleeing from the battlefield of Philippi after seeing Caesar's ghost, Valerius writes 'no, Cassius, you had not killed Caesar,

¹²⁰ Later, Velleius tells us how Brutus rejected Cassius' suggestion that they should also kill Antony and destroy Caesar's will: Brutus insisted that their goal was nothing more than the blood of the tyrant (*tyranni ... sanguinem*, 2.58.2).

¹²¹ This is the first of two authorial exclamations to the gods. The second occurs at 2.106.1 when Velleius exclaims how much could be written about Tiberius' generalship (2.106.1).

¹²² On the memory of Brutus and Cassius in literature, see Rawson (1986).

¹²³ See Bloomer (1992) 222.

¹²⁴ Wardle (1997) 334.

¹²⁵ Wardle (1997) 326. On the assassins' isolation from praise, see Bloomer (1992) 223. The word 'parricide' never appears in the text of Velleius Paterculus.

for no divinity can be extinguished; but by violating him while he was still in his mortal body you deserved to have the god thus hostile' (1.8.8). Velleius, in contrast, never explicitly acknowledges Caesar's apotheosis.

Velleius' narration of Caesar's assassination continues as follows:

Cui magnam invidiam conciliarat M. Antonius, omnibus audendis paratissimus, consulatus collega, inponendo capiti eius Lupercalibus sedentis pro rostris insigne regium, quod ab eo ita repulsum erat, ut non offensus videretur.

Considerable animosity had been roused toward Caesar thanks to Mark Antony, a man ready for any reckless venture and Caesar's colleague in the consulship.

Antony had set a royal diadem on Caesar's head as he sat before the Rostra during the Lupercalia, and though it was refused to him, the refusal was given in such a way as to suggest no offense on Caesar's part.

Historia Romana 2.56.4

Velleius draws particular attention to this episode by placing it out of chronological order, putting it after the assassination when it had actually happened the month before.¹²⁶ In order to help understand Velleius' treatment of this anecdote, it is interesting to look ahead to later authors and note that this incident would also be recorded by Plutarch (*Caes.* 61 and *Ant.* 12), Suetonius (*Iul.* 79.2), Appian (*B. Civ.* 2.109) and Dio (44.11), as well as in Livy's *Periochae* (116).¹²⁷ Suetonius follows the crown incident with people's fears that Caesar might move the centre of power to Alexandria or Ilium, as well as the proposal of Lucius Cotta that Caesar should have the title 'king' conferred on him. For Livy, Plutarch, Appian and Dio, the crown episode is also part of a larger set of issues relating to kingship which included, for example, the use of the term *rex* and the expulsion from office of Epidius Marullus and Caesetius Flavius.¹²⁸ Here in Velleius, however, it is an isolated anecdote inserted between Caesar's assassination and his failure to heed warnings about his safety. Why include it at all? Is this Velleius' own disapproving voice, warning his contemporaries against aspiring to kingship and/or arousing *invidia*?¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Cicero tells us that Caesar himself had it recorded in the *Fasti* that Antony, by order of the people, had offered the kingship to Caesar who chose not to accept it (*Cic. Phil.* 2.85.87).

¹²⁷ See Weinstock (1971) 331 for an overview of the sources for this episode which he calls 'one of the most discussed events in Caesar's life'.

¹²⁸ These two men were tribunes of the plebs who had allegedly attempted a conspiracy against Caesar on the grounds that he was aiming at monarchy (*App. B. Civ.* 108; *Liv. Per.* 116).

¹²⁹ For *invidia* as the hallmark of the Republic, see Bloomer (2011) 115.

Tiberius appears to have been sensitive to the implications of different titles and honours, particularly when it came to connotations of monarchy. One of Tiberius' primary virtues seems to have been *moderatio*¹³⁰ and this, like *clementia*, was celebrated on contemporary coinage (fig. 4). One area in which Tiberius famously applied *moderatio* was the rejection of many honours that were offered to him. These include the names *imperator*,¹³¹ *pater patriae* and (except in letters to kings) *Augustus*; the voting of temples and priests in his honour; the erecting of statues and busts without his permission, and the placing of the *corona civica* at his door (Suet. *Tib.* 26). Tacitus relates that Tiberius berated those who called him *dominus* or his work *divinus* (*Ann.* 2.87) and, according to Dio, he often declared 'I am master of the slaves, emperor of the soldiers, and chief of the rest' (57.8.2). This is in contrast to the impression that Velleius gives his readers of Caesar in the Lupercalia passage. There, although Velleius places all the blame for this episode on Antony's shoulders, he narrates that Caesar did not seem to be offended by this monarchical act. This suggests that Caesar's rejection of the crown was understood by some to be a façade, thereby retrospectively providing a motive for Caesar's assassins. Velleius distances his narratorial voice from this idea by employing the verb *videri*. We might also recall Velleius' explicit disapproval at Pompey's wearing of a crown at 2.40.4, just before Caesar 'grabs' Velleius' pen and enters the narrative. Drawing attention to the Lupercalia episode by placing it after the assassination, Velleius invites the reader to compare the anti-monarchical stance of the current *princeps* and implies that there could be no such motive for a modern-day conspiracy.

Concluding remarks

Time and genre have been particularly important for this investigation into Velleius Paterculus's treatment of Caesar. His historiographical survey encompassed mythological times to contemporary events, regularly bringing the current year to the reader's attention. With the Principate still new, it was important to root Tiberius to the past, and Caesar was a crucial part of Tiberius' claims to legitimacy. Apparent within the text both linguistically and thematically was a sense of continuity, which stretched from Tiberius back to Caesar via Augustus. On a micro-level, I have found instances of Velleius manipulating time and space when it came to his presentation of certain Caesarian episodes, bringing Caesar in or

¹³⁰ *Moderatio*, Lewis and Short, I: moderating, moderation in anything; a restraining.

¹³¹ Dio 57.8 points out that he allowed soldiers to call him *imperator*.

keeping him out of the text to serve a purpose within the narrative. During his early appearances in the text, for example, the impression was that Caesar was absent from Rome. He was not named in Velleius' account of the Catilinarian debate, meaning that a contrast with Cato's ideology could be sidestepped. (Indeed Velleius consistently avoided presenting Cato as a counterpoint to Caesar, preferring Pompey to play this part.) Caesar's 'physical' entry into the text, and the first time he is shown to be in Rome, occurred during Velleius' account of 59 BC, when he enters into the consulship that was to have such an impact upon the Roman Republic.

Time was also manipulated towards the end of Caesar's life when all five triumphs were represented as having occurred at his final return to Rome in October 45 BC. This made for an even greater sense of *peripeteia* at his subsequent assassination, a crime which was characterised by the theme of ingratitude and which irreversibly disgraced the reputations of Brutus and Cassius – according to both Velleius and Valerius Maximus. I have suggested that Velleius' choice to highlight the Lupercalia episode (by placing it after his account of the assassination) had the effect of retrospectively linking Caesar's assassination to his aspirations to kingship, though Velleius was careful not to attribute blame using his narratorial voice. Thus by unravelling the minutiae of Velleius' language and through close examination of the narrative structure of his work, I have found a highly sensitive and ambivalent treatment of Caesar. Far from simply an overpowering character that crashed into the text, my reading has demonstrated that there was in fact a strong sense of light and shade. Velleius sometimes brought Caesar closer to the reader, sometimes pushed him into the background – just as he sometimes aligned Caesar and Tiberius (e.g. with the virtue of prudence), and sometimes separated them (e.g. as aspirants to kingship).

I have argued that the format of the work, its fast pace likened to 'a wheel or a cascading, swirling stream' (1.16.1), allowed Velleius to omit altogether certain elements of Caesar's history; it is difficult to speculate about the significance of such omissions given Velleius' self-conscious selectivity. There was, of course, a host of material that he had to overlook if he was to stay within the narrow confines that he had set himself. Nonetheless, given that Velleius showed Caesar having a crucial impact on the very format of his writing, I have suggested that Caesar's presentation across the rest of the text demanded consideration. Velleius' account is organised in such a way as to magnify certain aspects of Caesar's life and legacy (e.g. the significance of 59 BC, the scale of his reversal of fortune in 44 BC, the monarchic associations of his assassination) and to minimise other aspects (e.g. his ideological contest with Cato, the Rubicon's status as a boundary that was treasonable to cross, his funeral and apotheosis). Finally, while the complexities and problems involved

in writing about Caesar in this genre and at this point in history were many, so – I have noted – were the benefits: he provided a vehicle for increased drama, tension and pathos within the narrative, and he provided an all-important anchor for Velleius' portrayal of Tiberius' 'Republican' principate.

CALIGULA, CLAUDIUS, NERO:

The moral and philosophical relevance of Seneca's Caesar(s)

This chapter uses a selection of works by Seneca to explore Caesar's literary reception during the reigns of Caligula, Claudius and Nero. My intention is to analyse how different aspects of Caesar's life are handled by Seneca over the course of this quarter century, and to evaluate how Seneca's treatment relates to other representations from this period. This is an especially delicate era for the literary depiction of Caesar since it comes after the recirculation of Cremutius Cordus' works and is followed by Lucan's creation of Caesar the monstrous epic character in the *Pharsalia*.¹ Caesar continued to be important for the legitimacy of the Julio-Claudian regime; plaques named Caligula 'the great-great-grandson of Divus Iulius', for example.² But he also remained dangerous, inextricably linked to the topic of kingly behaviour and assassination. Indeed Rome witnessed the assassination of a second Gaius Julius Caesar with Caligula's death in AD 41, and the first subsequent meeting of the Senate was conducted away from the Senate House because it was called 'Julian' (Suet. *Gaius* 60). As well as the spheres of legitimation and assassination, Caesar was also relevant for a number of individual policies that Caligula, Claudius and Nero undertook. Unpicking the host of material evidence that is available (such as inscriptions commemorating Claudius' campaign in Britain and his admission of Gauls into the Roman Senate)³ will enable a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding Seneca's literary portraits of Caesar.

Seneca is particularly valuable for our investigation into Caesar's reception because he experienced life under the first five Roman emperors, meaning that we can explore different strands and various subtleties in Seneca's treatment of Caesar as we move further away from Caesar's life and times. Further, how Seneca handles Caesar seems to have depended not just on the time at which he was writing but also the agenda of each work

¹ Seneca's first text, *De Consolatio Ad Marciam*, was written after Cremutius Cordus' works had been recirculated (*Marc.* 1.3-4). Suetonius (*Gaius* 16.1) writes that their recirculation happened under Caligula (AD 37-41). See Bellemore (1992) for the suggestion that they were recirculated during the last few years of Tiberius' principate (AD 14-37), following the fall of Sejanus.

² *CIL* II 4716 and *CIL* II 6208.

³ On these events, see Osgood (2011) 93-97, 166.

and, even within the same work, the drift of the argument and the topic at stake. Caesar appears in a number of Seneca's works in a variety of guises: he is depicted as a pivot between Republic and Principate, and as exemplary in his handling of grief in *Ad Marciam*; a model of restraint and clemency in *De Ira* (but absent from Seneca's treatise *De Clementia*); the instigator of the civil wars and proof of the futility of tyrannicide in *De Beneficiis*; and a counterpoint to Cato in the *Epistulae*, with Caesar's *ambitio* unequivocally condemned by our author. At times Caesar is central to rhetorical or philosophical questions; at other times he is simply mentioned in passing.⁴ It is the texts in which Seneca engages in a sustained way with the figure of Caesar which will be discussed in this chapter. One exception which will be discussed briefly is the *Apocolocyntosis*, a satire on the deification of Claudius. It is invested in a theme that is relevant for this investigation (since Caesar was the first historical Roman to be deified, his divine lineage a vital part of his descendants' identities), but it does not explicitly incorporate Caesar.

Seneca witnessed the prodigies at Augustus' death (*Naturales Questiones* 1.13); he entered the Senate probably during Tiberius' reign, definitely by AD 39 (Dio 59.19.7-8),⁵ and he was known but not liked by Caligula (Dio 59.19.7-8). He was exiled by Claudius in AD 41, recalled eight years later at the intervention of Claudius' wife Agrippina, whereupon he was hired as tutor of rhetoric to Agrippina's son Nero (Tac. *Ann.* 12.8.2). He would go on to become an indispensable advisor and speech-writer to Nero when he became princeps in AD 54, even writing the eulogy delivered by Nero at Claudius' funeral (Tac. *Ann.* 13.3.1). Thus in Seneca's later works, given that he helped shape Nero's political persona,⁶ his treatment of political figures like Caesar seems messily intertwined with the Neronian regime. In AD 65, retired from public life having experienced more than fifteen years at the heart of the imperial court, he was forced to commit suicide following accusations of involvement in the Pisonian conspiracy, a plot to assassinate Nero (Tac. *Ann.* 15.60.2) – a plot arguably modelled on the assassination of Caesar.⁷ What this means for research into literary representations of Caesar is that almost two thousand years on we can tease apart different strands of Caesar's legacy from texts written across different principates, by an author who had an exceptionally complex relationship with the regime. Seneca must be studied in his own right (pursuing a philosophical agenda in many of his prose works, influenced by previous literary texts and of course his own experiences); at other times,

⁴ See Griffin (1976) 184 for Seneca's 'neutral allusions' to Caesar.

⁵ See Griffin (1976) 43-44.

⁶ Whitton (2013) 154 asserts that 'Seneca is the regime'.

⁷ On the Pisonian conspiracy, and other conspiracies in Roman history, see Pagán (2011) 41-46.

however, he should be understood as intricately engaged with the regime under which he was writing.⁸

Unlike Velleius Paterculus who could hardly have omitted Caesar from a historical survey culminating in the principate of Tiberius, Seneca did not have to incorporate Caesar into any of his texts, and yet he makes several appearances across the corpus, in a variety of ways. The first text to be explored is Seneca's earliest surviving work, *De Consolatione Ad Marciam*. This is the first time we see Seneca dealing with the topic of Caesar. The text consoles Marcia (an elite Roman woman whose relationship to Seneca is unknown)⁹ over the death of her son Metilius, and it glorifies the achievements of her father Cremutius Cordus who was forced to commit suicide and his literary works destroyed, allegedly for calling Cassius 'the last of the Romans' (Tac. *Ann.* 4.34.1).¹⁰ This text serves as a useful springboard for our investigation into Seneca's treatment of Caesar for several reasons: firstly, it deals with the topics of time, memorialisation, exemplarity, and literature's relationship to the state. Early on in the text, for instance, Seneca celebrates the 'changed times' which brought about the recirculation of Cordus' works (1.3). These themes provide a framework for questions about Caesar's function and relevance for the era in which the work was written. Secondly, it exhibits the different, often subtle ways of writing about Caesar within a single text. Seneca alludes to Caesar's excursus into Britain and his famous *celeritas* (14.3), and his Janus-like role between Republic and Principate (14.3-15.3). While he is depicted as a very human figure, mourning the loss of his daughter (14.3), an intertextual nod to Virgil's *Aeneid* reminds the reader of Caesar's role as divine forefather of the Julian dynasty (15.1). While at one point he is held up as an *exemplum* to emulate due to his management of grief (14.3), at another point he is associated with brigandage and slaughter (20.5-6).

I will then turn to two of Seneca's other dialogues: *De Ira*, written under Claudius,¹¹ and *De Beneficiis*, written under Nero.¹² Caesar is explicitly referred to on two occasions in

⁸ The *Apocolocyntosis*, for example, may have been produced for the Saturnalia at which Nero would have been present. See Nauta (1987) and Champlin (2003) 149.

⁹ Seneca does not claim to know Marcia or her family. Hine (2014) 4 concludes that *Ad Marciam* is 'not simply a work of private, personal condolence'. See also Gloyn (2017) 15 who notes that Seneca's consolations are designed to 'reach the widest audience possible'.

¹⁰ The charges against Cremutius Cordus are discussed below.

¹¹ Abel (1961) 164-165 accepts Coccia's view that this text should be dated shortly after Caligula's death and just before Seneca's exile later in AD 41. Griffin (1976) 396 will only go so far as to say that it was written by AD 52.

¹² At exactly what point during Nero's principate this work was composed is impossible to discern. The earliest possible date of composition is AD 56 (when Caninius Rebilus died, whom Seneca criticises at *Ben.* 2.31.6) and the latest is AD 64 (the date of *Epistle* 81 in which Seneca remarks on this work). See Griffin and Inwood (2011) 3.

De Ira. He is depicted as a model of restraint, acting *clementissime* when he destroys a set of letters written to Pompey which would have incriminated their authors (2.23.4), and he is shown at the moment of his assassination, unable to satisfy the insatiable demands of so-called friends (2.30.4-5). It shows bitter hostility to Caligula and may well have been written when the memory of his unrestrained behaviour – and of his assassination – was still fresh.¹³ I will explore how Seneca treats Caligula's assassination quite differently when compared with his presentation of Caesar's assassination. Seneca places the blame on the shoulders of Caligula himself who acts arrogantly and immorally; for Caesar's assassination, Seneca places the blame on the avarice of Caesar's so-called friends.

Seneca's interest in the motives behind Caesar's assassination continues in his treatise on the exchange of goods and services, *De Beneficiis*. The subject of Caesar's assassination appears in the second of seven books, a book which offers precepts both for bestowing benefits (2.1-17) and for receiving them (2.18-25). Seneca offers a discussion on the circumstances leading up to Caesar's assassination, focussing on Brutus' acceptance of Caesar's *clementia* (2.20). Caesar's assassination is here representative of political assassinations in general and their ineffectiveness in particular, and it is set alongside examples regarding the early kings of Rome.

I will then consider the *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*, a collection of one hundred and twenty-four letters written by Seneca at the end of his life.¹⁴ Caesar appears numerous times in the letters. While I will note passing references to him, I will focus more deeply on those occasions when Caesar receives sustained or particularly striking treatment (namely letters 94, 95 and 104). As with all texts under consideration, I will explore the extent to which the genre, the aims of the work and its intended readership are relevant in assessing the portrayal of Caesar. In the letters, for example, Seneca presents himself as educating his friend Lucilius on moral improvement through philosophy.¹⁵ Exemplarity therefore plays an important role due to the collection's didactic function, and we will see that Caesar tends to be held up as a negative *exemplum*. As John Schafer points out, 'Seneca repeatedly insists on the effectiveness of *exempla*: lessons take much better when they are *shown* rather than merely *said*... The work itself is an exemplum of its own doctrine'.¹⁶ In the letters, then, the moral and philosophical relevance of Seneca's Caesar(s) comes into sharp focus due to the pedagogical nature of the work.

¹³ See Basore (1932) xi.

¹⁴ More were known in antiquity, now lost. See Edwards (2015) 42.

¹⁵ On Seneca's authorial persona as 'master instructing pupil', see Coleman (1974) 276.

¹⁶ Schafer (2009) 68-69.

The topic of Seneca's Caesar(s) remains surprisingly under-studied despite recent interest in memory, intertextuality and silence. Silvia Montiglio (2008), for example, discusses Seneca's interest in controlling memory. She connects this with 'the Stoic ideal of wisdom as "total and instantaneous"', where time is collapsed and a 'synoptic picture' of life emerges.¹⁷ Seneca's interest in time and memory, in particular how he uses memories of the past to benefit the present, has ramifications for how he perceives Caesar's value. Caesar could be a useful illustration, for example, of the pointlessness of tyrannicide. Whereas, though closely associated with *clementia*, he was not a useful *exemplum* for this virtue given the association between his *clementia* and his assassination (and is thus absent from Seneca's treatise on this topic). Marcus Wilson (2015) has recently explored the theme of 'outspoken silence' in Seneca's letters, discussing Seneca's declaration that he will avoid the kind of political material that Cicero includes in his letters (*Ep.* 118.2–3). Wilson shows that Seneca does not simply leave out political content but rather parades the omission: 'The epistles are so ostentatiously apolitical, they are political'.¹⁸ The professed absence of contemporary political comment is particularly interesting given the frequency with which Caesar is mentioned and how politically-loaded certain aspects of his reputation continued to be. Further, the concept of parading an omission might be useful when potentially conspicuous absences in the *Apocolocyntosis* are taken into consideration, especially when Caesar might be evoked implicitly through intertextual allusion.

My approach will again incorporate close readings of the literary material as well as broach wider questions about the relationship of literature to the state regarding the memorialisation of Julius Caesar. The discussion will focus on selected passages from Seneca's immense literary output (which I will handle chronologically), ones which engage in a sustained way with the figure of Caesar. I hope thus to provide a fair illustration of the different roles and functions that Caesar has across Seneca's vast corpus, from Caligula to Nero.

2.1. Historical context: the various strands of Caesar's legacy from Caligula to Nero

Caligula's accession in AD 37 meant that, for a second time, a Gaius Julius Caesar was at Rome's helm. The name 'Gaius Caesar' was not just reminiscent of Julius Caesar but also of

¹⁷ Montiglio (2008) 178.

¹⁸ Wilson (2015) 140.

Augustus' grandson and heir Gaius who had died young.¹⁹ Once emperor Caligula was regularly called Gaius Caesar Augustus, which blended Julius Caesar (and perhaps the young Gaius) with Augustus in onomastic terms.²⁰ Suetonius would later connect the name and manner of death of Julius Caesar and Caligula, commenting that people had observed that all the Caesars whose forename was Gaius perished by the sword (*Gaius* 60). He also relates that prior to Caligula's assassination in AD 41 the Capitol was struck by lightning on the Ides of March, foreshadowing in the minds of some 'the murder of a second distinguished personage, such as had taken place long before on that same day' (*Gaius* 57.2). Similarly, writing towards the end of Domitian's reign (c. AD 93), Josephus would weave elements of Caesar's assassination into his account of Caligula's assassination in book 19 of his *Jewish Antiquities*, as discussed by Victoria Pagán.²¹ Josephus relates, for example, that Charea's watchword was 'libertas', which had of course been Brutus' watchword at Philippi (*AJ* 19.54); that Caligula's co-consul, Gnaeus Sentius Saturnius, called for Charea to be rewarded 'because he is beyond comparison with Cassius and Brutus, the slayers of Julius Caesar' (*AJ* 19.184); and that Caligula's death occurred 'one hundred years after democracy had been laid aside' (*AJ* 19.187), thus dating it in relation to Caesar's first consulship of 59 BC.²²

The Ides of March appear to have been a powerful and relevant memory not just for the unspecified observer (or the later biographer or historiographer) but for Caligula himself. Receiving an oracle warning him about a certain Cassius, Caligula incorrectly believed that it referred to the governor of Asia who was called Cassius Longinus – for the reason that he was a descendant of the Gaius Cassius who had killed Caesar (Dio 59.29.3). Names associated with the conspirators continued to be tied to the memory of the Ides of March. But the assassins / liberators were remembered in conflicting ways. Griffin discusses, for example, how the birthdays of Brutus and Cassius were celebrated by Thrasea Paetus and Helvidius Priscus during Nero's principate:

This reverence for the heroes of the Republic, among whom Cato was always the chief saint, could be called the religion of the Senate... the cult was often associated

¹⁹ On the deaths of Gaius and Lucius, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.3; Suet. *Aug.* 65.1; Dio 55.10.9-10.

²⁰ An example of Caligula's titulature from his reign can be seen on a dedication from the Capitolinum of Brexia / Brescia, *L'Année épigraphique* (2014) 510: C. Caesar Augustus princeps optimus, pont. max, pronepos divi Augusti, trib. pot. IV, cos. design. V, imp. VI, p. p., p. exercit. The phrase 'princeps optimus' seems redolent of Augustus while the term 'pater exercituum' seems evocative of Julius Caesar's relationship with his troops.

²¹ Pagán (2004) 100-101.

²² For the importance placed on this date by Velleius, see Vell. *Pat.* 2.41.4 (discussed in chapter 1); for the importance of this date for Pollio and Diodorus, see the introduction.

with a determination that the power and dignity of the Senate should approximate as closely as possible to what it had been under the Republic.²³

When Caligula had indeed fallen victim to an assassination plot, the first subsequent meeting of the Senate was held in the Capitol and crucially not in the Senate House for the reason that the latter was called 'Julian' (*quia Iulia vocabatur*, Suet. *Gaius* 60). The Curia Iulia had been begun by Julius Caesar shortly before his death in 44 BC, and completed and dedicated by Augustus in 29 BC. The decision to avoid it in the aftermath of Caligula's assassination reflects a desire to escape the name and the power of this ruling family. Indeed Suetonius relates that some people 'proposed that the memory of the Caesars [*Caesarum memoriam*] be done away with and their temples destroyed' (*Gaius* 60). Caesar's temple, the Aedes Divi Iulii, loomed large in the Forum Romanum, immediately visible to the viewer who turned left on exiting the Curia Iulia (for a map, see fig. 5). Straight ahead was the view of the Basilica Iulia. Behind the Curia Iulia, possibly connected to it, was the Forum Iulium with its Temple of Venus Genetrix.²⁴ Both the forum and temple were dedicated on the last day of Caesar's triumph on 26th September 46 BC (Dio 63.22), though work on both continued after Caesar's death.²⁵ The Aedes Divi Iulii had been dedicated by Augustus in 29 BC, its rostra decorated with the beaks of ships captured at Actium. Thus different strands of Caesar's legacy – his name, the date and manner of his death, the assassins themselves, monuments with which he was associated – continued to be highly evocative some eighty years after his death, perhaps receiving even further significance following the assassination of another Gaius Julius Caesar.

During his lifetime, Caligula adopted a number of policies which might call Caesar to mind, so much so that Stefan Weinstock describes him as an 'imitator of Caesar'.²⁶ Caligula's interest in *clementia*, for example, saw him institute an annual festival in AD 39 which featured his own golden image carried in procession to the Capitol.²⁷ His plans to expand into Britain in AD 40, and in particular the emphasis placed on the conquest of Ocean, were also rooted in Caesarian precedent.²⁸ As David Braund explains, 'The emperor who campaigned successfully in Britain would not only emulate Caesar, but also excel

²³ Griffin (1976) 187. See Juv. *Sat.* 5.36-37.

²⁴ See Santangeli Valenzani (2006).

²⁵ See Platner and Ashby (1929) 225-227.

²⁶ Weinstock (1971) 325 n10.

²⁷ Weinstock (1971) 241 brings together the accounts of Dio (59.16.10) and Suetonius (*Gaius* 16.4) to illustrate the various features of the festival.

²⁸ Braund (1996) 94-95 discusses the parade of a golden image of Ocean in Julius Caesar's triumph of 46 BC and suggests a parallel with anecdotes about Caligula's authority over Ocean (which included the drawing up of a battle-line on the shore).

Augustus himself'.²⁹ Lastly, as noted above, two surviving inscriptions, a milestone and a column from Spain, show Caligula memorialised as 'great-great- grandson of Divus Iulius' (*CIL* II 4716 and *CIL* II 6208).³⁰

Unlike Caligula, who was a direct descendant of Augustus (through his mother Agrippina the Elder), Claudius was not a member of the Julian line either by birth or by adoption. Nonetheless Claudius immediately incorporated the names 'Caesar' and 'Augustus' into his titulature which can be seen on the coinage from the beginning of his reign.³¹ Taking the name 'Caesar' when Claudius had no familial claim to it must be viewed as 'a deliberate act of policy, just as it was a deliberate act of policy when Vitellius refused it in 69', as Barbara Levick rightly underscores.³² Were other Caesarian elements important for Claudius' political agenda? The construction of a harbour at Ostia and the draining of the Fucine Lake, both undertaken by Claudius, were works which Caesar had intended to carry out.³³ No evidence suggests that Caesar was explicitly identified by Claudius as an influence behind such strategies, even though later authors might see a pattern. Suetonius, for example, describing Claudius' completion of the harbour at Ostia, relates that this was often envisioned by Divus Iulius (*Claud.* 20.1).

Claudius' interest in Britain provides another significant parallel with Caesar. It has been suggested, for example, that this interest was designed to create a link with Caesar which compensated for Claudius' lack of Julian ancestry.³⁴ Once again, Suetonius recalls Caesar, noting that Divus Iulius was the last to attempt a campaign there (*Claud.* 17.1). No extant evidence from Claudius' reign makes a link back to Caesar with regard to Britain.³⁵ Claudius' success in Britain in AD 43 – 'the running theme of Claudius' reign'³⁶ – saw the Senate award him and his son the title of Britannicus, grant him a triumph, establish an annual festival in honour of his victory, and vote that two arches be erected, one in Gaul from where he had set out to Britain and the other in Rome (Dio 66.22.1-2). Of the arch in Gaul, no trace remains. Of the arch in Rome, which spanned the Via Flaminia and which was built into the Aqua Virgo, a fragment reveals that Claudius was memorialised as 'the first'

²⁹ Braund (1996) 91.

³⁰ See Zarrow (2007) 202.

³¹ Wiseman (1982) 58 n7. See Smallwood (1967) numbers 91, 92 and 93 which are all from AD 41, the year of Claudius' accession.

³² Levick (1981) 96. Vitellius' refusal of the name is discussed below, chapter 4.

³³ For the harbour at Ostia, see Plut. *Caes.* 58.10; for the draining of the Fucine Lake see Suet. *Iul.* 44.3-4.

³⁴ Braund (1996) 97.

³⁵ The only apparent exception seems to be that, during his triumph, Claudius climbed the steps of the Capitol on his knees like Julius Caesar before him (Dio 43.21.2; 60.23.1). See Beard (2007) 249.

³⁶ Braund (1996) 107.

(*primus*) to conquer the kingdoms and peoples beyond Ocean (*CIL* VI 40416).³⁷ No reference is made to the earlier British campaign of Caesar.

Interestingly, however, Caesar is incorporated into this memorial elsewhere. Another inscription attributed to the victory arch is a marble slab on which dedications are made to three members of Claudius' family – to his mother Antonia, his wife Agrippina and his adopted son Nero – suggesting the presence of their statues (*CIL* VI 921a).³⁸ The slab is broken away to the left where the final letters of another dedication remain, and these final letters fit precisely with an inscription honouring Claudius' brother Germanicus who died in AD 19: [G]ermanico / Caisari / [T]i(beri) Augusti f(ilio) / [d]ivi Augusti n(epoti) / [d]ivi Iulii pron(epoti) / [a]uguri flam(ini) Aug(ustali) / co(n)s(uli) II imp(eratori) II (*CIL* VI 921b).³⁹ Germanicus is memorialised as the 'great-grandson of Divus Iulius', just as we saw earlier with the Drusus inscription from Tiberius' reign (where the accompanying inscription concerning Germanicus did not contain a reference to Divus Iulius). In this group of Claudius' family members, then, Julius Caesar is explicitly incorporated into the lineage of Germanicus – and thus also that of Claudius. Caesar's role as the divine ancestor of the dynasty is included on the monument commemorating Claudius' success in Britain; his role as forerunner in the invasion of Britain is not.

There is also silence concerning Caesarian precedent on the Lyon Tablet (*CIL* XIII 1668). Dating to AD 48, this bronze plaque records portions of Claudius' speech advocating the admission into the Roman Senate of leading men from Gallia Comata. The models that Claudius does include are 'my great-uncle Divus Augustus' and 'my uncle Tiberius Caesar' who invited into the Roman Senate 'the whole flower of colonies and municipalities everywhere', and he calls this 'certainly a new custom' (*sane novo m[ore]*) (col II, lines 1-5).⁴⁰ The people whom Augustus and Tiberius had admitted, however, were from Italian country towns. In contrast, Caesar had admitted people from Gaul (Narbonensis) and so might have provided a more relevant *exemplum* for Claudius. Caesar's admission of Gauls into the Senate is a fact 'conspicuous by its absence'⁴¹ from the speech, both the version that is preserved on the bronze tablet and the version that Tacitus provides in his *Annals* (11.24).⁴² Strikingly, Caesar is mentioned elsewhere on the Lyon Tablet. Claudius states that

³⁷ For more on this arch, including its representation on coinage, see Barrett (1991) and Osgood (2011) 93-97.

³⁸ See Barrett (1991) 7.

³⁹ Barrett (1991) 7 points out that this observation was first made by Mommsen.

⁴⁰ Translation by Osgood (2011) 166.

⁴¹ Levick (1981) 98.

⁴² On the relationship between the Lyon Tablet and Tacitus' account, see especially Griffin (1982) and Wellesley (1954).

if anyone reflects that the Gauls resisted Divus Iulius in war for ten years, he should consider that they have been loyal to Rome for a hundred years since then (col. II, lines 32-36). A possible implication is that Caesar's victory paved the way for any later allegiance shown by the Gauls. However, one cannot escape Claudius' emphasis on the Gauls' opposition rather than Caesar's success. Furthermore, he rejects the very notion that Caesar might be important for his current proposal, encouraging his audience to consider the relevance of what has happened since.

Four years later, in 52 AD, we see Claudius utilising a space in Rome that was inextricably linked to Caesar: the location of a statue of Caesar in the Forum Iulium. This was where a *senatus consultum* in honour of Pallas was displayed, the freedman who was Claudius' chief treasurer and who had refused to accept a large financial reward (Tac. *Ann.* 12.53.3; Plin. *Ep.* 7.29). This is the only inscription that we know to have been displayed here and it is known about solely through the literary tradition. Tacitus' reference does not include its location. Pliny the Younger, writing under Trajan, does tell of its location: 'and that tablet shall be affixed to the mailed statue of the deified Julius Caesar' (*Ep.* 8.6.13). Pliny is outraged that Pallas should be honoured in this way:

Parum visum tantorum dedecorum esse curiam testem: delectus est celeberrimus locus, in quo legenda praesentibus, legenda futuris proderentur.

So it was not enough for these disgraceful proceedings to be witnessed by the walls of the Senate house; the most frequented spot in Rome was chosen to display them, where they could be read by everyone, today and ever after.

Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 8.6.13

Pliny does not need to elaborate on exactly where this statue is situated because it is supposed to be obvious.⁴³ While Tacitus' cynicism seems to have been rooted in the praise of frugality in a freedman who had become so wealthy, angering Pliny are several additional factors: the choice of location (because both contemporaries and future generations will be able to read this text) and the reason for the inscription (being designed to spur others to greatness, 8.6.15).⁴⁴ In Pliny's opinion, everything about the inscription is unsuitable, including its location. However, it has been suggested that the office of the

⁴³ Corbier (2006) 149.

⁴⁴ Corbier (2006) 157.

imperial *fiscus* was located in the Forum Iulium, and not in the Temple of Castor.⁴⁵ This would mean that Pallas' colleagues and successors in the treasury would regularly see the inscription. Further still, an official of the *fiscus* was called the *procurator a loricata*, making this inscription's location *ad statuam loricatam* in fact highly appropriate.⁴⁶ As Corbier points out, it is intriguing that Suetonius, writing early in the second century about the honours awarded to Pallas, makes no reference to the inscription (*Claud.* 28.1-2).⁴⁷ Perhaps it had been taken down by this point. Nonetheless, under Claudius, the Caesarian statue and its Caesarian environs were clearly recognised as a prominent and prestigious location, providing the ideal place for displaying a *senatus consultum* which honoured the emperor's chief treasurer. Therefore, while certain connections which might have been made by the Claudian regime were not publicly exploited (particularly with regard to Britain and the enfranchisement of Gauls),⁴⁸ the Pallas inscription reveals that a physical depiction of a loricate Caesar could be valuable. Whether it was the emperor who made the decision to display the plaque here, or the Senate, or Pallas himself, we cannot say; but full use was made of this Caesarian location's popularity and prestige as well as, perhaps, its association with the *fiscus*.

At Claudius' death in AD 54 it was his seventeen year old step-son Nero, and not his biological son Britannicus, who was proclaimed *princeps*. Suetonius relates that Nero gave Claudius a magnificent funeral, conducted the eulogy himself and subsequently deified him (*Suet. Nero* 9.1).⁴⁹ Nero now styled himself *divi filius*. Legitimising his position even further, he was directly related to Augustus through his mother Agrippina who was Augustus' granddaughter through Julia. It was in the manner of Augustus that Nero promised to rule (*Suet. Nero* 10.1). At this early stage of his reign, Nero's affiliation with Augustus and Claudius can be seen on coinage,⁵⁰ in the Egyptian accession papyrus from 17th November 54 AD⁵¹ and in countless inscriptions from Rome and across the Empire (none of which

⁴⁵ Weinstock (1971) 87 n10. Platner and Ashby (1929) 103 n1 discuss the possibility of two separate buildings. See also Corbier (2006) 154.

⁴⁶ See Radice (1976) 18 n1.

⁴⁷ Corbier (2006) 148.

⁴⁸ Levick (1981) 103 sees a variance in Claudius' public and private interest in Caesar, concluding that if Caesar did serve as a model for Claudius it was very much a 'personal and private act'.

⁴⁹ For Claudius' deification as a means to communicate the Senate's approval of his choice of successor, see Bergmann (2013) 343 who directs us to Gesche (1978) 377.

⁵⁰ An *aureus* from AD 55, for example, depicts Divus Augustus and Divus Claudius being drawn by a chariot of elephants (RIC 1, no. 6, p150), taking as its model a Tiberian coin which commemorated Divus Augustus (RIC 1, no. 62, p98).

⁵¹ Two of the voting-tribes in Alexandria rename themselves *Philoklaudios* (indicating Nero's affection for his adoptive father) and *Propapposebasteios* (honouring Nero's regard for Augustus). See Shotter (2008) 55.

refer to Caesar). Nero used *Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus* in official correspondence, evoking his adoptive father Claudius, his grandfather Germanicus and his great-great-grandfather Augustus.⁵² As we have seen with earlier emperors, additional kinship terms were sometimes used: a military diploma found in Pannonia, for example, commemorates Nero as the son of the divine Claudius, grandson of Germanicus (whose daughter, Agrippina, was Nero's mother), great-grandson of Tiberius (who had adopted Germanicus), and great-great-grandson of the divine Augustus.⁵³ As noted by Harriett Flower, this unbroken genealogy has replaced Caligula with his father Germanicus 'in what looks like, but is not quite, a list of emperors'.⁵⁴ Nowhere is Nero's lineage traced further back than Augustus, contrasting with those inscriptions to Tiberius, Drusus, Germanicus and Caligula (discussed above) where the dynasty's initial point of ancestry was located with Divus Iulius. For the first time since Augustus and Tiberius, the term *divi filius* was used by Nero (without Claudius' name also being included), but to what extent people recognised this phrase as being coined by Octavian / Augustus to refer to his descent from Divus Iulius, it is impossible to say.

Finally, a recent article by Olivier Hekster (et al.) has looked at Nero's self-representation with respect to his ancestry, and found that different media act in completely different ways.⁵⁵ It pinpoints the year AD 56 as a 'watershed' – this is when Neronian coins referring to ancestry dropped from a hundred percent to zero. The authors underscore that such a dramatic change 'cannot be understood without assuming a decision taken at the highest level'.⁵⁶ Portraiture also changed. After AD 59 Nero's features stopped being assimilated to those of Augustus and were replaced instead by a fuller face and longer hair.⁵⁷ Titulature in official documents, in contrast, continued to give emphasis to imperial ancestry. This study is a valuable reminder about the benefits of 'looking systematically at the available evidence in its own right, rather than assuming that various types of sources all form part of a coherent narrative' and it proves that 'substantial changes in one medium did not necessarily coincide with (similar) changes in the other

⁵² Hekster et al. (2014) 17.

⁵³ See, for example, *CIL* II 6236 from Hispania Citerior: *Nero Claudius divi Claudi Aug(usti) f(iilius) Germanici Caesaris nepos Tib(eri) Caesaris Aug(usti) pronepos divi Aug(usti) abnepos Caesar Aug(ustus) / Germ(anicus)*. For examples from Rome, see *CIL* VI 2040 and *CIL* VI 40418.

⁵⁴ Flower (2006) 218.

⁵⁵ Hekster et al. (2014).

⁵⁶ Hekster et al. (2014) 19.

⁵⁷ Hekster et al. (2014) 18.

media'.⁵⁸ Hekster's observations on Nero's self-representation support my investigation into representations of Caesar which also seem fractured across time, genre and context.

2.2. De Consolatione Ad Marciam

Seneca's earliest extant text is *De Consolatione Ad Marciam*. Even though this text purportedly aims to assuage Marcia's grief over her son, it has been noted by Vasily Rudich that it is 'the figure of Cremutius Cordus [who] dominates this consolation... her son Metilius, on whose death it was supposed to be written, is reduced to a non-person'.⁵⁹ The circumstances of the charges against Cordus and the content of his work continue to be discussed.⁶⁰ This is important for the current investigation into the *Ad Marciam* due to the question of whether or not Cordus' crime had been to praise Caesar's assassins. In which case, what are the implications of Seneca's celebration of the work's recirculation? To what extent was Cordus associated (rightly or wrongly) with the topic of Caesar's assassination? In order to answer these questions, and better understand Seneca's treatment of Caesar in the *Ad Marciam*, a brief consideration of the charges against Cordus follows.

Tacitus writes that Cordus had called Cassius 'the last of the Romans' (*Ann.* 4.34.1) and Suetonius suggests that both Brutus and Cassius had been given this title (*Tib.* 61.3). According to Plutarch, Brutus had called Cassius 'the last of the Romans' after Cassius' death at Philippi (*Brut.* 44.2). Levick is surely right when she says that – even if mention of Caesar figured only in a recapitulation – 'the judgement that true Romans were extinct carries harsh implications, not only for the regime of the Triumvirs ... but for that of Augustus'.⁶¹ It is especially the case that Augustus would have been implicated if Cordus had been citing Brutus' words on the fields of Philippi. While the formal charge was praise of Cassius, Sejanus' hostility would appear to be the main reason behind Cordus' enforced suicide. Dio reports that Cordus had offended Sejanus who then used Cordus' history as an excuse to prosecute, that the text in question had been read by Augustus himself and that it did not say anything negative about Caesar or Augustus, nor did it include 'overmuch respect for them' (*Dio* 57.24.2-3). Indeed in the *Ad Marciam* Seneca tells us that Cordus had spoken out against Sejanus ('what it is to remain unflinching when everyone else is forced to bow the head and submit to the yoke of a Sejanus', 1.3), including opposing the proposal

⁵⁸ Hekster et al. (2014) 19.

⁵⁹ Rudich (1997) 24.

⁶⁰ See Levick (2013) in *FRHist*: Vol. 1 pp. 497-501; Vol. 2 pp. 964-972; Vol. 3 pp. 592-593.

⁶¹ Levick (2013) *FRHist* III.592.

to set up a statue of Sejanus in the theatre of Pompey when the theatre was being rebuilt ('Cordus exclaimed that this would really ruin the theatre', 22.4). Unlike the later accounts of Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio, Seneca does not say that Cordus' estimation of Cassius had a part in the prosecution. Seneca does, however, mention 'the eloquence he [Cordus] employed to lament the civil wars and to proscribe forever those responsible for the proscriptions' (26.1).

It does not appear that the treatment by Cordus of Caesar's assassins led directly to his prosecution. The fact that this was the charge put forward, however, meant that Cordus would now to a certain extent be associated with a fight for the restoration of the Republic, including but not limited to Caesar's assassination. The strength of this association when Seneca was writing the *Ad Marciam*, or whether it intensified later with the accounts of Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio, is impossible to determine. What this means for our investigation into Caesar in the *Ad Marciam* is that we cannot say that praise of Cordus necessarily has any relation to Seneca's attitude about the assassination of Caesar.

Caesar appears in two sections of the *Ad Marciam*: a model of restraint in the face of bereavement (*Marc.* 14) and part of the civil war which stripped Cato of his freedom (*Marc.* 20.6). In the first, when Julia's death is introduced into the text, Seneca presents his reader with Caesar the Republican consul of 59 BC. After providing examples of three Romans who have 'softened a harsh blow by bearing it with composure' (Sulla, Horatius Pulvillus and Aemilius Paulus, 12.5-13.4), Seneca pauses to comment on the innumerable other examples he could use. He asks Marcia to 'pick any year you want and make a roll call of its magistrates – Lucius Bibulus and Gaius Caesar, if you like' (14.1), explaining that both men had lost children and had overcome their grief quickly. As noted above, this period was considered by Asinius Pollio to be the start of civil unrest (Horace, *Carm.* 2.1.1-4) and was shown by Velleius to be a turning point when he depicted Caesar grabbing his pen (Vell. Pat. 2.41.1). It is therefore a particularly interesting period for Seneca to draw attention to, coming as it does after those three exemplars from the Republic and, as we will see, before those from the imperial family. Compositionally Caesar appears as a sort of pivot between these two institutions. Examples from the Republic (sections 12 and 13, which are not in strict chronological order since Sulla was born after both Horatius Pulvillus and Aemilius Paulus) are followed by examples from the imperial family in section 15 ('Do I need to remind you of the bereavements of the other Caesars?' 15.1). Caesar, in section 14, acts as a linking device – or perhaps a break – between these two institutions. Further, Caesar lost his daughter in 54 BC, four years before Bibulus lost his two sons; yet Seneca

places Bibulus' bereavement before that of Caesar. Again, the narrative effect is that Caesar appears to close the Republican examples and to introduce the losses *aliorum Caesarum*.

Seneca inserts Bibulus' jealousy of Caesar into the story about the deaths of Bibulus' sons, playing with time once again since Bibulus' sons actually died nine years after the consulship with Caesar. In 50 BC Bibulus sent his sons to Egypt to demand the recall of Roman soldiers, whereupon they suffered humiliating treatment from Egyptian soldiers and were killed. Seneca refers to the fact that during the consulship of 59 BC, in an attempt to block Caesar's legislation, Bibulus stayed at home; and he contrasts this with Bibulus' energetic reaction to his sons' deaths (14.2). By blending the two anecdotes and offering no temporal signposts, Seneca elides the almost decade-long time lapse between these episodes. Seneca seems to have carefully constructed this part of the narrative so that a focus on Bibulus and his bereavement comes before the attention switches to Caesar. It is also notable that Bibulus' reaction to the loss of his sons is set up in contrast with the loss of his political authority: Seneca presents both as a kind of bereavement to which Bibulus responds differently.

In contrast to Bibulus' long-term idleness is Caesar's activity. Seneca describes him crossing into Britain, 'incapable of allowing the ocean to limit his good fortune' (14.3). It was at this point, in 54 BC, that Caesar's daughter Julia died after childbirth, 'taking the fate of the nation with her' (14.3).⁶² Julia's marriage to Pompey had cemented the men's alliance: when Julia died, along with the baby she shared with Pompey, the bond between Pompey and Caesar was weakened and their rivalry became heightened.

In oculis erat iam Cn. Pompeius non aequo laturus animo quemquam alium esse in re publica magnum et modum inpositurus incrementis, quae gravia illi videbantur, etiam cum in commune cresceret.

He [Caesar] could see clearly that Gnaeus Pompey would not take kindly to anyone else in the state being great, and would seek to limit his advancement, which he felt was threatening, even though it was to their common interest.⁶³

De Consolatione Ad Marciam 14.3

⁶² Velleius Paterculus calls Julia 'the one tie which bound together Pompey and Caesar in a coalition which, because of each one's jealousy of the other's power, held together with difficulty even during her lifetime' (2.47.2). For Julia's death as a catalyst for political turmoil and ultimately civil war, see Manning (1981) 82.

⁶³ I have altered Hine's translation of *in commune* for reasons discussed below.

The phrase *in commune* might mean 'to their common interest' (i.e. Pompey and Caesar) or it might refer to 'a general benefit' (i.e. the benefit of the state).⁶⁴ Adding to the complexity of this passage is the use of focalisation: *in oculis erat*. Even though Seneca does not say explicitly whose *oculi* he means, Caesar is the subject of the previous sentence and it seems clear that the criticism of Pompey that we see here – the suggestion that increasing powers should not cause offence – and the pun on *magnus* are focalised through Caesar. Indeed, Pompey's inability to bear an equal had previously been described by Caesar himself in his *Bellum Civile*, in a passage which also refers to their alliance via Julia and which, as it happens, uses *commune* to refer to enemies that he and Pompey shared (as opposed to enemies of the state) (BC 1.4.4).⁶⁵ Further, an increase that told to Pompey's own interest would make it more striking that he should find it objectionable. Thus *in commune* is here translated as 'to their common interest'. Of course, one cannot help but consider whether Caesar's gaining of power might be viewed as being at the expense of others and indeed the Republic, but crucially Seneca does not say as much here.⁶⁶

The episode regarding Julia's death closes with references to conquest and to speed, two archetypal Caesarian motifs: 'he conquered his grief as quickly as he always conquered everything else' (14.3). The concept of conquest has been opened up to include the private as well as the public; the familial and the political are merged. Caesar can deal quickly with any kind of event, in contrast to Bibulus who reacts quickly only to private loss. The use of focalisation coupled with an echo of Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, alongside references to Caesarian *celeritas* and conquest, mean that this passage goes deeper than the topic of Julia's death. Multiple aspects of Caesar are brought to the reader's mind. While this is clearly far removed from Caesar's 'invasion' into the text of Velleius' Paterculus, the reader (in a text which celebrates the memorialising quality of literature) can almost hear Caesar's voice. Caesar's character remains untarnished on the surface, and criticism of Pompey is distanced from Seneca's narratorial persona.

⁶⁴ See Kierdorf (1987) 209-210 who prefers the latter option. He cites other similar usages by Seneca: *QNat* 7.16.2; *Ep.* 48.2; *Ep.* 90.38. He also discusses the debate about whether *cresceret* should in fact read *crescerent*. I follow Reynolds in reading *cresceret*.

⁶⁵ 'Pompey, urged on by Caesar's enemies and by his desire that no one should be on the same level of dignity with himself, had completely withdrawn himself from Caesar's friendship and become reconciled with their common enemies, most of whom he had himself imposed upon Caesar at the time of their connection by marriage' (*Ipse Pompeius, ab inimicis Caesaris incitatus, et quod neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat, totum se ab eius amicitia averterat et cum communibus inimicis in gratiam redierat, quorum ipse maximam partem illo affinitatis tempore iniunxerat Caesari*) (BC 1.4.4).

⁶⁶ Contrast *Ep.* 94.65 (discussed below).

Later in the *consolatio*, Seneca declares that sometimes it is better to die early. He uses the examples of Cicero and Cato who would have avoided the horrors of civil war had they died earlier. About Cicero he writes: 'He would not have seen swords drawn against the lives of fellow citizens, or assassins carving up the possessions of the murdered' (*non vidisset strictos in civilia capita mucrones nec divisa percussoribus occisorum bona*, 20.5). About Cato, who survived his spell in Cyprus and the journey back to Rome, he writes:

nunc annorum adiectio paucissimorum virum libertati non suae tantum sed publicae natum coegit Caesarem fugere, Pompeium sequi. Nihil ergo illi mali inmatura mors attulit: omnium etiam malorum remisit patientiam.

An extension of just a few years compelled a man born for the sake of freedom – not just his own but also his country's – to flee Caesar and to follow Pompey. So an early death caused him no suffering, and it actually spared him suffering of all kinds.

De Consolatione Ad Marciam, 20.6

The impression we get of Caesar here is in stark contrast to the picture we get earlier in the *consolatio* (consul, expansionist, exemplary in his handling of grief, envied first by Bibulus and then by Pompey). We now see connotations of murder and tyranny. This is the kind of sentiment we see in the *Epistulae Morales*, written towards the end of Seneca's life (under Nero). But as Griffin points out, 'the Letters merely emphasize a view that Seneca held earlier, for in the Consolation to Marcia, he laments that Cato, a man born for personal and public liberty, had to flee from Caesar'.⁶⁷ The strength of Seneca's language is remarkable: *occisorum, caedes, latrocinia, rapinas* (20.5-6): Caesar's civil wars are akin to 'slaughter' and 'brigandage'. Thus Caesar's association with civil war is quite separate from (and does not tarnish the memory of) his exemplary handling of grief.

Immediately after the passage on Julia's death, Seneca discusses the bereavements 'of other Caesars' (15.1-3). Caesar serves as a Janus-like figure between two eras which Seneca presents as distinct in their language and structure. He had featured alongside Bibulus at the end of the 'Republican' section and acts as a point of transition into the 'Imperial' part where we see phrases like 'the other Caesars' (*aliorum Caesarum*) and 'the supply of Caesars' (*Caesarum turba*). Strikingly, while the name 'Caesar' had originally referred to the individual, it is now a title for emperors. Seneca treats them in order, the

⁶⁷ Griffin (1976) 186.

exemplum of Caesar leading into the *exempla* of Divus Augustus (who ‘had lost his children and grandchildren’) and Tiberius (who ‘lost both the son he had fathered and the one he had adopted’). This illustrates that Seneca is only interested in examples from the dynastic line. Caesar is depicted as the first link in this chain of hereditary rulers, the *Caesares*. Referring to the family as a ‘house’ (*domum*) during this chapter underscores even further the institution’s standing as a dynasty, perhaps with tragic undertones which is apt given that the subject matter is bereavement.

Finally, among the references to the bereavements of ‘the other Caesars’, we see an allusion to Virgil (signposted by *dicantur*) when Seneca refers to ‘they who are said to be born from gods, and to be destined to give birth to gods’ (*qui dis geniti deosque genituri dicantur*, 15.1). We recall Apollo’s words to Iulus at *Aen.* 9.642: *dis genite et geniture deos*.⁶⁸ Thus Seneca does not just allude to Augustus’ status as *divi filius* through his descent from Divus Iulius, and Tiberius’ status as *divi filius* through his descent from Divus Augustus, but intertextually he also points to the dynasty’s Trojan heredity. Further, by recalling the foundational text of Virgil, specifically a passage linking Iulus to Augustus, Seneca evokes the wider topic of literature’s relationship to the contemporary ruler. This is an important theme for the *Ad Marciam* given Cremutius’ fate. Near the start of the *consolatio*, for example, we witness how a change of regime (*mutatio temporum*) can generate changes in literary policy: Seneca praises Marcia for restoring her father’s books to the *publica monumenta* thus saving her father from death, and he praises Cremutius for providing an uncorrupted record of history for future generations (1.3). Seneca celebrates literature’s ability to perpetuate memories and elide temporal boundaries. While through Iulus Virgil looks ahead to Caesar and Augustus, Seneca looks back (via Caesar and Augustus) to Iulus. Caesar’s role as divine forefather of the dynasty, his place in the imperial family’s mythical foundation story, is an important – though implicit – part of Caesar’s presentation in Seneca’s *Ad Marciam*.

2.3. De Ira

Written when Claudius was *princeps*, Seneca’s treatise on anger also incorporates Julius Caesar. Seneca cautions his readers (including his brother, the addressee) about the danger

⁶⁸ See Manning (1981) 83 who suggests that *dicantur* might imply scepticism of the consecration.

of submitting to anger which he describes as a sort of madness (1.1.2).⁶⁹ He offers precepts about how anger can be avoided and how it can be alleviated (2.18.1). Over the course of the three books, there are two explicit references to Caesar. Firstly, at 2.23.4 he is a model to emulate with regard to the avoidance of anger. He is an *exemplum* of self-restraint when he mercifully burns documents which would have implicated their authors. Secondly, at 3.30.4-5 his assassination is used to illustrate the anger that can stem from frivolity and mindlessness. Just as we saw in Velleius' *Historia*, Seneca provides no reference to the interests of the Republic when it comes to the assassins' motives. Rather, Caesar is shown unable to meet the limitless demands of supposed friends, a casualty of trivial grievances.

Before these two explicit references, Caesar is alluded to at 2.11.3. Immediately prior to this point, Seneca discusses the pointlessness of fear ('fever, the gout, a bad sore are all feared aren't they?' (2.11.2). He draws a comparison for the pointlessness of anger by describing a repulsive mask that frightens children: while it is indeed ugly, it should by no means be dreaded (2.11.2). Seneca then explains that another dimension to the futility of anger is the fact that nobody who is feared is himself unafraid, and it is here that we see an allusion to an incident involving Caesar:

Occurrat hoc loco tibi Laberianus ille versus, qui medio civili bello in theatro dictus totum in se populum non aliter convertit, quam si missa esset vox publici adfectus:

necesse est multos timeat quem multi timent.

On this point you should think of the famous line of Laberius that, when delivered on the stage in the midst of the civil war, caught the whole people's attention just as though the voice of the public sentiment had spoken:

It is necessary that he whom many fear fears many.⁷⁰

De Ira 2.11.3

Seneca invites the reader to remember a line delivered by Decimus Laberius, a composer of mimes, when he was impersonating a Syrian slave during a drama performed in the presence of Julius Caesar in 46 BC. The episode appears in the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius who was writing in the fifth century (*Mac. Sat.* 2.7.4-5). Caesar offered Laberius a huge sum of

⁶⁹ For an overview of the Stoic theory on emotions, which encourages rationality (as opposed to purely emotional responses) and teaches that caution should replace fear, see Graver (2007) especially 51-55.

⁷⁰ I have slightly adapted Kaster's translation.

money to appear in one of the dramatist's own plays.⁷¹ Laberius accepted but made his feelings of degradation clear during the production's prologue: 'see how easily I'm undone by the invitation ... that issues from the merciful mind of the man who towers above us' (Mac. Sat. 2.7.3). He put on the costume of a slave who had been whipped and was trying to escape (Mac. Sat. 2.7.4) and then delivered the line 'we lose our freedom' as well as that which is also preserved by Seneca: *necesse est multos timeat quem multi timent* (Mac. Sat. 2.7.4). Macrobius goes on to describe the reaction to Laberius' comment: 'At that the people turned as one to look at Caesar alone, making plain that this caustic remark had scored a direct hit on his high-handedness' (Mac. Sat. 2.7.5).

Seneca therefore subtly alludes to an awkward incident for Caesar – described by Fantham as 'the last known public display of free speech against Caesar'⁷² – and yet, unlike the later Macrobius, he neither names him nor incorporates his embarrassment. What function does the allusion to the Laberius / Caesar episode play in this part of the treatise? Firstly, Seneca assumes the position of Laberius and uses the dramatist's words to support his own argument: in the ensuing lines, Seneca writes *in propria voce* 'whatever terrifies trembles too' (2.11.4). Within the framework of an anecdote about a performance, then, Seneca casts himself in the anti-Caesar role, speaking the same words to his own 'audience' as those spoken by Laberius to his. Further, Seneca suggests that the animosity towards Caesar was felt by the whole populace (*vox publici adfectus*).

Given Seneca's assumption that his readership is already familiar with the episode, we must take into consideration Caesar's apparent restraint after Laberius delivered those famous lines. Caesar gave Laberius his promised fee and restored him to his former rank, and when Caesar announced that Laberius' opponent had won, he did so with a laugh (Mac. Sat. 2.7.8). He therefore displayed no anger.⁷³ According to Seneca's treatise, a control on anger is something to be commended. Just a few lines later, Seneca writes that anger 'affects minds that are insubstantial' (2.11.6). Seneca's inclusion of a seemingly embarrassing, anti-Caesarian incident may therefore, on further examination, be understood as an example of Caesarian restraint. Not allowing feelings of anger to control one's mind and behaviour is entirely in line with the teachings of the treatise and indeed

⁷¹ The reward might have been compensation for the obligatory loss of his equestrian status that performance entailed. For the status of actors in the Roman Republic, see Reynolds (1943) 38 n5. For the legislation introduced in AD 19 (known as the *Senatus Consultum from Larinum*) which forbade members of the upper classes from taking part in performances, be in on stage or in the arena, see Levick (1983).

⁷² Fantham (2005) 226.

⁷³ Edwards (1993) 134 points out that if Caesar had taken action, it would have been an acknowledgement of the charge.

the Stoic tradition at large. Yet we cannot escape the fact that any reference to this aspect of Caesar's conduct is only implied, and depends entirely on the extent to which the reader is familiar with this part of the anecdote. Caesar's evocation here is thus particularly complex and invites further exploration of Caesar's appearance in this text.

The first explicit reference to Caesar in *De Ira* appears a short time later in book 2. Immediately prior to this, Seneca relates how a conspirator against Hippias of Athens, on being caught, falsely named the king's friends as his accomplices. It was only after Hippias had put them all to death that he learned of the trick: 'Anger caused the tyrant [*tyrannus*] to lend the tyrant-slayer [*tyrannicide*] a hand' (2.23.1). Seneca then praises Alexander the Great who, though exceptionally prone to anger, restrained any feelings of passion when his mother warned him (inaccurately) about being poisoned by his physician. Alexander calmly drank the liquid, correctly trusting his own judgement over that of his mother (2.23.2). Seneca concludes this episode with the following statement: 'the more uncommon self-control is in kings (*in regibus*), the more it's to be praised' (2.23.3). It is against this backdrop of kingship that Seneca turns to Caesar. Seneca describes how, 'handling his victory in the civil war in a most merciful way (*clementissime*)', he destroyed a set of letters written to Pompey which would have incriminated their authors (2.23.4). In contrast to the hot-headedness of Hippias, Caesar is held up alongside Alexander the Great as an *exemplum* of self-restraint. This may retrospectively invite us to read the Laberius episode, where the civil war is also mentioned as a setting, as showcasing Caesar's *moderatio* (while perhaps at the same time drawing attention to Caesar's unorthodox levels of power). Seneca makes no explicit mention of monarchy regarding Caesar's position – striking given the connection between kingship, danger and self-control which, as we have seen, precedes this part of the treatise. Nor does he make reference to Caesar's familial relationship with Pompey, or the fact that Pompey had also burned letters without reading them.⁷⁴ Seneca does incorporate the key term *clementissime* when in his treatise *De Clementia* Caesar is nowhere to be seen.⁷⁵

In book 3 of *De Ira*, Seneca discusses how trivialities can anger men and animals alike (3.30.1). He describes the jealousy that is felt when friends have given us less than we

⁷⁴ The only other reference to Pompey in *De Ira* appears at 3.30 regarding Caesar's assassination (see below). For Pompey's burning of incriminating documents, see Dio 20.4.

⁷⁵ For Caesar's burning of Pompey's letters, see also Pliny *NH* 7.93-94 and Dio 41.63.6. Dio links the burning of Caesar's letters and Brutus' ingratitude with Caesar's assassination. Seneca does not make such a connection. It seems clear that this is because Seneca advocates the advantages of exercising restraint; a link to assassination would make for a model to be avoided.

anticipated and less than was given to them (3.30.2). Against this backdrop of trivial grievances against friends, Seneca discusses Caesar's assassination:

Divum Iulium plures amici confecerunt quam inimici, quorum non expleverat spes inexplebiles. Voluit quidem ille – neque enim quisquam liberalius victoria usus est, ex qua nihil sibi vindicavit nisi dispensandi potestatem – sed quemadmodum sufficere tam improbis desideriis posset, cum tantum omnes concupiscerent, quantum unus poterat? Vidit itaque strictis circa sellam suam gladiis commilitones suos, Cimbrum Tillium, acerrimum paulo ante partium defensorem, aliosque post Pompeium demum Pompeianos. Haec res sua in reges arma convertit fidissimosque eo compulit ut de morte eorum cogitarent pro quibus et ante quos mori votum habuerant.

More friends than enemies finished off the deified Julius; he hadn't satisfied their insatiable hopes. Of course he wanted to – for no one made more generous use of victory, from which he claimed nothing for himself save the wherewithal for giving – but how could he satisfy such relentless desires, when each one of them lusted after all that a single man had in his power. And so he saw his fellow soldiers surround his seat with their swords drawn: Tillius Cimber, who had just before been the keenest defender of his faction, and others who sided with Pompey only after Pompey was gone. These impulses have turned kings' arms against them and driven the most loyal men to plan the deaths of those on whose behalf, and before whom, they had vowed to die.

De Ira 3.30.4-5

This final reference to Caesar in *De Ira* picks up on the concept of kingship again (although Caesar himself is never directly called a *tyrannus* or *rex*): 'It is this that turns against kings their own weapons' (3.30.5). Seneca proleptically calls Caesar 'divine' which is emphasised by the accusative's location at the very start of the sentence and indeed passage, elevating the impending murder to an almost sacrilegious level (in a way that is similar to Velleius Paterculus' treatment of the assassination discussed in chapter 1, though Velleius did not include the topic of divinity). The verbal echoes (*expleverat ... inexplebiles*) and the rhetorical question reinforce what an impossible task Caesar faced when confronted with such avarice, their greed contrasting with his generosity (*liberalius*). The term *suos commilitones* underlines the disloyalty of the attack, inviting the reader to recoil at the thought of soldiers turning their swords against one of their own. Like Seneca, Velleius had

also underlined the killers' status as friends (juxtaposing *caedis* and *familiarissimis* at 2.56.3) and highlighted their ingratitude to Caesar (calling them *ingrati* at 2.57.1). Once again, then, we see the conspirators characterised by betrayal and ingratitude.

Seneca is, let us not forget, illustrating how trivial grievances can lead to anger. It is to the benefit of his argument, therefore, to present the assassins as having motives that are lowly and simplistic. Nonetheless an interesting point of comparison is Seneca's treatment of Caligula's assassination in the same work, since there the irrational anger is placed squarely at Caligula's door (and not his assassins'). At 1.20.8 Seneca writes that Caligula grew angry at heaven because its thunderbolts had interrupted some pantomimes. When it interfered with his own festivities, he challenged Jove to a fight:

Quanta dementia fuit! Putavit aut sibi noceri ne ab Iove quidem posse aut se nocere etiam Iovi posse. Non puto parum momenti hanc eius vocem ad incitandas coniuratorum mentes addidisse; ultimae enim patientiae visum est eum ferre qui Iovem non ferret.

How crazy was that! He supposed either that not even Jupiter could harm him or that he could harm even Jupiter. I think this utterance of his made no small impact in stirring the thoughts of the conspirators: for it seemed the last word in supine behaviour to put up with a man who would not put up with Jupiter.

De Ira 1.20.9

Caligula's assassination is depicted as being due to his arrogance and madness. The author's intrusion into the text (*quanta dementia fuit!* and *non puto*) illustrates the strength of his disapproval at the conduct of the *princeps*. This time it is Caligula whose behaviour is sacrilegious, not the conspirators. The 'impossible task' is to endure the rule of Caligula; for Caesar, the 'impossible task' is to satiate insatiable demands. Caligula's assassins are *coniurati* whose motives are on an epic scale; Caesar's are *amici* whose grievances are trivial and personal. In both instances Seneca is chiefly interested in the conspirators' motives and does not describe the killings themselves. Despite this minor similarity in authorial approach, Seneca makes no correlation whatsoever between the two events.⁷⁶ In Seneca's *De Ira*, the two men do not even share the same name within the context of the respective conspiracies against them: *Divus Iulius* is used for Julius Caesar (3.30.4), differentiating him from Caligula whom Seneca calls *C. Caesar* (1.20.8).

⁷⁶ Contrast the accounts of Josephus and Suetonius, discussed above.

2.4. Apocolocyntosis

Seneca's text on the death and deification of Claudius was probably produced for the *Saturnalia* beginning on 17th December AD 54 and so it is likely that the new emperor, Nero, being the *Saturnalicus Princeps* ('the master of the revels'), would have heard it.⁷⁷ Interpretations of the text are diverse. Some see it as an attack on the process of deification generally; others see it as an attack on the deification of Claudius specifically, possibly because it was a motion sponsored by Agrippina.⁷⁸ In contrast, Dennis Feeney sees it as evidence 'that the cult was a vigorous and muscular institution which could provoke and sustain interrogation and debate'.⁷⁹ More recently it has been described as a work which denigrates the memory of the previous *princeps* in order to flatter the current one (which Seneca does in other writings),⁸⁰ and also as an attempt to stop the deification of *principes* from turning into a charade.⁸¹

At several points in this work, for a number of reasons, the reader might expect a reference to Julius Caesar. Firstly, he was the first historical Roman person – as well as the first member of this dynasty – to be deified, with his divinity providing a vital point of legitimation for his descendants. Elsewhere in Seneca's writings Caesar's divinity is referred to, including in texts written under Nero. In *De Beneficiis*, for example, Seneca calls him Divus Iulius even before his death (2.20.1). In the *Questiones Naturales*, written towards the end of Nero's reign, Seneca again calls him Divus Iulius when referring to the comet that appeared after Caesar's death which was taken to signify his apotheosis (*QNat* 7.17.2). The theme of deification generally, coupled with Seneca's references to Caesar's apotheosis elsewhere in the corpus, make the absence of any reference to Divus Iulius in the *Apocolocyntosis* particularly striking. Secondly, every other preceding ruler in the family line is mentioned: Augustus, Tiberius,⁸² Caligula and, of course, Claudius. Augustus' status as the earliest point of reference for the dynasty's lineage calls to mind the contemporary inscriptions discussed above, which make no reference to Nero's descent from Caesar and stretch only as far back as Augustus. Thirdly, Claudius had adopted several policies which might call Julius Caesar to mind. As we have seen, these included expanding into Britain and admitting Gauls into the Senate, as well as such areas of urban planning as the building of a

⁷⁷ See Nauta (1987) and Champlin (2003) 149.

⁷⁸ See Eden (1984) 9 and Price (1987) 87.

⁷⁹ Feeney (1998) 111.

⁸⁰ Whitton (2013) 152 draws a comparison with Seneca's hostility towards the recently-deceased Caligula in *De Ira* and the *Consolatio Ad Polybium* (both written under Claudius), the latter of which suggests that the *prioris principis furor* be remedied by the godlike Claudius (13.1).

⁸¹ Cole (2006) 176.

⁸² At *Apoc.* 1.2 Seneca refers to the (imaginary) deification of Tiberius.

harbour at Ostia and the draining of the Fucine Lake. Seneca would thus have had ample opportunity to shoehorn the figure of Caesar into the *Apocolocyntosis*.

At *Apoc.* 9.5 the character of Diespiter speaks of Romulus and Augustus before saying that Claudius should become a god and recommending ‘a note to that effect be added to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*’. The closing books of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* famously feature two apotheoses: those of Romulus and Caesar (*Met.* 14.805 ff. and 15.746 ff. respectively), along with a forecast of Augustus’ future apotheosis (*Met.* 15.868 ff.). Yet Seneca has Diespiter include Romulus and Augustus in his speech in relation to the *Metamorphoses* but makes no mention of Caesar. Furthermore, in section 10, we see Augustus dismissing Claudius’ claims to legitimate rule, saying that Claudius ‘for so many years has been masquerading under my name’ (10.4).⁸³ Claudius had taken the name ‘Caesar Augustus’ even though he was not connected to the Julian line through birth or adoption. Coming soon after the reference to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, we also recall the ambiguity that a reference simply to ‘Caesar’ might have. In the *Metamorphoses* it is not immediately clear whether Ovid is describing Julius or Augustus when he celebrates Caesar’s achievements in war and peace (*Met.* 15.746-749).⁸⁴ It is only with the mention of Caesar’s comet and his offspring (‘his greatest achievement’) at lines 749-750 that we realise it is Julius. Thus the reference to the name(s) that Claudius assumed, especially coming after the allusion to the end of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, might have called Caesar to mind – but the text omits any direct reference to him at all.

2.5. De Beneficiis

Seneca’s ethical treatise on the exchange of goods and services, written under Nero, does incorporate Caesar.⁸⁵ Exploring the processes and implications of giving and receiving across seven books, Seneca teaches his readers that the exchange of benefits helps bind human society.⁸⁶ Caesar appears four times in this text and on each occasion civil war is the backdrop. In book 2, Seneca asks whether Brutus was right to accept the gift of life from Caesar at Pharsalus in 48 BC (2.20). In book 3, he mentions in passing Caesar’s sparing of

⁸³ A similar though more subtle slur on the Claudian branch of the family can be seen in the first of Calpurnius Siculus’ *Eclogues* where the restoration of the Julian line appears to be celebrated (1.42-45). See Sullivan (1985) 52.

⁸⁴ See Feeney (1991) 210.

⁸⁵ The earliest possible date of composition is AD 56 (when Caninius Rebilus died, whom Seneca criticises at *Ben.* 2.31.6) and the latest is AD 64 (the date of *Epistle* 81 in which Seneca remarks on this work). See Griffin and Inwood (2011) 3.

⁸⁶ Griffin (2007) 97.

Domitius at Corfinum (3.24). In book 5, Seneca speaks of the ingratitude Caesar showed when he brought war from Gaul and Germany to Rome (5.15). A little later in the same book, Seneca describes an exchange with a veteran who had shown Caesar kindness at Munda (5.24). Caesar is a challenging figure for Seneca to handle as his apparent demonstrations of clemency or ingratitude are loaded retrospectively with extreme political significance.

It is in the latter part of book 2 – a book which offers precepts both for bestowing benefits (2.1-17) and for receiving them (2.18-25) – that we first see Caesar. The focus is on Brutus and whether or not he was right to receive the gift of mercy: ‘We often debate the case of Marcus Brutus to determine whether he ought to have accepted from the Divine Julius the sparing of his life, given that he believed Caesar should be killed’. Such dilemmas of the civil war were popular topics at rhetorical schools.⁸⁷ Seneca announces that he will discuss the actual killing elsewhere (2.20.2) but no such discussion can be found in Seneca’s surviving work. Instead, he pauses briefly to outline his thoughts on whether or not Brutus acted correctly in accepting Caesar’s *beneficium*: ‘he seems to have gone badly astray on this issue and not to have comported himself in accordance with Stoic teaching’ (2.20.2).

Immediately prior to this episode, Seneca explores situations where genuine choice has been removed concerning whether or not to receive a benefit (2.18.6-2.19.2). The following scenario is put forward: ‘A cruel and angry tyrant makes you a gift and makes it clear that your refusal would be offensive to him. Won’t I accept it?’ (2.18.6). Seneca explains that ‘it does not matter what was given unless it was given by a willing giver to a willing recipient’ (2.18.8) and that ‘it is not a benefit to be compelled to accept it, and it is not a benefit to be in debt to someone to whom you do not wish to be’ (2.19.2). The very next line is where Seneca introduces Brutus’ receipt of his life at the hands of Caesar, meaning that Brutus’ lack of free choice is at the forefront of the reader’s mind. Indeed at the end of the Brutus-Caesar passage, Seneca returns to the subject of what makes a true *beneficium*. He concludes that ‘[Caesar] didn’t kill Brutus, but that does not mean that he saved him. He didn’t confer a benefit on him; he just spared him’ (2.20.3). Thus the primary concern for Seneca in this passage, evidenced by the material that precedes it as well as by its opening and closing sentences, is Brutus’ acceptance of the gift of life and whether or not Brutus had a choice (and so whether or not it had constituted a *beneficium*).

⁸⁷ See Griffin (2013) 198. In *Ep.* 14.13 Seneca describes Cato’s participation in the civil war as a topic for rhetorical exercises (discussed below). For rhetorical education generally, including the types of historical situation that would be used for *declamatio* exercises, see Corbeill (2007).

This leads us to a theme that is particularly prevalent in book 2: ‘the cooperative and reciprocal nature of the social practice of giving and receiving’.⁸⁸ The issue of ingratitude, of not repaying an act of kindness, was something we found in *De Ira* when Caesar’s generosity was contrasted with his assassins’ greed (*Ira* 3.30.4).⁸⁹ Similarly, later in *De Beneficiis*, Seneca refers to Antony’s failure to reprimand the conspirators as evidence of his ingratitude to Caesar (5.16.6). Unsurprisingly given Seneca’s interest in the moral code of reciprocity, the mercy that Brutus received from Caesar in 48 BC cannot be entirely separated from the assassination of 44 BC. This is what forms the middle part of the Brutus-Caesar episode (the latter half of 2.20.2). Once again the focus is on Brutus’ conduct and not Caesar’s. Brutus is chastised for believing that assassinating Caesar would make a difference:

Quanta vero illum aut rerum naturae aut urbis suae tenuit oblivio, qui uno interempto defuturum credidit alium, qui idem vellet, cum Tarquinius esset inventus post tot reges ferro ac fulminibus occisos!

[Brutus] must have been in the grips of some enormous amnesia either about the natural order of the world or about his own city; he came to believe that if one man was eliminated there would not arise some other man with the same goals, despite the fact that Tarquinius came along right after so many kings had been slain by the swords of men and the thunderbolts of gods.

De Beneficiis 2.20.2

Caesar’s assassination is here representative of political assassinations and their inefficacy as a strategy for revolution. This is clear from the ablative absolute *uno interempto* and cemented by the Tarquinius example.⁹⁰ Seneca disapproves of this course of action because of its political futility rather than, it seems, through any particular feelings towards Caesar who is not even named during these lines.⁹¹ Seneca closes the episode by declaring that Caesar’s sparing of Brutus was not a *beneficium* ‘since it was by a wrong that Caesar had

⁸⁸ Griffin and Inwood (2011) 4.

⁸⁹ See Griffin (2003) 167.

⁹⁰ Two early kings of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus and Servius Tullius, had been assassinated; another, Tullius Hostilius, had been struck by a thunderbolt. This did not stop the still more tyrannical Tarquinius Superbus from ascending to the throne. See Griffin (2013) 199.

⁹¹ Brunt (2013) 82 links this passage to moral degeneration at Rome. For Seneca’s representation of Cato making the same mistake as Brutus (in thinking that the Republic could be restored), see George (1991) 244.

come to be in a position to bestow this benefit' (2.20.3).⁹² Seneca is careful to avoid the implication that Brutus was in the moral right: Brutus was wrong to kill Caesar but not because of the ingratitude issue. Seneca criticises Brutus for not learning lessons from the past; he forgot that when one man is killed, another will take his place.⁹³

Finally it is interesting to note how differently Seneca treats Caesar's (in)gratitude in the personal sphere as opposed to the political. In book 5 of *De Beneficiis*, Seneca unequivocally condemns Caesar for turning Rome's weapons upon herself. Seneca denounces the ingratitude that stems from *ambitio* (5.15.4), and it is here that we see a damning description of Julius Caesar as well as other examples from history (5.15.4-16).⁹⁴ Caesar is referred to as the 'enemy and conqueror of Pompey', who brought war from Gaul and Germany to pitch camp in the Circus Flaminius (5.16.5). Further, Seneca seems to compare Caesar's clemency with Sulla's cruelty: 'Others made crueler use of their arms but, once sated, laid them down: he (Caesar) swiftly sheathed his sword, but never laid it down' (5.16.5).⁹⁵ Yet later in book 5 and thus soon after this indictment of Caesar's ingratitude and cruelty towards Rome, Seneca shows Caesar in a positive light when repaying a debt of gratitude to an individual (5.24). The anecdote starts with a veteran calling Caesar *divus Iulius* (5.24.1), but as soon as the veteran engages his general in conversation the latter is simply called 'Caesar' by both the veteran and the narrator alike. The effect is that Caesar appears particularly human. Seneca offers us an insight into Caesar's own (flawed) memory, relates an episode which portrays him as vulnerable (unable to walk because of the pain) and allows us to hear Caesar's voice through the inclusion of direct speech. Seneca thus sheds light on Caesar the man and general at this point in *De Beneficiis* to illuminate Caesar's awareness of his responsibility. A kindness had been shown to him, and he was obliged to offer a kindness in return: gratitude on a personal level is the case in point.

⁹² Compare *Ben.* 3.24 where Seneca describes how a slave had saved Domitius' life when Caesar was besieging Corfinium, by not administering the poison for which Domitius had asked. What a slave bestows upon his master beyond his legal compulsion does count as a *beneficium* (*Ben.* 3.20-27). See Griffin (2013) 221-223.

⁹³ The reference to the gods' anger that we see in *fulminibus* (2.20.2) might evoke Seneca's earlier description of the assassination of Caligula, where thunderbolts had also played a part (*Ira* 1.20.8).

⁹⁴ The other figures are Coriolanus, Catiline, Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Antony. Antony showed ingratitude *in dictatorem suum* by declaring that he had been justly killed and by allowing Caesar's assassins to depart to their commands in the provinces (5.16.6).

⁹⁵ Griffin (2013) 278 discusses Caesar's *clementia* as a rejection of Sulla's cruelty. See also Cic. *Att.* 9.7C.1.

2.6. Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium

As we turn to Seneca's letters, questions about the format and intended readership must first be addressed: were the letters 'genuine', personal correspondence designed to be read by one like-minded friend, or were they a philosophical treatise intended for a wider readership? What was at stake when Seneca referred to Caesar's *ambitio* and linked Caesar's civil wars and the end of the Republic to the degeneracy of the modern age?

The sequencing of the letters has been shown to matter,⁹⁶ and Seneca seems to anticipate the collection's publication when he predicts Lucilius receiving the sort of fame that Cicero's correspondence bestowed upon Atticus (21.5-6) and his work being read by posterity (8.1-2).⁹⁷ The letters have been described as 'a series of carefully organized essays on specific themes'.⁹⁸ When compared with the format of a formal philosophical treatise, the epistolary genre affords Seneca a 'more personalized tone' and 'a more intimate relationship with his wider public'.⁹⁹ Schafer suggests that this is 'perhaps the only suitable medium for dramatizing a multi-year friendship and course of philosophical instruction'.¹⁰⁰ Thus there is every reason to believe that Seneca's letters were not simply private letters for his friend but a form of philosophical instruction written with a wide audience in mind. The implications for Caesar are that Seneca deems him a valuable (anti)model for the education of current and future generations.

Seneca writes that his letters are of a personal nature (though the lack of personal information is notable)¹⁰¹ with an 'inward' focus, contrary to the political correspondence of Cicero. Cicero concentrates on matters such as 'what candidate is in difficulties, who is campaigning on borrowed means and who is using his own; who has Caesar's support for the consulship, or Pompey's' (118.2). Seneca's own letters, he tells us, play host to self-examination and reflection ('Instead of treating other people's problems, it is better to address one's own – to examine oneself', 118.3). Seneca in fact does regularly mention political figures, including Caesar, Pompey and Cato. One scholar speculates that Seneca does so on occasions when 'this information is relevant for the assessment of moral and philosophical proficiency'.¹⁰² Wilson, however, suggests that Seneca's engagement with

⁹⁶ On the carefully constructed ordering of the letters, see Schafer (2009) 68.

⁹⁷ See Edwards (1997) 28 and Schafer (2011) 36 n20.

⁹⁸ Coleman (1974) 288.

⁹⁹ Coleman (1974) 288. On the epistolary genre, see Edwards (2005), Morello and Morrison (2007) and Ebbeler (2010). On Seneca's use of this genre, see Coleman (1974), Edwards (1997) and Wilson (2001).

¹⁰⁰ Schafer (2011) 34-35, citing Griffin (1976) 416-419, Inwood (2005) 346.

¹⁰¹ See Edwards (1997) 23.

¹⁰² Reydams-Schils (2005) 19.

political material is more complex: '[Seneca] uses the letters to positively repudiate politics on the grounds that it is destructive of philosophical progress.... The epistles are so ostentatiously apolitical, they are political'. This is an interesting point when we consider the context in which Seneca is writing about Caesar. We will see that the philosophical voice at the end of letter 94, for example, urges the reader not to follow the example of political figures such as Caesar and Pompey. Thus Caesar appears to symbolise the antithesis to (philosophical) progress. Cato, in contrast, represents Caesar's opposite: philosophy (not politics), progress and freedom. In fact it has been noted that 'the focus is almost always on Cato when Caesar is mentioned, and the dictator's victory is equated with servitude and the end of freedom'.¹⁰³

Not all references to Caesar in the letters are sustained, but even passing references can offer thought-provoking glimpses into Seneca's treatment of Caesar. In letter 51 Seneca praises Caesar (along with Pompey and Marius) for building his villa at a distance from Baiae and so away from the town's licentiousness, noting that Cato too would have preferred a military trench to a pleasure palace (51.11-12). During letter 83, Seneca mentions Tillius Cimber's knowledge of the plot to assassinate Caesar (83.12), clarifying who he means by stating 'I mean the Caesar who controlled the state after conquering Pompey'.¹⁰⁴ Seneca does not describe Caesar conquering a foreign enemy but a fellow Roman, not extending the Empire but gaining the State as if it were a captured territory. Thirdly, when writing about the fickleness of fortune in letter 98, Seneca notes that 'by birth [the elder Sextius] should have held public office, but he refused the rank of senator when the divine Julius offered it to him' (98.13).¹⁰⁵ This is the only occasion on which Caesar is referred to as *divus* and also the only time we see him in an administrative capacity. The use of *divus* has the effect of emphasising Sextius' courage since he is shown rejecting a gift from someone omnipotent. Perhaps the reference to the fickleness of fortune here also points to Caesar himself: one minute, a god-incarnate; the next, the victim of an assassination plot.¹⁰⁶ We also find references to Caesar when Seneca is discussing Cato: at 14.12-13 the theme of Cato's opposition to Caesar and Pompey is debated (see below); at 24.8 Cato's initial attempt at suicide fails and he becomes 'hostile now not only toward Caesar but also toward himself'; and at 97.8 Cato has to witness the corrupt trial of Clodius, charged with adultery with Caesar's wife. Passing references to

¹⁰³ Griffin (1976) 186.

¹⁰⁴ My translation.

¹⁰⁵ I have slightly adapted Graver and Long's translation.

¹⁰⁶ Sextius' invitation to the Senate must have taken place only a few years before Caesar's assassination. See Lana (1992) 111 for Sextius being born no later than 70 BC.

Caesar thus cover a range of topics: his military persona, his conquest over Pompey, his relationship to Cato, his position of supreme power, his assassination and his divinity.

At the other end of the spectrum, Seneca offers a sustained engagement with the figure of Caesar on three occasions: letters 94, 95 and 104. In letter 94, the longest of the collection, Seneca uses Caesar as an anti-example in his discussion of two approaches to moral guidance (*praecepta* and *decreta*).¹⁰⁷ Towards the end of the text, Seneca writes that it is necessary to hear ‘the voice that whispers healing words to you when you have been deafened by such a clamour of self-aggrandizement’ (94.59). It is in this ‘whispering’, philosophical voice that Seneca makes a scathing attack on Caesar’s *ambitio* and cruelty. This implies that Caesar did not have the capacity to heed philosophical wisdom and so abstain from cruelty, but that Seneca’s readers – if they listen to and learn from this philosophical voice – will be spared from becoming like Caesar, a hostage to *ambitio*.

The reader is urged not to envy those who are commonly called great since they have been conquered by desire (94.61). Seneca uses as examples Alexander, Pompey, Caesar and Marius. Alexander is shown causing destruction all over the world, ‘like wild beasts that bite off more than their hunger demands’ (94.62). The Spartans, Athenians, Greeks and Persians are cited as nations abused by Alexander. With regard to Pompey, Seneca describes both foreign (*externa*) and civil (*domestica*) wars (94.64). We hear of Pompey’s ‘crazed love of a delusive greatness’ and how his military campaigns were merely ‘pretexts to conceal the extension of his power’: it was greed that drew him to Africa, Armenia and Asia (94.64). Concerning Marius, Seneca asks whether the reader thinks it was virtue that inspired the slaughter of the Teutons and the Cimbri, and the pursuit of Jugurtha through Africa, before concluding that ‘Marius led armies, but ambition led Marius’ (94.66). Seneca’s treatment of Caesar – coming between Pompey and Marius – is slightly different. Although this whole passage is about ruining lands, conquering foes and dripping with the blood of nations (94.61), Seneca cites no specific peoples or places when it comes to Caesar:

Quid C. Caesarem in sua fata pariter ac publica inmisit? gloria et ambitio et nullus supra ceteros eminendi modus. Unum ante se ferre non potuit, cum res publica supra se duos ferret.

¹⁰⁷ Schafer (2011) 19 believes that this passage refers to Caligula. I can find no other scholar who thinks that Caligula is meant here. Given that the dictator is connected with Marius and Pompey elsewhere (e.g. 51.11), and that earlier in the collection Seneca had offered clarification when he spoke of Caesar’s assassination (83.12), I can see no reason why this reference should refer to Caligula.

What impelled Caesar to combine his own destruction with that of the state? Pride, ambition, and limitless preeminence over others. He could not bear to have a single man ahead of him, although even the Republic tolerated a pair of men at its head.

Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium 94.65

Seneca does not explicitly refer to the civil wars or indeed any foreign conquests (unlike the passages relating to Alexander, Pompey and Marius). Instead, Caesar's opponent seems to be the Republic itself and the fundamental principle that no individual should hold supreme power. Seneca presents us with a clear condemnation of Caesar's *ambitio*, laying waste to the Republic as if it were a foreign enemy. Caesar thus serves as a brief but devastating illustration, destroying himself and the state.¹⁰⁸ We have already come across the idea that Caesar's fate was inextricably linked with that of the state,¹⁰⁹ and the rivalry between Caesar and Pompey was by now a *topos*.¹¹⁰ Just as Caesar was unable to bear anyone standing above him, he stands out above the others here, effectively 'topping the list' when it comes to men conquered by desire and ambition.¹¹¹

Letter 95 forms a pair with letter 94 and it also incorporates Caesar.¹¹² This time, it is a description of Cato which occasions a reference to Caesar. At 94.68-69 Seneca borrows Virgil's description of a thoroughbred horse from *Georgics* 3.75-85, prancing in the field and hearing a distant clash of arms, in order to praise Cato as a hero of the Republic: 'no one, in fact, could have "pranced" higher... he challenged both leaders and showed that the Republic too had someone to back it' (95.70).¹¹³ Just as negative *exempla* closed letter 94 (where nobody stood above Caesar), positive *exempla* close letter 95 (where nobody prances higher than Cato).¹¹⁴ Seneca depicts Cato standing against both Caesar and Pompey, denouncing both leaders and supporting a 'third' party, the Republic.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Pompey receives twice as many words as Caesar, Alexander nearly four times as many.

¹⁰⁹ See Vell. Pat. 2.44.1 on the 'deadly' sharing of power between Caesar, Pompey and Crassus.

¹¹⁰ See Vell. Pat. 2.47.2 and Sen. *Marc* 14.3 on Julia's death exacerbating their rivalry. For Pompey's jealousy, see Vell. Pat. 2.30.3, 2.33.3, and Caes. *BC* 1.4.4.

¹¹¹ See *Ben.* 5.16.5 for a comparable attack on Caesar (discussed above). There, Seneca does provide concrete examples (that is, locations both *externa* and *domestica*): Gaul, Germany, Rome and the Circus Flaminius. However, Caesar is not named but called 'the foe and conqueror of Pompeius'.

¹¹² For the relationship between the two letters, see Star (2010) 32: 'With these two letters Seneca demonstrates a continuity between the republic and the empire... The crises of the last decades of the Republic and the civil war continue... These crises have transformed into luxury and consumption'. For the degeneracy of the age, see also 97.2 and 97.8.

¹¹³ For Seneca's use of quotation, see Ker (2015) 113.

¹¹⁴ In addition to Cato, Seneca cites Gaius Laelius, Cato the Elder and Quintus Tubero.

¹¹⁵ We might recall similar sentiments in Seneca's *Ad Marciam* where Seneca had lamented that Cato, a man born for the sake of freedom, was compelled to flee Caesar and to follow Pompey,

The closest we come to criticism of Cato in the letters appears in letter 14 with regard to Cato's decision to take sides in the civil war. Seneca discusses a stock theme of Stoic disputations, Cato's involvement in civil war, and incorporates the opinion that Cato should not have taken sides at all: 'The question is, whether it is Caesar or Pompey who controls the State. Why, Cato, should you take sides in that dispute? It is no business of yours; a tyrant is being selected' (14.13).¹¹⁶ According to Seneca, philosophers face a difficult task in dealing with men in power: 'the wise man will never provoke the anger of those in power. Rather, he will alter his course just as you would in steering a ship away from a storm' (14.7). But he also notes how carefully one must tread because sidestepping topics equates to criticising them ('in avoiding things one condemns them', 14.8). Wilson reads these passages as a disclosure of Seneca's own 'philosophical survival strategy' in Nero's Rome, a strategy which (it seems) incorporates the omission of any references to Nero.¹¹⁷ The implications of such a reading for Caesar would be that labelling him a tyrant and condemning his ambition might not provoke Nero's anger.

We see more 'tyranny versus freedom' imagery – this time also slavery imagery – in letter 104, a letter which advocates peacefulness of the mind and an acceptance of death. Again it is a reference to Cato which occasions a reference to Caesar: 'You may say that he [Cato], just like Socrates, pledged himself to liberty in the midst of slaves – unless you are happy to think that Pompey, Caesar and Crassus were the allies of freedom' (104.29). Caesar and his legions are described on one side, along with the common people 'all keyed up for revolution'; Pompey is on the other side, along with 'the highest nobility and equestrians'. Seneca writes that 'in between [stood] two remnants, the Republic, and Cato' before offering an epic parallel for the scene he describes:

Mireberis, inquam, cum animadverteris

Atriden Priamumque et saevom ambobus Achillen.

You will be amazed, I tell you, when you catch sight of

Atreus's son and Priam, and the scourge of both, Achilles.

Marc. 20.6. Bartsch (1997) 122 notes that Seneca never mentions the manner in which Cato carried out his resistance.

¹¹⁶ See Bartsch (1997) 122 how Seneca's Cato differs from Lucan's Cato: The former believes that the old Republic can be saved; the latter believes that liberty has been dead since the days of Marius and Sulla.

¹¹⁷ Wilson (2015) 145-146: 'To express certain thoughts in Nero's Rome was perilous, possibly a capital crime. Seneca's sensational philosophical gymnastics begin to make more sense when viewed against the backdrop of a particularly vicious culture of "censorship"... A safe retirement must be subtle and unobtrusive' (146).

Seneca quotes *Aen.* 1.458, when Aeneas beholds the Temple of Juno in Carthage. Cato and the Republic are now relics from history; the reader, invited into the text via the second-person verb, is aligned with Aeneas (the viewer). The comparison appears to liken Pompey to Agamemnon, Caesar to Priam, and Cato to Achilles.¹¹⁸ Like Achilles in the camp of Agamemnon, Cato is in the camp of Pompey grudgingly. By likening Caesar to Priam, Seneca reminds us of Caesar's mythological heredity, and perhaps also anticipates his murder. However, a reader who is being asked to make connections between these two wars and these two texts may recall the immediate aftermath of Priam's death in *Aeneid* 2 (557-558): the obvious point of comparison with Priam's headless corpse on the shore is the death of Pompey.¹¹⁹ Further, Caesar is victorious over Pompey when the Trojans had of course lost the war to the Greeks.¹²⁰ As well as evoking the theme of text as monument and summoning the (literary) memory of the reader / viewer, the quotation illustrates the different factions that can exist within a conflict. The Virgilian scene does not map onto Seneca's description of the civil war in terms of the characters; the conflict within the allusion thus mirrors the conflict of war and of Cato's irreconcilable position (according to Seneca). He goes on to report Cato's statement that if Caesar wins, he would choose death, and if Pompey wins, he would go into exile (104.32). Even though Seneca suggests in letter 14 that Cato should not have engaged in politics at all, by using the technical term *sententiam ferre* here (which often relates to senatorial rulings) he illustrates Cato's constitutional authority.¹²¹ Seneca concludes that we must spurn pleasures and riches, and value only liberty. Cato is the supreme example of liberty and the personification of the Republic. His counterpoint, Julius Caesar, is thus the supreme example of tyranny, the embodiment of one-man rule.

Concluding remarks

My analysis has suggested that how Seneca handled the subject of Julius Caesar depended above all on the agenda and genre of each work, and, even within the same work, the

¹¹⁸ See Lemmens (2015) 375-376.

¹¹⁹ See Bowie (1990) 473-475.

¹²⁰ For the complexities of Seneca's quotations, and their detachment from their original context, see Ker (2015) 113.

¹²¹ Lemmens (2015) 377.

topic about which he was writing (that is, the flow of that particular argument). Moreover, his many different guises meant that he could give value to a variety of philosophical arguments as either *exemplum* or *anti-exemplum*. My reading of the *Ad Marciam* has suggested that, early on in Seneca's career, it was possible to speak about Caesar with a degree of freedom. While Seneca primarily focussed there on Caesar's handling of grief because this served the purpose of the *consolatio*, closer examination revealed that several other strands of Caesar were present in this text both explicitly and implicitly, including his roles as consul, conqueror, author of the commentaries, part of the civil war which stripped Cato of his freedom, and divine forefather of the Principate. I have found assessments of Caesar's conduct according to Seneca's Caesar (through focalisation) and according to the narrator himself (who both praised Caesar's handling of grief and condemned the civil wars). My analysis of the structure of *Ad Marciam* chapter 14 has shown that Seneca was ambiguous in his presentation of time with regard to Bibulus' loss of his sons and his consulship with Caesar, so that Caesar and his bereavement appeared closer in time and closer in the narrative to the bereavements of 'the other Caesars'.

With the assassination of Caligula and conspiracies against Nero, there was a great deal of immediate pressure and danger for authors discussing the value of assassination or the character of an assassinated leader. I have observed how in *De Ira*, written under Claudius, Seneca emphasised what an impossible task the generous Caesar faced when confronted with such avarice from his friends and fellow soldiers. For Seneca, this contrasted with the circumstances of Caligula's recent assassination in which blame was placed squarely on the shoulders of Caligula himself who had acted arrogantly and immorally. In fact, I have suggested, Seneca deployed Caesar as an *exemplum* to emulate. He was a model of restraint, acting *clementissime* when it came to the destruction of Pompey's correspondence and, it might be inferred, in the Laberius episode. *De Beneficiis*, written under Nero, also incorporated the theme of Caesar's assassination but here the focus was entirely on Brutus. Caesar was more of an abstract figure, personifying the futility of tyrannicide. I have observed that elsewhere in the same text, when the focus was on personal gratitude and the reciprocal nature of *beneficia*, Seneca offered personal details about Caesar the general.

Scholarship has shown that in the *Epistulae*, the civil wars and the end of the Republic are linked to the degeneracy of the modern age. I have suggested that Caesar's impact thus remained relevant for Seneca's vision of society. References to him were often prompted by references to Cato, and we regularly came across images of tyranny (Caesar) versus freedom (Cato). But like Caesar, I have noted, Cato was an ambiguous *exemplum*; his

involvement in Caesar's civil wars was a bone of contention for Seneca and indeed a stock theme of Stoic disputations, as was Brutus' receipt of life at the hands of Caesar. Numerous episodes of Caesar's life were open to interpretation. Thus his actions – and the actions of others towards him – were extremely valuable philosophically. This chapter has also suggested that, while valuable, writing about Caesar could be enormously challenging because of the contemporary resonance of topics such as clemency, ingratitude and assassination, topics that were potentially very dangerous for their author.

NERO:**Lucan's *Pharsalia* and Caesar's epic tracks**

Having looked at the principates of Tiberius, Caligula and Claudius and found invitations both to recall and to elide different aspects of Julius Caesar, we turned to Nero's reign where we explored texts by Seneca. The topic of civil war featured heavily where Caesar was concerned, especially in *De Beneficiis* and the *Epistulae Morales*.¹ We also noted that inscriptions from across the Empire traced Nero's lineage back only as far as Augustus, and that the only predecessors that Nero celebrated on his coinage were Augustus and Claudius. Of course, we cannot say that the absence of Caesar from extant Neronian inscriptions and coinage represents a deliberate plan on the part of the *princeps* to write Caesar out of dynastic history. Caesar provided no precedent for the constitutional settlement of the Principate; only Augustus did that (and it was in the manner of Augustus that Nero promised he would rule: Suet. *Nero* 10.1). Nonetheless, as we turn to Lucan's *Pharsalia* – an epic poem on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey – it is notable that Caesar's textual presence during Nero's reign continues to stand in contrast to his absence from the non-literary material from this period. This is the second chapter containing material written during Nero's principate, and this is down to the wealth of significant literary representations. Both Seneca and Lucan raise important questions about literature's relationship to the regime and the impact of genre on depictions of Caesar. Moreover Lucan's *Pharsalia* represents a watershed in Caesar's literary reception since he now becomes a substantial epic character that could be utilised by later authors wishing to draw on his associations with tyranny, brutality and civil war – as we will see in chapter 4.

The text that survives relates the events of 49 and 48 BC across ten books,² with the text depicting Caesar as a bloodthirsty general whose appalling behaviour includes

¹ In the former, all references to Caesar were set against a backdrop of civil war; in the latter Caesar's *ambitio* and his part in the civil war were linked to the end of the Republic and the degeneracy of the modern age.

² Written in the latter half of Nero's reign (AD 54-68), it appears to have been left unfinished at Lucan's death in AD 65. On its unfinished nature and its possible end-points, see Ahl (1976) 307-325 and Fantham (1992) 97. Masters (1992) 216-259 and Tracy (2011) argue that the lack of closure is deliberate.

breakfasting amid piles of corpses on the battlefield of Pharsalus (*Phars.* 7.792-795). From his first appearance in the text Caesar is characterised by anger – ‘fierce, indomitable, wherever hope and indignation (*ira*) called, he moved to action’ (1.146) – with the ensuing thunderbolt simile recalling the weaponry of the angry Jupiter.³ Thus while Seneca had presented Caesar as exemplary in his avoidance of this emotion in his philosophical treatise (*De Ira* 2.23.4), Lucan includes anger as a fundamental quality of his epic Caesar. We also find his connection to *fortuna* / Fortuna, as we did in Velleius’ historiographical portrayal.⁴ There, Caesar’s command over Fortuna had been successful insofar as the battle line was subsequently re-established (Vell. Pat. 2.55.3); but the narrator had already declared that fortune is always accompanied by *invidia* (Vell. Pat. 1.9.6) and that fortune elevates men to potentially dangerous heights (Vell. Pat. 2.40.4). Caesar’s relationship to fortune had therefore subtly pointed towards his ultimate downfall, just as it had for Velleius’ Pompey. In Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, Caesar declares at the banks of the Rubicon ‘I am following you, Fortuna’ (*Phars.* 1.206), setting up Fortuna’s role as a rival deity to Roma who waves Caesar back.⁵ Lucan’s Caesar himself appears almost godlike: the troops at the grove of Massilia, for example, find the prospect of Caesar’s anger as terrifying as that of the gods (discussed below), and after quelling the mutiny of book 5, Lucan’s Caesar declares that the gods are indifferent to the undertakings of humans (5.340-342).⁶ To a degree, Caesar appears to supplant the traditional epic gods.⁷ Of course, the real Caesar had been divinised and so this becomes more than generic innovation. The narrator makes a withering attack on apotheosis immediately before the Battle of Pharsalus, stating that ‘the civil wars would make gods equal to those above’ (*bella pares superis facient civilia divos*, 7.454).⁸ He describes Romans swearing oaths to these new gods in temples, their statues decorated with lightning bolts and stars (7.455-459).⁹

³ Fantham (2011) 556-557. Other examples noted by Fantham include the comparison with the Libyan lion who ‘crouches in hesitation, till he has concentrated all his anger’ (1.207), and the effect of Curio’s speech which is described as increasing Caesar’s anger (1.292).

⁴ At Vell. Pat. 2.55.3, Velleius had used epic phraseology to describe the uncertainty of battle (*dubio Marte*) and shown Caesar exerting an arrogant authority over fortune / Fortuna (*inrepatā fortunā*). See chapter 1.

⁵ Fantham (2011) 547 n35.

⁶ See Fantham (2011) 550.

⁷ Day (2013) 106. For the absence of Gods in Lucan’s epic, see Ahl (1976) 280-305, Feeney (1991) 250-301, Bartsch (1997) 108-114.

⁸ Discussing the noticeably plural ‘civil wars’ and ‘gods’, Fratantuono (2012) 289 writes: ‘[These lines] are the brave act of a young man who would soon be compelled to take his own life for involvement in a plot to rid Rome of another Caesar’.

⁹ Contrast Lucan’s comments about Cato in book 9: ‘Behold, the true father of his country, a man worthy to be worshipped, Rome, at your altars; by whom none need blush to swear, and who, if you ever free your neck from the yoke, shall be made a god’ (*ecce parens verus patriae, dignissimus aris*,

Very early on in the text Lucan invites his reader to link Julius Caesar with Nero. Introducing the horrors of civil war, Lucan writes at the very start of the poem that ‘we’ll complain no more, you gods, if fate could find no other way to Nero’s advent’ (1.33 ff.). He adds a little later that ‘what was done, Caesar, was for you’ before imagining Nero’s apotheosis (1.45-65).¹⁰ Whether such sentiments are ironic is the sort of issue explored by one of the two major branches of Lucanian scholarship, identified by Shadi Bartsch in the introduction to *Ideology in Cold Blood* (1997). ‘The school that brings biography to the aid of interpretation’¹¹ reads Lucan’s *Pharsalia* in terms of the author’s misgivings about Nero. Scholars in this camp¹² might cite, for example, Lucan’s involvement in the Pisonian conspiracy (discussed below) as evidence of the poem’s anti-Julio-Claudian perspective. The second school of thought sees the twisted fabric of the poem as being synonymous with the very lack of cohesion that it narrates, the linguistic paradoxes and the inversions of epic norms representing the destructiveness of civil war itself: ‘It is the war within the text that emerges as the poem’s defining trope’.¹³ A key scholar in this camp is Jamie Masters whose insightful monograph *Poetry and Civil War in Lucan’s Bellum Civile* (1992) argues that the lack of any consistent authorial ‘point of view’ is ‘so obviously *calculated* to confuse us’.¹⁴ The ‘fractured voice’ of the narrator mirrors the rupturing of the Roman state.¹⁵ Bartsch’s approach bridges the two camps. She only makes passing reference to the character of Caesar, however; her attention is on Pompey.¹⁶ It is my objective to bridge both camps but with Caesar as my focus. I will consider the ‘real-life situation’ of how Julius Caesar was remembered in first-century Rome and I will combine this with textual analysis, exploring (for example) how voices and temporalities are deployed and how this might affect a reader’s interpretation.

Lucan’s relationship to Nero undoubtedly provides an interesting dimension to this study into Caesar’s reception because of the themes of conspiracy and attempted

/ Roma, tuis, per quem numquam iurare pudebit / et quem, si steteris umquam ceruice soluta, / nunc, olim, factura deum es, 9.601-604).

¹⁰ The first ‘Caesar’ the reader meets is Nero and not Julius Caesar. The next time we see the name ‘Caesar’ it describes the dictator: ‘Caesar could accept none above him; Pompey no equal’ (1.125).

¹¹ Bartsch (1997) 5.

¹² Bartsch (1997) 6 lists Ahl, Barti, Morford and Naducci.

¹³ Bartsch (1997) 5.

¹⁴ Masters (1992) 88. Cf. Holmes (1999) 80 who considers it the reader’s responsibility to try to resolve complexities such as praise of Nero coupled with hostility to the Caesars. The idea of reader responsibility will be discussed below (building on the work of Damon who explores the responsibilities of the reader of Caesar’s *Bellum Civile*).

¹⁵ Masters (1992) 90.

¹⁶ Bartsch (1997) calls Caesar the ‘architect’ of civil war (p4), for whom ‘civil war is a glorious thing’ (p62). She summarises his character as ‘a personification of the unpredictable power that seems to stand behind Rome’s downward spiral’ (p63).

assassination. Having previously been in Nero's inner circle, Lucan (like his uncle Seneca the Younger) was forced to commit suicide in AD 65 for his part in the Pisonian conspiracy.¹⁷ Conspirators had planned to assassinate Nero during the games held in honour of Ceres in April. A man named Lateranus was going to fall at Nero's knees like a suppliant. Taking the emperor by surprise, he would then attack him and pin him down while the others ran up to slaughter him (Tac. *Ann.* 15.53.2). Vasily Rudich discusses the similarities between the plot to assassinate Nero and its two models from history:

This scene of action was borrowed from the murder of Caligula, while the actual scenario closely followed the assassination of Julius Caesar. This was not due to the plotters' lack of imagination; rather, the stylization was quite deliberate. For Romans, precedent was always a matter of the utmost importance and was to be followed whenever possible, and the powerful spell cast by the tradition of tyrannicide was demonstrated more than once.¹⁸

The Ides of March still held an important place in Rome's cultural memory.¹⁹ For the conspirators against Nero, its emulation would serve to bolster the present scheme. (In fact it would surpass its models from history if it succeeded in overthrowing the Julian line.) The conspirators had planned to replace Nero with Gaius Calpurnius Piso but the plot was betrayed, and Nero executed everyone he suspected of complicity. Furthermore, in the aftermath of the conspiracy, Nero exiled a certain Gaius Cassius Longinus purportedly for keeping in his house a bust or ancestor mask of the liberator Cassius which had been inscribed with the term *duci partium* ('to the Leader of the Party', Tac. *Ann.* 16.7.2).²⁰ Events surrounding the Pisonian conspiracy remind us that it is not just the actions of Caesar himself but also of others towards him, in this case the assassins, that can have contemporary resonance and a part to play in Caesar's reception.

My discussion of Lucan will begin with analysis of his subject matter and genre. I will then discuss the different ways that previous scholarship has tended to approach Lucan's Caesar. The rest of the chapter will consider three key themes: exemplarity, subjectivity and memorialisation. Since this investigation is concerned with the issue of memory and the figure of Caesar, my starting point will be to examine how Lucan

¹⁷ See Hardie (2013b) 226.

¹⁸ Rudich (1993) 100.

¹⁹ See Henderson (1998) 262: 'Assassination of a Caesar *always* returned speculation to the Ides of March' (his emphasis). See also Rawson (1986), Pagán (2004) 10 and Wiseman (2013) 77.

²⁰ On conspiracy narratives in Roman historiography (including the Pisonian conspiracy and the assassinations of Caesar and Caligula), see Pagán (2004).

approaches the subject of memory within the context of his characterisation of Caesar. Do we see Caesar utilising or learning from his own memories of the past, for example? To do so, I compare aspects of Caesar's direct speech with that of other characters in the *Pharsalia*. Since speeches are by definition focalised through the character who voices them, this approach will shed light on the unique way in which Lucan's Caesar views his relationship to the past. In order to unravel what Lucan is doing with this element of Caesar's poetic characterisation, I will also consider how the historical Caesar interacted with precedents in comparison with the Caesar of Lucan's epic.

I will then explore how this aspect of Lucan's characterisation of Caesar (his engagement with his past) relates to wider questions surrounding Lucan's placement of Caesar within the framework of an epic narrative. Analysing the moral lessons that Lucan seems to impart when he shows Caesar (mis)handling *exempla*, my focus will be on historiography and exemplarity. Finally I will offer a close reading of Caesar's visit to Troy in book 9, a rare instance in which the character of Caesar must confront the past and in a sense confront epic poetry's principal function which is to serve as a form of interaction with (or monument to) the past. I will demonstrate that how the past is regarded by different spectators is absolutely central to this episode. Lucan displays Caesar's blinkered and highly selective view of history while simultaneously inviting his readers to understand the past differently – reminding us of literature's multivocality and epic's responsibility to memorialise.

Finally, it is important to note that due to the uncertainty over the date of its composition, Petronius' *Satyricon* (in particular Eumolpus' miniature epic on Caesar's civil war at *Sat.* 118.6-124.1) will not be discussed here. Speculation regarding its date has ranged from Claudius' principate to the third century AD, with scholars debating whether Lucan was responding to Petronius, whether Petronius was responding to Lucan, or neither.²¹ Völker and Rohmann have recently argued that Petronius and Lucan were probably aware of one another's work, and so it was not necessarily a case of Petronius imitating Lucan but rather a reciprocal, intertextual relationship.²² Further research into Petronius' date of composition would be welcome, as would more work on the relationship between Lucan and Petronius. As far as the current investigation is concerned, the scale,

²¹ See Harrison (1999) xvi-xvii. For a history of the scholarship on the relationship between Petronius and Lucan, see Connors (1989) 4 n1. For an overview of parallels between Petronius and Lucan, see Rose (1971) 88-94 and Luck (1972) 133-141.

²² Völker and Rohmann (2011) 670-671. See also Roche (2009) 45-47.

scope and influence of Lucan's text make it the focus, and because it can be securely dated to Nero's reign.²³ It is essential for any discussion of Caesar's literary reception.

3.1. Civil war, epic and Lucanian scholarship

As discussed earlier, Augustan writers had not shied away from the topic of civil war. It was a theme that was important for Augustus' reign, not least because the *princeps* celebrated the end of civil war and the peace he had brought about.²⁴ However the topic of civil war was also a controversial and potentially dangerous subject for writers in the early Principate to tackle: Horace described writing about it as 'a dangerous gamble at every point; you walk over fires still burning beneath the treacherous ash' (*Carm.* 2.1.6-8); Valerius Maximus referred to his reluctance 'to advance into the abominable memory (*detestandam memoriam*) of the civil wars' (3.3.2); Seneca the Elder (citing Labienus) wrote that the best defence against civil war was to forget (*oblivio*, *Contr.* 10.3.5); and Claudius, who began writing under Augustus and was still writing when emperor (Suet. *Claud.* 41.1-2), avoided the topic altogether in his own historical account (Suet. *Claud.* 41.2).²⁵

Lucan's choice of civil war as his epic theme is in itself a provocation, not to mention his unambiguous language to describe it as such. In his own *commentarius*, Caesar appears cautious about using the phrase *bellum civile*.²⁶ It thus seems unlikely that it would

²³ Precisely when Lucan started composing the *Pharsalia*, and which books were published before Nero banned Lucan from reciting his poetry, are topics which continue to be discussed. See Fantham (2011) 13-14, Asso (2010) 6-9 and Ahl (1976) 333-353. On the ban see Tac. *Ann.* 15.49 and Dio 62.29.4.

²⁴ See DeBrohun (2007) 266 on Virgil's reference to the closure of the gate of Janus at *Aen.* 1.292-296: 'more positively, it implies that the victory at Actium simultaneously ended all Rome's wars, foreign and domestic, and it provided an end, at last, to the long era of civil war; less positively, it reminds the Romans that the attainment of peace, celebrated by Janus' closure after Actium, came also at the cost associated with the impiety of civil war'.

²⁵ By starting his history with Caesar's death in 44 BC and moving swiftly on to an era of peace, Claudius was able to side-step three civil wars (that of Caesar and Pompey, that of the Second Triumvirate and Caesar's assassins, and that of Octavian and Antony). It also meant that he avoided discussing his family's connection to Antony (who was his maternal grandfather) and bypassed the wider themes of power struggles and the right to rule – an advantageous omission given that Claudius was not a member of the *gens Iulia* through either blood or adoption.

²⁶ At *BC* 3.1.4 Caesar refers to people in Rome who had been convicted of bribery under the Pompeian Law and who 'had offered themselves to him (Caesar) at the beginning of the civil war, in case he wanted to use their services in the war' (*qui se illi initio civilis belli obtulerant, si sua opera in bello uti vellet*). It is hard to say whether this usage of the term is focalised through the people themselves or through the character of Caesar, or whether it is authorial. The only other appearance of the term *bellum civile* in Caesar's surviving writings relates to rumours within Curio's camp (*BC* 2.29.3). The text here is in an extremely unsatisfactory condition but the meaning is along the lines of 'it was a civil war, they said'. The term thus appears to be focalised through the soldiers.

have featured in its original title.²⁷ Furthermore, it is interesting to note that during the years 48-47 BC Caesar minted coins representing his earlier conquest of Gaul: 'a convenient means to celebrate his military might in connection with (and without mentioning) the civil war'.²⁸ In sharp contrast to Caesar's sparing use of the expression *bellum civile* in his commentary, Lucan uses the term throughout his *Pharsalia*. The phrase famously appears in the first line of Lucan's epic.²⁹ The very first word, *bella*, is noticeably plural.³⁰ The wars in Lucan's opening line are not just civil, they are 'more than civil' (*plus quam civilia*, 1.1). While this alludes to the familial connection between Caesar and Pompey through the latter's marriage to Julia, it may also embrace a struggle over *civilitas*; that is, the style of government. The victor, according to the epic poem, would go on to become the most powerful man on Earth. This is an idea that can be felt throughout the text. In book 9, for example, when Cato's character is said to have been reluctant to fight while Pompey was alive and the outcome still hung in the balance, 'doubt remained as to whom the civil wars would make master of the world' (9.20.21).

As we turn to the subject of genre, it is clear that generic boundaries between epic and history were by no means set in stone in antiquity.³¹ Nonetheless there were undoubtedly conventional generic distinctions, and it would be naïve to suggest that Lucan's readers would not have approached the epic with certain expectations.³² The two earliest Latin historical epics were composed by Naevius and Ennius.³³ Naevius (270-201 BC) wrote about the First Punic War (in which he had fought) in his epic *Bellum Punicum*, and seems to have incorporated the mythical exploits of Aeneas into his version of contemporary history. Ennius (239-169 BC), providing an overview of Roman history from the beginnings until his own time, began the *Annales* with the Fall of Troy. Perhaps there may also have been an aetiological dimension to both texts insofar as the events in ancient

²⁷ See Kelsey (1905) 231 for Hirtius' preference for the term *civilis dissensio* in the preface.

²⁸ Grillo (2012) 8. For an example of such coinage, see *RRC* 452 which depicts a trophy of arms with a Gallic shield and carnyx.

²⁹ For recent, detailed analysis of the opening of the epic, see Fratantuono (2012) 1-55.

³⁰ Henderson (1987) 124: 'The poem surges out way past its represented *Bellum Civile*, the events of 49-8 b.c.e., to offer you, not 'The Civil War', but through '(The) Civil Wars' ... 'Civil War' the phenomenon'.

³¹ In his *Life of Vergil*, for example, Donatus quotes Sulpicius Carthaginiensis who had heard about Augustus going against Virgil's wishes and deciding not to burn the *Aeneid*. He refers to the epic as *historia* (*Life of Vergil*, 38). Lucan was also called 'a historian' in antiquity (Servius ad Verg. *Aen.* 1.382). See Leigh (2007) 483.

³² See Harrison's introduction to Papanghelis, Harrison and Fragoulidis (2013) (eds), especially p1-6 where he discusses 'how embedded generic concepts were in literary consciousness, and how innovative poets might exploit generic models and expectations' (p2).

³³ See Reed (2011), especially p21 where he also discusses Hostius' *Bellum Histricum*, Volusius' *Annales*, Furius Bibaculus' *Annales Belli Gallici*, and Varro of Atax's *Bellum Sequanicum*. The last two dealt with Caesar's wars in Gaul.

Carthage concerning Dido and Aeneas might have helped to explain the ongoing hostility between Rome and Carthage which manifested itself in the Punic Wars. Both Naevius and Ennius incorporated in some capacity both the distant past (the foundation of Rome) and contemporary history. Other central features of the genre include the presence of divine machinery, adopted from Greek epics, and the interaction with other epics.³⁴ The latter has been described as the 'quintessential if not defining characteristic of epic'.³⁵

The foundation of Rome and the actions of the gods were, of course, fundamental to Virgil's *Aeneid*. Engaging with the propagandistic messages that were being promoted by Augustus, Virgil cast Aeneas as his epic hero, son of Venus, member of the *gens Iulia* and ancestor of Augustus. At several points in the *Aeneid*, Virgil looks proleptically to Augustus' principate (most famously on Aeneas' shield in book 8 which depicts the defeat of Antony at Actium). Thus once again a Latin epic embraces Rome's mythological foundation story, the actions of the gods and events affecting contemporary Rome, but now there is another conspicuous aspect to the genre: its association with the *princeps* and his core ideological values.³⁶ The precedent of the *Aeneid* invites us to ask whether Lucan's Caesar somehow stands for Nero.

While the *Pharsalia* is clearly 'not a history in the proper sense',³⁷ the relatively recent temporal setting coupled with the lack of anthropomorphic Olympian Gods invite us to consider certain historiographical approaches to the text. A theme that will be of utmost importance for this chapter is the idea of utilising the past – through the imitation or avoidance of examples – to inform and benefit one's present.³⁸ Matthew Leigh, in his 1997 monograph *Spectacle and Engagement*, is the only Lucanian scholar to my knowledge to discuss the role of exemplarity.³⁹ It is important to consider instances of exemplarity within a text (the audience being the characters in the text) and the exemplarity of the text itself

³⁴ Ennius famously acknowledges his debt to Homer when, in the first book of the *Annales*, a vision of Homer appears and tells Ennius that the Greek poet's soul has migrated into his body (1.5-10). It is well known that Virgil adapts and borrows from both Homer and Ennius. Lucan also adapts and borrows, and he does this chiefly from Virgil. For an overview of this vast topic, see Casali (2011), Barnes (2001) 268-272, Conte (1994) 443-444, and Thompson and Bruère (1968).

³⁵ Bates (2010) xi.

³⁶ For the *Aeneid*'s role in transforming epic into a genre that was explicitly political, and Aeneas as 'a hero deliberately created for political reflection', see Quint (1993) 8.

³⁷ Fratantuono (2012) 63. See also Johnson (1987) 103 who suggests that we read Lucan's Caesar as a symbol rather than a representation of a historical figure (adding that Lucan uses his text and the character of Caesar to relate historical facts but that Lucan then leaves behind the issue of historiography altogether). See also Zwierlein (2010) 417 who cites Lucan's inclusion of Cicero at Pharsalus as proof of the need for caution when treating Lucan's epic as a historical source.

³⁸ The *locus classicus* for this principle is Livy *Praef.* 10.

³⁹ See especially the chapter in Leigh (1997) 158-190 entitled 'Scaeva as Lucan's exemplary hero'.

(the audience being the readers whom the recollection of the story is intended to inspire).⁴⁰ I propose to explore how Lucan's Caesar engages with *exempla* within the text as well as how the character itself might serve as an *exemplum* for the text's readers – the two aspects of the 'double audience'. I will consider, for example, whether Lucan uses Caesar's blinkered manipulations of the past to draw attention to Nero's own relationship to the past as blinkered and manipulative.

Until now, scholars have not explored in any depth what Lucan's depiction of Caesar might suggest about Julius Caesar's contemporary reception. In his reading of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Lee Fratantuono hints at a relationship between how Caesar was remembered under a given regime and how he is treated in texts from that era – 'Caesar was an ambiguous figure in both Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in part because of the problem he posed for the Augustan regime'⁴¹ – but he focuses solely on Augustus' principate. What about the problems Caesar posed for Nero's regime? Ahl's seminal work, *Lucan: An Introduction* (1976), includes a section on 'The Problem of Caesar's *Clementia*'⁴² yet he does not discuss how this strand of Caesar's legacy remained problematic under Nero. Masters builds upon Ahl but also chooses not to explore how *clementia* was viewed by Nero.⁴³ Moreover, the fact that the *Pharsalia* seems to depict Julius Caesar as emblematic of a new era has been recognised by Fratantuono⁴⁴ and by Ahl⁴⁵ before him, yet neither links this to the text's epic genre or contrasts this with Caesar's absence from the non-literary material from the Neronian period.

The reader's active participation in the text is another important consideration. Jessica Seidman has recently explored the rivalry between the Caesarian protagonist and the Lucanian narrator.⁴⁶ Lucan's ability to draw on his reader's literary knowledge is, she argues, what allows him to gain the upper hand. Regarding the simile in book 1 where Caesar likens Pompey to a Hyrcanian tiger cub (1.324-325), Seidman writes:

We can observe both a peculiarly Lucanian poetic aesthetic and a moment in which Caesar and Lucan use poetry at cross-purposes. Well aware of the power of poetic

⁴⁰ Leigh (1997) 165-166 speaks of the 'double audience'. The research of Chaplin (2000) on Livy and exemplarity provides an important parallel for Leigh's work on Lucan. She describes the internal and external audiences, and notes that each may react differently to the same *exemplum* (see especially pp. 50-53). See also Grethlein and Krebs (2012) who discuss the varying responses of the internal and external audience due to their knowledge of the 'plupast' (see especially pp. 1-16).

⁴¹ Fratantuono (2012) 26.

⁴² Ahl (1976) 192-196.

⁴³ Masters (1997) 78-86.

⁴⁴ Fratantuono (2012) 15.

⁴⁵ Ahl (1976) 57.

⁴⁶ Seidman (2017).

language to rewrite the past, Caesar attempts to use this simile to change the way his soldiers recall their recent history and thus also their understanding of their present predicament. In the very same simile, Lucan playfully reminds his reader of the recent literary past, altering the way that the reader remembers Caesar himself and the legacy he has left for imperial Rome.⁴⁷

Of course, our literary knowledge of the events that Lucan's epic describes often hinges on Caesar's own *commentarius*. While a limited amount of work has been done on how Lucan's version of events compares with Caesar's,⁴⁸ how Lucan incorporates the idea of reader responsibility with regard to the character of Caesar demands further investigation.⁴⁹ A reliance on the reader's literary memory is, I suggest, an important dimension to Lucan's portrayal of Caesar in general and to the Troy episode in particular. At several points, for example, we are invited to participate in Lucan's narrative; it becomes difficult to resist comparison of it with what we already know from Caesar's account (among others)⁵⁰ and we are compelled to draw conclusions about what we are witnessing which are different from the conclusions we see Lucan's Caesar making. This gives rise to questions about success and reality, and the subjectivity of these concepts.

Finally, I hope my work continues and complements the current interest in the topic of memory among Lucanian scholars. Christine Walde discusses the paradox within the text between the 'real' Caesar and the invented image, citing (for example) the Roman people's faded memories of Caesar given his prologue absence from Rome, and their resultant fear, imagining a barbaric general burning down temples and killing civilians (*Phars.* 1.465-520).⁵¹ This 'contorted image' constructed by the internal Romans is at odds, according to Walde, with the narrator's depiction of Caesar's joyful entrance into the city at *Phars.* 3.84-98 – an insightful illustration of discordant views of Caesar which is particularly helpful for my analysis. She also discusses the memory of Lucan's text – that is, its reception – and demonstrates the enormous influence it has had on the literary image of Caesar. Mark Thorne and Diana Spencer both explore Lucan's engagement with *memoria* in helpful article;⁵² but the link between memory, genre and the particular characterisation of Caesar

⁴⁷ Seidman (2017) 75.

⁴⁸ Masters (1992) 20-21, for example, lays Lucan's and Caesar's accounts of the Massilia episode side by side.

⁴⁹ On reader responsibility in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, see Damon (1994) 185 and Grillo (2012) 6.

⁵⁰ We might compare, for example, Cicero's active role in Lucan's *Pharsalia* with his omission from Caesar's *Bellum Civile* and wonder 'what would Cicero really have said / done / thought?'

⁵¹ Walde (2006) 53.

⁵² Thorne (2011) reads Lucan's text as an epic funeral monument, preserving for future generations what Rome lost through civil war. Spencer (2005) offers a more pessimistic reading where 'opening

demands further investigation. Thorne, for instance, discusses how ‘Lucan’s epic illustrates that civil war has an inherent capability to subvert and destroy, whether in terms of epic genre expectations, traditional virtues, or the healthy functioning of *memoria*’.⁵³ He goes on to call Caesar a ‘destroyer of memory’.⁵⁴ I demonstrate that the Lucanian Caesar’s relationship with the past is much more complex than this. Lucan shows Caesar cleverly suppressing certain memories (because they are not beneficial to him) and actively constructing new ones through the creation of *exempla*.

3.2. Lucan’s Caesar and his engagement with the past

The character of Caesar uses more future tenses in his direct speech than Pompey (as Martin Helzle has pointed out) not least because Pompey’s successes lie in the past.⁵⁵ The distinction between past (Pompey) and future (Caesar) goes hand in hand with the simile in book 1 in which Pompey is likened to an old oak tree and Caesar is likened to a powerful thunderbolt (1. 135-157).⁵⁶ In total Caesar has thirteen speeches, the highest number of all the characters,⁵⁷ and this amounts to 360 lines of direct speech.⁵⁸ The longest oration occurs at Pharsalus (7.250-329).⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that in Caesar’s *Bellum Civile* the only instance of Caesar’s direct speech also occurs at Pharsalus, a source on which Lucan could draw.⁶⁰ The Caesarian Caesar’s speech is brief (just twenty-three words) and successfully moves the narrative forward; the Lucanian Caesar’s lengthy speech (seventy-nine lines) delays the action of the narrative, with Caesar even apologising for holding the troops there with his words (7.295-296).⁶¹ Thus while both authors prioritise this episode of speech-giving – insofar as it is the only instance of Caesar’s direct speech in Caesar’s text and the longest instance in Lucan’s – Lucan offers his readers a version of Caesar’s

up the present to the past can result in a closing down of opportunities for progression and change’ (p69).

⁵³ Thorne (2011) 374.

⁵⁴ Thorne (2011) 376 citing Gowing (2005) 84.

⁵⁵ Helzle (2010) 358. For a recent discussion of Lucan’s characterisation of Caesar through speech, see Talbot Neely (2017).

⁵⁶ Helzle (2010) 358-359. See also Rosner-Siegel (2010).

⁵⁷ Barratt (1979) 103.

⁵⁸ Helzle (2010) 362.

⁵⁹ For analysis of this speech, see De Moura (2010) pp. 71-90.

⁶⁰ “‘We must postpone our march for now and think about battle – our perpetual request! We are mentally ready to fight; hereafter it will not be easy to find an occasion’’. At once he leads out his troops in light order’ (BC 3.85.4).

⁶¹ Talbot Neely (2017) 74.

exhortation at Pharsalus that is very different from Caesar's own.⁶² Using examples from the Lucanian Caesar's speech at Pharsalus, and an additional example from his rousing address to his soldiers at Ariminum, I will demonstrate his incredibly astute application of the past.

When, at Pharsalus, Lucan's Caesar learns that Pompey's army is ready for battle, he delivers a rousing speech to his men (7.235 ff). Excluding participles, there are only a handful of verbs in a past tense.⁶³ The following extract provides an illustration:

Haec est illa dies mihi quam Rubiconis ad undas
 promissam memini, cuius spe movimus arma,
 in quam distulimus vetitos remeare triumphos 256
 haec, fato quae teste probet, quis iustius arma 259
sumpsert; haec acies victum factura nocentem est.
 Si pro me patriam ferro flammisque petistis,
 nunc pugnate truces gladioque exsolvite culpam.⁶⁴

This is the day which I remember you promised me by the waters of the Rubicon, the day we hoped for when we went to war, the day for which we have postponed our return in triumph; this, the day which must prove on the evidence of destiny who more justly took up weapons: this is a battle bound to make the loser guilty. If it was for me that you attacked your land with weapon and with flames, fight fiercely now and with the sword put an end to blame.

Pharsalia 7.254-262

In this impassioned speech, Lucan's Caesar unashamedly puts himself before his fatherland, placing the emphatic *pro me* in front of *patriam* (7.261). *Patria* is, of course, a highly emotive word, particularly within the context of civil war. Being etymologically linked with *pater*, it reminds us of the familial connection that links Caesar and Pompey. It also looks proleptically to the title of *pater patriae* which was awarded to Caesar in 45 BC. This forward-looking dimension to the character's language can be seen in the meaning of each of the four perfect tense verbs. On all four occasions, verbs in the perfect tense are being used by Caesar explicitly to make a point about his present. This is clear from the repetition

⁶² For analysis of how Lucan's version relates to Appian's full-length version of Caesar's speech at Pharsalus (App. *B. Civ.* 2.72-74) and to the one-line summary that Plutarch provides (*Pomp.* 68.6), see Goebel (1981).

⁶³ For historical battle exhortations in antiquity, see Hansen (1993) 161-180.

⁶⁴ As noted above I follow Braund (1992) in using Housman's text. Spurious lines have been omitted (such as 7.257-8) hence the incongruent line numbers here.

of *haec* (this day, this battle) and the use of *nunc*. Later on in the same speech, Caesar again uses his past to illuminate his present and future. He briefly references his past wars in Gaul to explain how he will be able to recognise all his soldiers (7.285-288): ‘fortune has entrusted [*commisit*] me to my own men’s hands, made [*fecit*] me a witness in so many wars in Gaul. Which soldier’s sword shall I not recognise [*agnoscam*]?’

The reader’s understanding of the Lucanian Caesar’s treatment of the past is brought into sharper focus by his/her knowledge of other literary texts. At 7.315-317, for example, Caesar says ‘when Pompey kept your troops in a narrow place ... with how much blood did he glut his sword!’ In the previous book we read a different story. At 6.299-300 Lucan the narrator suggests that the whole war could have been finished at Dyrrachium if Pompey had not restrained his soldiers. This subtly invites the reader’s active participation. We recall the narrator’s words from the previous book and realise that the character of Caesar is interpreting (or rather relating) this episode in a different way. Each is providing ‘spin’ for his own purpose: for the narrator, to account for Pompey’s fatal misjudgement in not securing victory when he had the chance;⁶⁵ for Lucan’s Caesar, to fire up his troops for battle. The reader might also recall Caesar’s own description of events in his *Bellum Civile*. There he states that he lost around a thousand men but that the majority of them perished without any wound (*sine ullo vulnere interiit*, *BC* 3.71), contrasting with the image that the Lucanian Caesar provides of Pompey spilling blood (*quanto sanguine!*, 7.317). The act of Pompey ‘glutting his sword’ is fixed firmly in the past for Lucan’s Caesar; the motivation for referring to this episode is to rouse his troops for battle now.⁶⁶

In another speech by Lucan’s Caesar, a rousing address to his soldiers at Ariminum (1.299-351), all past tense verbs are used solely to elaborate on the present circumstance.⁶⁷ In this speech Caesar does, however, speak of Pompey in the future tense which is surprising given his custom of relating Pompey to the past:

Scilicet extremi Pompeium emptique clientes
continuo per tot satiabunt tempora regno?

⁶⁵ Suetonius (*Iul.* 36) reports that having been put to flight at Dyrrachium, Caesar said that Pompey did not know how to win (*negavit eum vincere scire*).

⁶⁶ Similarly, just before this passage, Caesar had declared that ‘we are waging civil war with a general of Sulla’ (*cum duce Sullano gerimus civilia bella*, 7.307). This line nicely captures how even within one sentence Caesar’s direct speech focusses on the present (and the future) where he and his men are concerned (*gerimus*), and on the past where Pompey is concerned (*cum duce Sullano*).

⁶⁷ At 1.319-323, for example, we see two verbs in the perfect tense (*cinxere*, *clausurunt*) but both are found within a question about current knowledge: *quis... nescit...?* (‘Who does not [currently] know...?’). For analysis of this speech, see Hardie (2010) 20-23.

Ille reget currus nondum patientibus annis,
ille semel raptos numquam dimittet honores?

I ask you – shall Pompey’s lowest minions, bought, bestow on him his fill of power unbroken through so many years? Shall Pompey guide triumphal chariots although his age does not yet allow it? Shall Pompey never yield the privileges he once usurped?⁶⁸

Pharsalia 1.314-317

Does Lucan’s Caesar therefore see a future for Pompey? The answer is no. These references to the future are not only within the constraints of rhetorical questions, they actually allude to past actions of Pompey. The triumph for his victory in Africa, for example, took place in 81 BC which is over thirty years prior to the action currently taking place in the narrative.⁶⁹ The use of *nondum* (‘not yet’) highlights his youth at that point. The focus on time (*per tot tempora, nondum patientibus annis, semel, numquam*) coupled with the rhetorical questions depicts a conflict, according to Lucan’s Caesar, between Pompey’s past and future. When Pompey is spoken of in terms of the future, they are not real, projected outcomes that Caesar offers but references to the past cloaked in rhetorical questions. Later on he refers to Pompey as ‘Sulla’s pupil’ (1.326) and describes him licking Sulla’s sword (1.330). For Lucan’s Caesar, Pompey exists in the past and has a historical precedent in Sulla. The character of Caesar, on the other hand, who focusses on the present and future, never provides a historical precedent for himself.⁷⁰ (At 1.303-305 he acknowledges the fact that people are reacting as if he were Hannibal but there is no suggestion that this is how Caesar sees himself.) His command of the spoken language is such that he is able to select particular aspects of the past for the express purpose of illuminating and benefitting his present. As such they are not only short, passing references but are frequently accompanied by clear temporal signposts (such as *haec est illa dies, iam, nunc*, and so on). Therefore we cannot simply say that Lucan’s Caesar is blind to the past or that he only looks forward in his speech; rather, his relationship to the past seems to be one that is both shrewd and highly selective.

⁶⁸ I have slightly adapted Braund’s translation.

⁶⁹ Plutarch describes how Sulla at first refused Pompey’s request for a triumph but later consented (*Pomp.* 14).

⁷⁰ Fratantuono (2012) speaks of ‘Marius as proto-Caesar’ (p59) but does not distinguish between which characters in the text view Marius or Caesar in this way. He does not point out that the character of Caesar never compares himself to Marius.

A glance at the voices of other characters (including the narrator) will reveal whether the character of Caesar is unique in his treatment of the past. Pompey is directly linked to Marius and Sulla at several points in the poem by several voices. In book 8, during a meeting with the senators at Syhedra, Pompey likens himself to Marius returning from exile to take a seventh consulship: ‘can Fortune hold me down, though struck by a lighter blow?’ (8.271). Lucan shows the character of Pompey using a historical *exemplum* to forecast cautiously (it is, after all, within a rhetorical question) his own future. Whilst I agree that ‘a Marian analogy is hardly reassuring given Marius’ savagery on his return to Rome’⁷¹ – not to mention his death less than two weeks into his seventh consulship and his forces’ defeat by Sulla when he returned from the East in 83 BC – what seems most interesting is that Lucan shows Pompey articulating the idea of a historical comparison (regardless of the connotations) for himself.⁷² The character of Caesar never likens himself to any figure from the past.

The character of Cato also links Pompey to the past (after Pompey’s death):

Olim vera fides Sulla Marioque receptis
 libertatis obit: Pompeio rebus adempto
 nunc et ficta perit. Non iam regnare pudebit,
 nec color imperii nec frons erit ulla senatus.

Long ago when Marius and Sulla were admitted, the true guarantee of liberty disappeared: with Pompey taken from the world, now even the bogus guarantee has gone. Now to reign will be a source of no shame, nor will there be a screen for power nor will the senate be a mask.

Pharsalia 9.204-207

Cato’s speech compares past, present and future.⁷³ The memory of Marius and Sulla from long ago (*olim*) acts as a reference point for the current civil war (*nunc*). Two ablative absolutes (*Sulla Marioque receptis; Pompeio adempto*) illustrate the similarities between then and now. This time around, however, things are worse since even the façade of freedom has gone. While *frons* can mean ‘mask’ it can also mean ‘foliage’. No longer will

⁷¹ Braund (1992) 299.

⁷² At only one point in the text do we see Pompey suggesting precedents for Caesar. During a speech to his men in book 2, Pompey refers to a host of figures from the past to illustrate the current discord at Rome: ‘Though fortune is ready to raise you up, Caesar, to the height of a Camillus or a great Metellus, you join the ranks of such as Marius and Cinna’ (2.544-546).

⁷³ For an overview of Lucan’s characterisation of Cato, and its relation to Cato’s depiction in earlier Julio-Claudian literature, see Tipping (2011).

there be nature, growth and prosperity; all that remains is, in the opinion of Lucan's Cato, rotten. *Regnare* is another interesting word choice because a few lines earlier Cato had described Pompey as *rector* not *rex*: 'he was ruler of the senate but it [the senate] still reigned' (*rectorque senatus, sed regnantis, erat*, 9.194-5). Here at line 206 he picks up on the idea of ruling by again using the loaded, monarchic term *regnare*. According to Lucan's Cato, an individual 'reigning' over Rome signifies a shameful lack of liberty.⁷⁴

Just as the character of Pompey looks to the past for precedents, Lucan the narrator also sees patterns from history and unequivocally links Caesar to Marius and/or Sulla twice. At the end of book 4 Lucan narrates the tricking and defeat of Curio at the hands of King Juba, reviewing Curio's life and his part in provoking the civil war:⁷⁵

Ius licet in iugulos nostros sibi fecerit ensis
 Sulla potens Mariusque ferox et Cinna cruentus
 Caesareaeque domus series, cui tanta potestas
 concessa est? Emere omnes, hic vendidit urbem.

True, mighty Sulla and fierce Marius and bloody Cinna and the chain of the
 Caesarian house created for themselves the power of the sword over our throat.
 But who was ever granted such great power as he? They all bought, but he sold
 Rome.

Pharsalia 4.821-824

While Curio is presented as an example of corruption, his character also contains some irony for Lucan since his power exceeds even that of Sulla, Marius, Cinna and the Caesars.⁷⁶ The use of the adjective *Caesareus* is particularly interesting. In extant literature this word previously appears in only Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It occurs once in book 1 of the *Met.* when the narrator speaks of 'an impious band ... mad to blot out the name of Rome with Caesar's blood [*sanguine Caesareo*]' (*Met.* 1.200-201). It occurs twice within two lines at the end of book 15 of the *Met.* when, after Caesar's apotheosis, the narrator refers to the *Caesareos penates* and the *Caesarea Vesta* (*Met.* 15. 864-865).⁷⁷ Both times in Ovid, the word is used firstly within the context of Caesar's death and deification, and secondly in a

⁷⁴ Cf. Sen. *Ep.* 14.3: 'Why, Cato, should you take sides in that dispute? It is no business of yours; a tyrant is being selected'. See chapter 2.

⁷⁵ At 1.273-291 his character had given a speech which was a decisive factor in Caesar's decision to cross the Rubicon.

⁷⁶ See Ahl (1976) 89: 'They merely bought the right to enslave Rome; Curio sold the city to its masters'.

⁷⁷ See Hill (2000) 231 for *penates* meaning 'home' here and thus referring to the official residence of the Pontifex Maximus who was in charge of the worship of Vesta.

way that links Caesar to Rome and/or Roman religion. According to Ahl in his examination of the Lucan passage cited above, Lucan's Caesar belongs 'to the ranks of villains of the past'.⁷⁸ It seems appropriate to add that through Lucan's incorporation of the phrase *Caesareae domus*, and the implicit connotations of dynastic succession and imperial cult (since these are the spheres within which this word had previously been used, as far as we can tell), Lucan's Caesar and 'the chain of the Caesarian house' also belong to the villains of the narrative's future.

Elsewhere in the *Pharsalia*, *Caesareus* is only ever used to describe elements of war: battle-lines (3.264), weapons (3.762, 5.346), a camp (4.695-6), Caesar's fear-inducing hands (5.531), a rampart (6.44), cohorts (6.247), crosses for execution (7.304), triumphs (8.430), blood (10.423-4) and, most shockingly, the Senate (5.40, in a speech by Lentulus) – now perversely part of Caesar's arsenal. Is the 'chain of the Caesarian house' simply another resource to be used for overpowering and conquering? Worse still, is it a chain that stretches beyond the narrative's timeframe and into Lucan's own era (given the word's connotations of succession and imperial cult that we saw in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*)? After all, just two lines before Lucan's reference to the 'Caesarian house', the sword is described as hanging over *nostros iugulos* ('our throats', 4.821). The use of *nostri* has the effect of pulling the reader into the text or pushing the civil war out to the reader. It was also, of course, one of the ways that Caesar himself tried to elide the boundary that separated reader and text in his *commentarii*, barbarising the Roman enemy in the process.

The only other instance in the *Pharsalia* where Julius Caesar is explicitly linked to Marius and Sulla is also in the voice of Lucan the narrator. Once again, a glance backwards from the figure of Caesar to the time of Marius and Sulla (external analepsis since it is outside the limits of the *fabula*) is paired with what I propose to show is a forward-looking reference (external prolepsis) to the narrator's contemporary situation:

Felix ac libera regum,
 Roma, fores iurisque tui, vicisset in illo
 si tibi Sulla loco. Dolet, heu, semperque dolebit
 quod scelerum, Caesar, prodest tibi summa tuorum,
 cum genero pugnasse pio. pro tristia fata!

⁷⁸ Ahl (1976) 56.

Fortunate you could have been, and free of kings, Rome, and your own mistress, had a Sulla conquered for you there. Alas, how bitter now, for ever bitter, that the greatest of your crimes is your advantage, Caesar: to fight a pious son-in-law. O cruel fates!

Pharsalia 6.301-305

The word *pius* is particularly striking because of its association with Virgil's Aeneas. Lucan undercuts his praise of Pompey's piety by implying that this is what contributed to his defeat. A more cunning, less *pius* opponent might have succeeded in defeating Caesar. Or perhaps somebody truly *pius* would have been reluctant to fight a relative and so would have avoided the war altogether. The use of this word, a term so closely connected to the figure of Aeneas, signifies an inversion of the Virgilian model. In Lucan's epic, it is not the member of the *gens Iulia* who is *pius* but his defeated opponent. The term *genero* also suggests a link with the *Aeneid* because of Aeneas' role as Latinus' son-in-law, but here the son-in-law loses. The narrator's disgust at the fact that the two adversaries were actually family members (*cum genero*) can be heard in the spluttering p-alliteration of line 305 (*pugnasse pio pro*). His dismay can be felt in the outbursts *pro patria fata!* and *heu*. His despair at the perpetual (*semper*) horrors of civil war is clear from the echo of *dolet* in *dolebit*. Because the narrator's voice is so distinct in these lines, the temporal references seem to transcend the confines of the fabula and reach up to the narrator's own vantage point. The resulting effect is that the present tense (*dolet*) appears to relate to the narrator's present (Neronian Rome); the future tense to his own, unknown, future.⁷⁹

Contrary to Lucan's portrayal of a character whose habit is to stay silent when it comes to historical precedents for himself, Julius Caesar in person actively and selectively engaged with figures from his past. At the funeral of his aunt Julia in 68 BC, for example, Caesar famously displayed images of Marius (Julia's husband) which had been banned by Sulla (Plut. *Caes.* 5.3). Three years later Caesar secretly commissioned portraits of Marius (trophies or statues, not funeral *imagines*)⁸⁰ which included inscriptions of his Cimbrian successes, setting them up on the Capitol at night (Plut. *Caes.* 6). According to Plutarch, 'this was an experiment on the people, and he was eager to see whether his ambitious enterprises had softened them to such submissiveness that they would allow him to play the revolutionary in this tomfool way' (Plut. *Caes.* 6.3). Suetonius also presents this episode as a deliberately inflammatory and politically-motivated act, designed to cause upset

⁷⁹ The omniscient position of the narrator can also be felt in the lines immediately afterwards (6.306 ff) where he reviews events which take place after Pharsalus which might have been avoided.

⁸⁰ Pelling (2011b) 157.

among the *optimates* following Caesar's thwarted attempts to gain charge of Egypt (Suet. *lul.* 11). Resurrecting physical images of Marius meant reversing a sort of *damnatio memoriae* that Sulla had imposed: Sulla had written Marius out of the landscape at Rome and Caesar was putting him back, inviting the populace to remember what they had been encouraged to forget. In evoking Marius' memory Caesar was clearly intending to align himself with the figure of Marius and to occasion support among the Marians.

Turning to Caesar as author, Marius is not mentioned in any of the three books of Caesar's *Bellum Civile*.⁸¹ Sulla, on the other hand, is referred to three times.⁸² The first is when the character of Lentulus boasts among his friends that he will become a second Sulla (*BC* 1.4.2). The second is when Caesar the narrator refers to the tribunes' power of veto which Sulla had left untouched (*BC* 1.5.1).⁸³ Perhaps most interesting is the third and last reference to Sulla because this comes within the indirect speech of Caesar as the author characterises himself: 'Sulla, although he completely stripped the tribunes of power, nevertheless left their veto unencumbered' (*BC* 1.7.3). It is at the start of the very next section (*BC* 1.8.1) that Caesar sets out for Ariminum and famously suppresses mention of the crossing of the Rubicon. Once the civil war has officially begun, there are no more references to Sulla. In the voice of Caesar the narrator or Caesar the protagonist, Sulla is only mentioned within the context of the tribunes' power. In the voice of Caesar's opponent Lentulus, he does not restrict the reference to this. Once Caesar has crossed the Rubicon all references to Sulla stop, perhaps for the same reason that Marius' name never appears: Caesar seems unwilling for connotations of past civil wars to colour his text (just as we saw with the limited use of the phrase *bellum civile*, and the coins minted during the years 48-47 BC that represented Caesar's earlier conquest of Gaul).

An interesting counterpoint to Lucan's Caesar is Sallust's Caesar who is characterised by a considered use of precedent (as discussed above, in main

⁸¹ Collins (1959) 122 does not point out Caesar's silence regarding Marius in the *Bellum Civile* but he does mention his omission of Cicero. Note that Marius does appear in the *Bellum Gallicum*. At *BG* 1.40.7 Caesar relates the speech he made prior to the campaign against Ariovistus in which he reminded his men of previous Roman victories, including that of Marius against the Cimbri and Teutoni. At *BG* 1.7 Caesar reports that his memory of the killing of Lucius Cassius (who was consul alongside Marius in 107 BC) by the Helvetii is what dictates his decision not to grant the Helvetii any concessions when it comes to migrating through Roman territory. On such references to the past serving to justify Caesar's aggression, see Grillo (2012) 97 n65.

⁸² In the *Bellum Gallicum* Sulla is referred to once. At *BG* 1.21 Caesar notes that Publius Considius had previously served under Sulla and Crassus.

⁸³ See Carter (1991) 158 for Sulla's reforms of the constitution in 81-80 BC, his restriction of the tribunes' powers of legislation and his decision not to interfere with the veto.

introduction).⁸⁴ Sallust's Caesar advocates maintaining the conduct of the past: not to execute the conspirators would be to act as their *maiores* would have.⁸⁵ We therefore get a sense of historical continuity, where venturing into new behaviours (including setting new precedents) would be bad.⁸⁶ He cites Sulla's execution of Damasippus, an adherent of Marius, as an anti-example, pointing out that this led to the beginning of huge slaughter (*Cat.* 51.32-26). Caesar also asks the senators to consider how posterity will remember their actions (*Cat.* 51.26-27). As well as considering *exempla* from the past and *exempla* for the future, Caesar warns the senators that their execution of the conspirators might be misremembered by posterity (*Cat.* 51.15). Sallust presents Caesar as understanding the changeability of memory and as possessing a seamless view of history. In sharp contrast to Lucan's Caesar, Sallust's Caesar believes that past precedents should be followed.

What these brief examples suggest is that the historical Caesar was in fact very aware of the sensitives surrounding the use of precedent. In particular he actively used the evocation or suppression of Marius and Sulla for political purposes. We can assume that he displayed Marius' image, for example, to win political acclaim and align himself more closely with the *populares*. Within the realm of civil war, however, just like the Lucanian character (and unlike other characters including the narrator), Caesar actively selected not to engage with any examples of civil war from history. This was presumably because he was sensitive to how this might impact upon his self-presentation and upon the presentation of the war itself.

3.3. Exemplarity

Exempla, by their very nature, work on two different time-frames: according to Chaplin, 'Either the past is recollected and applied to the present, or the present is envisioned as a source of models for the future'.⁸⁷ Although Lucan uses both types in the *Pharsalia*, he depicts Caesar (unlike other characters) as having no interest in the first of Chaplin's time frames. He never recollects past *exempla* to apply to his present. The narrator, in contrast, advocates the consideration of such precedents within the very first hundred lines: 'Do not

⁸⁴ See Ramsey (2013) 8-11 for Sallust's sources, including his apparent reproduction of contemporary documents (detailed at *Cat.* 34.3, 44.4).

⁸⁵ See Feldherr (2013) 100.

⁸⁶ Feldherr (2013) 107. See also pp. 103-108 where he discusses the contradictions inherent in arguing that the senators should follow the conduct of their ancestors while also using their ancestors as anti-examples.

⁸⁷ Chaplin (2000) 197.

rely on any foreign races or seek examples (*exempla*) of destiny afar: The first walls were drenched with a brother's blood' (1.93-95). The narrator urges his Roman reader to seek *exempla* from their own nation, and he makes it clear that the model of Romulus and Remus, though far away in time, is not far away in its relevance and location.⁸⁸

Book 2 dedicates over two hundred lines to the description of people's reactions to the omens and prophecies that preceded the outbreak of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey (2.16-233). This lengthy passage involves an unnamed elder looking to the past:

At miseros angit sua cura parentes,
oderuntque gravis vivacia fata senectae
servatosque iterum bellis civilibus annos.
Atque aliquis magno quaerens exempla timori
'non alios' inquit 'motus tum fata parabant
cum post Teutonicos victor Libycosque triumphos
exul limosa Marius caput abdidit ulva'.

But miserable parents are tormented by their own sorrow: they detest their long-enduring lot of oppressive old age, their years preserved for civil war again. And one spoke, seeking precedents for his mighty fear: 'The commotions caused by Fate were just the same when Marius, victorious after his Teutonic and his Libyan triumphs, in exile, hid his head in muddy sedge'.

Pharsalia 2.64-70

The old man links the 'current' civil strife back to Marius, and he goes on to describe the return of Sulla in 83 BC and the further killings that ensued. The idea of repetition can be felt in *iterum* and the plural *bellis civilibus*. Significantly, the speaker is unnamed (*aliquis*) and so symbolises the universal grieving parent.⁸⁹ There is a suggestion in *magno quaerens exempla timori* that finding – perhaps even just seeking – historical precedents can be a source of comfort, yet the overwhelming emotions here are misery, hopelessness and fear. The variability of life due to civil war is also tangible: *victor* becomes *exul* in the space of just four words, before we even hear Marius' name. Victorious in the first civil war, Sulla exiled Marius before embarking on a campaign in the East against Mithridates. While Sulla was away, Marius returned. He declared Sulla's laws invalid, locked the gates of the city,

⁸⁸ Cf. Horace *Ep.* 7 on the recurrence of civil war following Romulus' killing of Remus.

⁸⁹ Later in book 2, Cato describes himself as a grieving father (2.297-303). On this sort of 'un-Stoic' display of emotions by Lucan's Cato, see Seo (2011).

embarked upon a five-day massacre (where the severed heads of his enemies were displayed in the Forum Romanum) and took a seventh consulship. The internal characters and the external reader know that history will repeat itself yet again. Once *victor*, now *exul*, Marius will be *victor* again by line 99.⁹⁰

Towards the end of the speech, the elder declares that ‘these sufferings await, again to be endured, this will be the sequence of the warfare’ (2.223-224). The idea that (within a Latin epic) another war is coming – one which will feature a new protagonist – looks metapoetically to the opening of *Aeneid* 7 where the epic narrator introduces the second, Iliadic half of his text (especially *Aen.* 7.41-45). Both texts speak of a ‘sequence’ of events.⁹¹ The new war narrated in the second half of Virgil’s epic signifies a greater future and grander poetry (*maior ordo ... maius opus*, *Aen.* 7.44-45). The new war in Lucan’s epic, focalised through the unnamed survivor, also includes two comparatives but their meaning is diametrically opposed to Virgil’s: ‘graver threats (*graviora*) and greater loss (*maiore damno*) to humankind’ (2. 225-226). In Virgil the sequel to the Trojan War (the war in Italy) is a constructive step forward since it leads to the foundation of Rome. Lucan’s inversion of this passage looks to the sequel of the war between Marius and Sulla (that of Caesar and Pompey) and points only to destruction. Just as the external reader, in recognising allusions to Virgil, uses his/her knowledge of past literary works to shape his/her interpretation of this passage, so the unnamed elder uses his memory of past civil wars to inform his interpretation of the present situation.

After referring to Marius, Sulla, then Sulla again (227-232), the speech comes to an end:

Sic maesta senectus
praeteritique memor flebat metuensque futuri.

Thus the melancholy elders lamented, remembering the past and fearful of the future.

Pharsalia 2.232-233

Fantham describes line 233 as ‘a marvellously symmetrical line balancing past and future with chiasmic arrangement of adjectives and dependent nouns’.⁹² There are patterns in history, there are patterns within the epic canon and there are patterns within an individual

⁹⁰ Fantham (1992) 94 suggests that Marius’ hardships are seen as the Fates’ preparation for the terror of his final, civil-war return and victory in 87 BC.

⁹¹ *Ordine* in Lucan (2.223); *ordo* in Virgil (*Aen.* 7.44).

⁹² Fantham (1992) 121.

text. The result of the word order of line 233 is the centrality of *flebat*: the older generation is weeping. Tears also form part of Virgil's epic. When Aeneas comes upon Juno's great temple at Carthage, for example, he sees within the temple's artwork depictions of the Trojan War (*Aen.* 1.450-65). His face becomes wet with copious tears and he says to Achates *sunt lacrimae rerum*.⁹³ The tears of Aeneas, like those of Lucan's elder, are related to his consideration of both his past and his future. He tells Achates to let go of his fears since fame will bring some safety (*Aen.* 1.463). Because their war was glorious (and not civil), the memorialisation of the past assuages any fears for the future. For Lucan's elder, the opposite is true: remembering the inglorious past heightens his fears for the future. Lucan's reader is invited to conclude that the fear and sadness experienced by the unnamed elders in book 2 are entirely appropriate. Fully understanding the horrors of past civil wars and recognising that history is repeating itself should make you afraid.

The only form of *exempla* with which Lucan's Caesar engages is the second of Chaplin's two types: the setting of new precedents to act as models for the future. At several points in the *Pharsalia* we find Lucan's Caesar creating his own *exempla*. He considers, for instance, his crossing of the Rubicon as representing a new and enduring model. In book 2 (478 ff.) Domitius attempts to impede Caesar's progress to Corfinium by breaking the bridge but his plan is unsuccessful. Caesar's character declares: 'After the waters of the Rubicon, Caesar will now halt at no river' (2.497-498).⁹⁴ Lucan places the self-conscious setting of a new precedent in Caesar's direct speech; reminding us that Caesar is addressing people (first the Pompeian troops of Domitius and then his own troops) who can also therefore see him (even if some are too far away to hear him), just as he sees them.⁹⁵ These characters act as spectators to Caesar's setting of an *exemplum*, as indeed do we the reader.⁹⁶ Another example occurs a less than twenty lines later, when Caesar forces Domitius to live on, knowing that he sought punishment and feared pardon: 'Be now a bright hope to the conquered side, an *exemplum* of my behaviour' (2.513-514). The audience of his speech comprises Domitius, the troops (*agmina*, 2.507) and us the reader. This is the only time in the epic when Caesar's direct speech includes the word *exemplum*. (The plural *exempla* never appears in Caesar's speeches.) Once again, the character of

⁹³ See Wharton (2008) for an overview of scholarship on this controversial phrase.

⁹⁴ This reference to the Rubicon is not present in Caesar's own account of the Domitius episode, nor is there any direct speech or any reference to exemplarity (*BC* 1.16). The only instance of Caesar's direct speech in the entire *BC* occurs in book 3 at Pharsalus (see above). It is as if Lucan, in his text, is giving Caesar the voice that Caesar did not want to be heard in his own text. Caesar was, of course, one of the finest orators of his time (discussed in chapter 5).

⁹⁵ Domitius' view is noted at line 483 (*conspexit*); Caesar's at line 492 (*conspicit*).

⁹⁶ See Leigh (1997) 184 for the importance of visibility for exemplarity (discussed above).

Caesar is voicing his certainty that his actions will serve as a model for the future – as indeed they will, by virtue of Lucan’s narrative.

In the Massilia episode of book 3 of the *Pharsalia*, Lucan’s Caesar is once again shown breaking away from past customs and rewriting the rule book.⁹⁷ The Lucanian narrator, looking to the past, tells of a sacred grove that has been untouched by men’s hands since ancient times (3.399). The birds fear to sit on the branches and the beasts fear to lie in the thickets; even the natural elements do not enter the grove (3.402-425). Understandably then, because they know of its past, Caesar’s soldiers are nervous about cutting down the grove:

Implicitas magno Caesar torpore cohortes
ut vidit, primus raptam librare bipennem
ausus et aeriam ferro proscindere quercum
effatur merso violata in robora ferro:
‘iam ne quis vestrum dubitet subvertere silvam,
credite me fecisse nefas.’ Tum paruit omnis
imperiis non sublato secreta pavore
turba, sed expensa superiorum et Caesaris ira.

When Caesar saw his cohorts were entangled by a great reluctance, he was the first to dare to grab an axe, to balance it and gash with iron the towering oak. When he had sunk the blade into the desecrated trunk, he says ‘Now none of you need hesitate to cut down the wood: mine is the guilt – believe it!’ Then all the throng obeyed his orders, not free from fear with dread removed, but weighing in the scales the wrath of gods and Caesar.

Pharsalia 3.433-439

The description of the cohorts as *implicitas* (‘entangled’) makes it sound as if they are physically entwined in the thickets. On the one hand *implicitas* may suggest that the very idea of man’s reluctance to desecrate the grove is as organic and deep-rooted as the grove itself. On the other hand it could be focalised through Caesar: he sees the soldiers’

⁹⁷ In much the same way, Lucan breaks away from Caesar’s account. See Masters (1992) 17 who builds upon work by Griset, Haffter and Rambaund in arguing that Lucan’s text is ‘a deliberate counterpoise to Caesar’s commentary’. As noted above, he lays the two accounts of the Massilia episode side by side and notes certain key differences. In Caesar’s version, for example, Caesar approaches the Massilians for a meeting; in Lucan’s, it is the Massilians who make contact first and then Caesar arrogantly refuses.

reluctance as a simple physical obstruction, as easy to break down as the grove itself. At line 433 Caesar's name physically smashes through their 'great reluctance' and indeed the 'entangled cohorts'. Masters discusses this passage's relationship to the Erysichthon episode in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 8.741-746)⁹⁸ and the tree-felling *topos* in general which, in the epic genre, habitually relates to the collection of wood for funeral pyres.⁹⁹ He reads Lucan's account of the desecration of the Massilian grove as 'a metaphor for the plundering of poetic material from another source'.¹⁰⁰ In opening up the debate to encompass not just epic but also historiography, however, it is possible to expand further our understanding of Lucan's manipulation of generic conventions here. As we have seen, the idea of utilising the past to inform one's present is a fundamental principle of historiography. In this episode we see the soldiers engaging with the past and we see Caesar emphatically not doing so. The only lines of direct speech in the whole description of the violation of the grove occur when Caesar voices the creation of a new precedent. The soldiers follow Caesar's example because they view his anger, should they fail to do as they are told, as potentially god-like (3.439).¹⁰¹ Nonetheless, they remain fearful because they remember the precedent which existed before Caesar's.

These three instances – the crossing of the Rubicon, the punishment of Domitius, and the Massilia episode – all show how Lucan's Caesar actively creates his own, brand new *exempla*. He simply does not engage with past precedents, unlike other characters. The lamenting elders of book 2 and the soldiers in the Massilia episode of book 3 not only consider the past but they use it to inform their feelings and (in the case of the Massilia episode) their actions (for a time). In both of these examples the emotion which results from considering the past is fear. Caesar's ignoring of past precedents and his subsequent lack of fear is presented by Lucan as irrational, unnatural and ultimately foolish. Memory and *exempla* are therefore extremely important for Lucan's characterisation of Caesar.

Lastly, it is interesting to note that in Caesar's own account, other characters are shown to be interested in the past when the Caesarian protagonist is not. At *BC* 3.47, for example, we witness the soldiers using their memories of the past to strengthen their minds during a period of difficulty:

Ipse autem consumptis omnibus longe lateque frumentis summis erat in angustiis.
Sed tamen haec singulari patientia milites ferebant. Recordabantur enim eadem se

⁹⁸ Here he builds on the work of Phillips (1968) 298-299.

⁹⁹ Masters (1992) 26. See also Williams (1968) 263 ff.

¹⁰⁰ Masters (1992) 27.

¹⁰¹ See above for anger as a defining quality of Lucan's Caesar.

superiore anno in Hispania perpessos labore et patientia maximum bellum confecisse, meminerant ad Alesiam magnam se inopiam perpessos, multo etiam maiorem ad Avaricum, maximarum se gentium victores discessisse.

He himself, however, was in great difficulties, since all of the grain crops far and wide had been consumed. But the soldiers nevertheless tolerated their sufferings with remarkable patience. (They reminded themselves that they had suffered the same things the previous year in Spain, and that with effort and patience they had brought a very important war to conclusion. They remembered that after suffering great scarcity at Alesia, and even more at Avaricum, they had left the field as conquerors of supremely great peoples.)

Caesar, *Bellum Civile* 3.47.4-5

The recollection of the past here in book 3 of Caesar's *Bellum Civile* continues from chapter 47 to the end of chapter 48. Chapter 49 then opens with imagery of fecundity and hope; , due to its position in the text, the positive tone appears to be a direct result of the soldiers' recollections of the past. It is clear from the language in the passage above that Caesar does not include himself in this instance of reminiscence (*ipse autem erat... sed tamen milites ferebant...*). The soldiers seem to understand that history is full of repetition (there were difficulties in Spain, Avaricum, Alesia and now) and they gain strength in knowing that if they succeeded in the past, they can succeed again.¹⁰² They do not need to hear a rousing speech from their leader, encouraging them to remember that they have been through worse than this before; they appear well trained and confident, and perfectly able to draw on memories of the past themselves. The verbal echoes in this passage (*perpessos, perpessos; maximum, magnam, maiorem, maximarum*), though typical of Caesar generally, here reinforce the concept of repetition and of re-enacting past behaviours. The fact that Caesar has not included himself in this practice suggests that he does not need to look to the past because he does not need comforting. Ultimately he knows that they will succeed, both because Caesar the protagonist is a masterful military leader and because Caesar the historiographer is the omnipresent, self-conscious narrator.¹⁰³ Particularly striking is that

¹⁰² Similarly, soon after this episode, Caesar refers to his men 'learning from experience' (*BC* 3.50.2).

¹⁰³ While Caesar the narrator does refer to certain fears of Caesar the protagonist during the *BC*, they are never connected to knowledge of the past, e.g. *BC* 1.25.4: 'Caesar worried (*veritus*) that Pompey would not think that Italy had to be abandoned, so he began to block his escape from and use of the harbour'.

the soldiers' recollections only encompass the fabula of Caesar's *commentarii*.¹⁰⁴ History for Caesar's soldiers, or certainly any history worth remembering due to its beneficial value, according to this Caesarian piece of historiography, only encompasses 'Caesarian' history.

3.4. Troy episode

Book 8 of Lucan's *Pharsalia* revolves around Pompey's flight and subsequent death. During the first nine hundred lines of book 9 Cato leads the Pompeian troops across the dangerous terrain of Africa. The reader has not seen the character of Caesar since the end of book 7, when he was contemplating the blood-stained battlefield after Pharsalus.¹⁰⁵ When the character finally reappears at the end of book 9 we find him surveying the ruins at Troy during his pursuit of Pompey.¹⁰⁶ Viewing will be particularly important for our discussion – both the reader's view of Caesar and the character as spectator.¹⁰⁷ The Troy episode 'takes us back in time, to events contemporary with the opening of book 8'¹⁰⁸ (that is, Pompey's flight), thus inviting consideration of temporality and narrativity. Given that these events are contemporaneous with book 8 but narrated afterwards, Caesar's character does not know what we do: that Pompey will die before Caesar reaches Egypt. Similarly, conflicting temporal perspectives stemming from, for example, allusions to Virgil (Caesar could not have read the *Aeneid* since it had not yet been written) play a part in leading the reader towards interpretations that are fundamentally different from Caesar's.¹⁰⁹ To help unpack such complexities I will take a narratological approach in my reading of this passage.¹¹⁰

As soon as Lucan's Caesar arrives in Troy, he is fascinated by the idea of memorialisation:

Sigeasque petit famae mirator harenas
et Simoentis aquas et Graio nobile busto
Rhoetion et multum debentis vatibus umbras.

¹⁰⁴ For the Battle of Ilerda in 49, see *BC* 1.41-47; for the Battle of Alesia in 52, see *BG* 7.79-89; for the siege of Avaricum in 52, see *BG* 7.15.

¹⁰⁵ See Zwierlein (2010) 411.

¹⁰⁶ For an overview of scholarship on Caesar's trip to Troy, see Hardie (2008) 314 n32.

¹⁰⁷ For viewing in the epic genre, see Lovatt (2013).

¹⁰⁸ Braund (1992) 314.

¹⁰⁹ See Walde (2006) 49 on the complicated relationship between Lucan's reader and Lucan's text: 'the statements of the protagonists are realized in such a way that the meta-level of intertextuality weakens or even contradicts the surface meaning'.

¹¹⁰ In doing so I follow Rossi (2001).

And, admirer of fame, he seeks Sigeum's sands, Simois' waters, Rhoeteum
renowned for its Greek tomb and the ghosts that owe so much to bards.¹¹¹

Pharsalia 9.961-963

Here we see the concept of the natural landscape, man-made memorials and the work of poets all continuing the memory of 'ghosts' from the past. *Vatibus* is a particularly intriguing word choice because this is a term that Lucan uses to describe himself.¹¹² Perhaps if we re-read *famae mirator* from a metaliterary perspective, we can say that Lucan's Caesar considers himself an admirer of story-telling generally – the documentation of the past – and of the enduring fame that 'bards' are able to bestow. Earlier on in this episode *fama* had been described as Caesar's 'leader', distracting him from searching for Pompey (*fama duce*, 9.953).¹¹³ Caesar's literary memories are what guide him to, and through, Troy.¹¹⁴ Crucially, the details about this epic site are not based on the *Aeneid*, suggesting these lines are focalised through Caesar and not the narrator. Compositional time, as opposed to mythic time, is important here. In book 6 of Virgil's *Aeneid*, for example, Aeneas tells the shade of Deiphobus that he has set up a tomb for him in Rhoeteum. Lucan's scene supposedly takes place in 48 BC, before the *Aeneid* had been composed and so before the innovation regarding Deiphobus.¹¹⁵ Prior to Virgil, it was Ajax's tomb that was the famous site there. The character of Caesar, knowing only this earlier version, naturally looks for the Greek tomb of Ajax (*Graio busto*) and not the tomb of Deiphobus. How Lucan's reader and how Lucan's Caesar interpret this aspect of Troy's (mythological) history therefore differs according to which of Lucan's epic predecessors each has read.

The focalisation continues into the next two lines: 'Caesar walks around a memorable name – burnt-out Troy – and seeks the mighty traces (*magna vestigial*) of the wall of Phoebus' (9.964-965). For the character of Caesar, although the physical remains are mere ruins, Troy's name is *memorable*. Its memory has survived through its inclusion in literature.¹¹⁶ He considers any small physical traces of the wall 'great' or 'mighty' because its reputation has survived for so long. By referring to Apollo, Caesar shows himself to be

¹¹¹ I have changed Braund's translation of *fama* from 'glory' to 'fame', following Zwierlein (2010) 414.

¹¹² O'Higgins (1988) 208-209 points out that Lucan calls himself *vates* twice during the epic (at 1.63 and 7.553) and that this is the only word he uses to describe his creative self.

¹¹³ Hardie (2013a) 112.

¹¹⁴ For Lucan's interest in the act of reading (in particular his projected readers), see Ormand (1994) 39.

¹¹⁵ See Bleisch (1999) especially 194.

¹¹⁶ Walde (2006) 48 describes a 'well-composed lesson of memory and its media (which) shows the advantages of poetic memory over *lieux de mémoires*'.

fully aware of Troy's mythological history, as detailed by Homer.¹¹⁷ Further, by naming a god (rather than referring to 'fate' and 'fortune' as Lucan the narrator tends to do), Caesar is shown to be thinking of this archaeological site in conventionally epic terms. As he ponders the site's epic reputation, the character of Caesar walks around, presumably leaving footprints as he moves. As he does so he looks for the 'footprints' (*vestigia*) of his mythological ancestors – a connection he shares with his relations. The focalisation here thus betrays Caesar's enthusiasm to be leaving his own epic tracks as well as to be walking in the footsteps of his ancestors.

Immediately afterwards, the focalisation stops for the time being (9.966). This is evident from the form of the verbs which have shifted from third-person singular, active and present (*petit, circumit, quaerit*) to third-person plural and a mixture of tenses and moods (*pressere, tenent, teguntur, periire*). It is the narrator's perspective that we are now given. He surveys the bare reality of the ruins at Troy:

iam silvae steriles et putres robore trunci
 Assaraci pressere domos et templa deorum
 iam lassa radice tenent, ac tota teguntur
 Pergama dumetis: etiam periire ruinae.

Now barren woods and trunks with rotting timber have submerged Assaracus' houses and, with roots now weary, occupy the temples of the gods, and all of Pergamum is veiled by thickets: even the ruins have perished.

Pharsalia 9.966-969

The power of nature to bring about decay is what punctuates this passage. The verb *pressere* shatters *Assaraci* and *domos*, successfully capturing the substantial damage done to Assaracus' property. The tree root is personified as 'weary' yet the predominant t-sound of line 968 suggests that, though fatigued, nature nevertheless remains harsh and brutal. Far from being neat and concise, the lines run into one another (especially 968-969) just as the roots and thickets no doubt creep along, messily intertwined with one another. These audio-visual effects are a form of interaction between the primary narrator-focaliser (Lucan the narrator) and the primary narratee-focalisee (us the reader).¹¹⁸ The narrator provides for his reader a snapshot of what is actually a spectacularly gloomy landscape. The result is that the narrator and the reader perfectly understand the grim reality of the devastation at

¹¹⁷ For Phoebus Apollo and Poseidon building Troy's city-walls for Laomedon, see *Il.* 7.452.

¹¹⁸ For more on this type of interaction, see De Jong (2004) 60-61.

Troy. The character of Caesar, in sharp contrast, is simply consumed by his literary nostalgia.¹¹⁹

The focus then switches back to Caesar. The adjustment in perspective is clear from the use of *aspicit* which starts the following line¹²⁰ (recalling the present tense third-person verbs *petit*, *circumit* and *quaerit* from earlier in the passage):

Aspicit Hesiones scopulos silvaque latentes
Anchisae thalamos; quo iudex sederit antro,
unde puer raptus caelo, quo vertice Nais
luxerit Oenone: nullum est sine nomine saxum.

He sees Hesione's rock and Anchises' marriage-chamber hiding in the woods; the cave where the adjudicator sat; the place from which the boy was snatched to heaven; the peak where Naiad Oenone grieved; no stone is without a story.

Pharsalia 9.970-973

Caesar's literary observations – signposted by the term *silva* which can be used metaphorically to denote literary material (discussed in the following chapter)¹²¹ – are presented as purely for himself; extra details or explanations about these visions are thus not provided. Unsurprisingly, Caesar thinks of Anchises whose union with Venus resulted in Caesar's 'ancestor' Aeneas. He also, however, cleverly manages to cast a dark shadow on the other branch of his mythological family, the branch of Ilus.¹²² Two instances of dishonesty are summed up in the phrase 'Hesione's rock',¹²³ and Oenone's grief relates to the betrayal she suffered at the hands of her husband Paris (Ilus' great-grandson) who favoured Helen.¹²⁴ Why not mention, or rather ponder (as these lines comprise the thoughts of Caesar), the most well-known, respected and loved member of Ilus' side of the family, Priam? He was the brother of Hesione, the father of Paris and the King of Troy. In fact a tour guide will shortly appear who admonishes Caesar for stepping on the shade of

¹¹⁹ Reed (2011) 28 describes Lucan's Caesar at Troy as 'superbly oblivious to the disjunction between legend and reality'.

¹²⁰ See Rossi (2001) 316 for *aspicio* denoting mental perception or internal visualisation.

¹²¹ See Statius' *Silv.*; Quint. *Inst. Orat.* 10.3.17; Gell. *praef.* 6; Suet. *Gram.* 24

¹²² Rossi (2001) 318-319.

¹²³ Hesione was the daughter of Laomedon (who was Ilus' son). As a punishment for not paying Apollo and Neptune the agreed amount for building Troy's walls, the dishonest Laomedon had to tie Hesione to a rock to be eaten by a sea monster. Hercules saved her from the rock on the condition that Laomedon would reward him with horses. Yet again, Laomedon went back on his word and did not provide the agreed reward. See also chapter 4.

¹²⁴ Paris was the 'adjudicator' of the beauty contest between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite. Aphrodite fixed the result when she promised him Helen of Sparta if he chose her as the winner.

Hector and asks him ‘Have you no respect for the Hercean altar?’ (9.979). The altar of Jupiter Herceas was not only the most prominent physical component of Priam’s house, it was where he was killed. The word that Lucan selects for his tour guide to use is *respicere*. We must remember that as well as meaning ‘respect’, this word also means ‘look back’. Caesar’s failure to look back to the beheading of Priam is also an ironic reminder that Pompey has already, at this point in the text, become the victim of the same grisly fate. Caesar, unlike the external reader, does not know this yet. Each interpretation of the scene is different because of the literary awareness of each ‘viewer’.

The next lines begin with an analeptic view of Caesar’s actions:

Inscius in sicco serpentem pulvere rivum
transierat, qui Xanthus erat. Securus in alto
gramine ponebat gressus: Phryx incola manes
Hectoreos calcare vetat. Discussa iacebant
saxa nec ullis faciem seruantia sacri.

Unwittingly, he had crossed a stream creeping in dry dust – this was Xanthus. Oblivious, he placed his footsteps in the deep grass: the Phrygian local tells him not to tread upon the shade of Hector. Scattered stones were lying there preserving no appearance of anything sacred.

Pharsalia 9.974-978

Crossing a stream of course evokes Caesar’s crossing of the Rubicon, symbolic of civil war and ultimately the death of the Roman Republic.¹²⁵ Caesar’s limited interpretation means that at this point he does not fully grasp the symbolism of what he sees (that a once-great city now lies in tatters). This allusion to the Rubicon also calls to mind Caesar’s own treatment of that episode in his commentary. We do not witness him crossing the river, but instead arrive at a point in the text where he has already crossed it.¹²⁶

Certain ‘sightseeing’ passages of the *Aeneid* are important for understanding Lucan’s Troy episode. One is a simile which occurs in book 2 of the *Aeneid*, a book presented in the voice of the character of Aeneas (and which, as we will see, opens with characters misreading the landscape at Troy). At *Aen.* 2.304 ff., we observe a member of

¹²⁵ See Ahl (1976) 215-222 for the similarity of the descriptions of the devastation of Troy and that of Italy following the Battle of Pharsalus.

¹²⁶ Rossi (2001) 323 points out that *inscius* is all the more significant if we take into account that Caesar’s *Bellum Civile* also ignored the Rubicon.

the *gens Iulia* being *inscius* while viewing Troy's water and grasslands.¹²⁷ This intertext is particularly relevant with regard to the characters' differing readings of the scenes before them. The other important passage comes from book 8 of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas is given a tour of Evander's Rome. Lucan subtly uses allusions to this episode to comment on the importance of understanding the link between one's past, present and future.¹²⁸

Aeneas' account to Dido of his past sufferings begins with the Greeks leaving behind the wooden horse when they disappeared from Troy and the Trojans then opening their gates to explore the deserted Greek camp (*Aen.* 2.13-30). The Trojans happily point out landmarks such as the place where Achilles stayed, believing that these sites and these dangers are now firmly in the past. Misinterpreting the landscape proves disastrous. The Greeks attack; Aeneas wakes up to find Troy under siege. Aeneas likens the scene of devastation to a flood annihilating fields, while an 'unknowing shepherd' (*inscius pastor*) stands dumbstruck (*Aen.* 2.304-308).¹²⁹ Virgil's Aeneas and Lucan's Caesar are both described as *inscius* as they view the wreckage of Troy. There are two key differences between the characters' interpretations of what they see. Firstly, the water. In Virgil, the water is strong and damaging.¹³⁰ In Lucan, it is weak and it moves slowly.¹³¹ Far from being destructive, the water in Lucan appears *in sicco pulvere* ('in dry dust') and for this reason it can only be understood by the *inscius* spectator as something positive. A trace of water in an otherwise hostile and dry landscape is quite simply a sign of life and hope. The second key difference is the grassland. In Virgil, it is obliterated. In Lucan, the grass is long (*alto gramine*) which means it is alive and growing – indeed it is sprouting over the city's 'dead' ruins.¹³² It seems clear that the two adjectives *sicco* and *alto* are instances of embedded focalisation which demonstrate the Lucanian Caesar's optimism at this point. Does the explanation for Caesar's blind positivity lie in knowledge of his heritage? From the destruction of Troy sprang the foundation of Rome, so what he sees when he looks at the ruins of Troy is the great future of Rome and of his family.¹³³ In the Troy episode, he arrogantly forgets that history repeats itself: just as war batters Troy, so war batters Rome.

¹²⁷ For the suggestion that Lucan repeatedly recalls book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid* to invite a comparison with the sack of Troy, see Guillemin (1951).

¹²⁸ See Hardie (2013a) 107-108 for the parallelism between books 2 and 8 of the *Aeneid*, the second books in their respective halves of the epic.

¹²⁹ This anticipates the simile in book 4 which likens Aeneas to a *nescius pastor*, a hunter ignorant of the harm he has done with his deadly arrow (*Aen.* 4.69-73).

¹³⁰ Note the repetition at *Aen.* 2.306: *sternit agros, sternit sata laeta boumque labores*.

¹³¹ At *Phars.* 9.974 the water is described as 'creeping' (*serpentem*).

¹³² On this and other linguistic paradoxes in Lucan, see Wick (2010) 108 ff.

¹³³ Ahl (1976) 206-208 uses the storm episode in book 5 of the *Pharsalia* as evidence for Caesar's megalomaniacal self-belief, since the ferocity of the storm increases rather than diminishes Caesar's arrogance.

Describing the land where there is water as 'dry' and the grass as 'deep' means that Caesar can be seen to zone in on aspects of life and hope¹³⁴ where other spectators (the tour guide, the reader, Lucan the narrator) see death and ruin.¹³⁵

There is one further dimension to this intertext. In the *Aeneid* it is the ghost of Hector who warns Aeneas of the danger (*Aen.* 2.270 ff). Hector's ghost also plays a role in Lucan's scene. Far from grabbing his attention, Lucan's Caesar does not see it. As noted above, the Phrygian tour guide tells him not to tread on it (9.979). Following Rossi's line of thought, is this a further illustration of Lucan's Caesar trampling on the memory of the other branches of the family (as we saw with the allusions to Laomedon's deceit, for example)?¹³⁶ Could it also be an allusion to civil war?¹³⁷ The answer to both of these questions seems to be yes. Ultimately, however, we are confronted by another example of Caesar's blinkered view of his past and his future. He does not need to see Hector's ghost because he arrogantly believes that he has nothing in his future about which he needs to be warned.

The second passage in the *Aeneid* which is important for our understanding of Lucan's Troy episode is Aeneas' walk with Evander through Pallanteum in book 8. There, a Trojan was looking forwards (into the future) at Rome; here in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, a Roman is looking backwards (into the past) at Troy. Virgil's episode begins at *Aen.* 8.306 with Evander, Aeneas and Iulus returning to Pallanteum having completed sacred rites. Evander is described as *obsitus aevo* ('clothed with years', *Aen.* 8.307). *Obsero* also means 'to sow' or 'to plant' and this is symptomatic of the natural, pastoral scene Evander goes on to describe at line 314. The tone is undoubtedly positive and uplifting: Aeneas is *facilis* (8.310) and *laetus* (8.311); he marvels (*miratur*, 8.310), is captivated (*capitur*, 8.311), and asks and hears about the tales of the men of old (*exquirique auditque virum monimenta priorum*, 8.312). The verb *audit* makes it clear that these *monimenta* are not physical objects that he can see or even written texts that he can read, but spoken stories that he hears. Evander teaches Aeneas about the breakdown of Saturn's golden age and the beginnings of war, telling him that 'little by little an inferior, tarnished age succeeded, with war's madness, and

¹³⁴ Contrast Rossi (2001) 314: 'Not surprisingly, the ruins of Troy offer to the visitor a gloomy spectacle'.

¹³⁵ Arguably the most notable occasion on which the reader is invited to feel dismay at Caesar's interpretation of what he is looking at happens the morning after Pharsalus: Caesar breakfasts on the battlefield (7.792 ff), delighting that he cannot see the land for all the corpses that lie there: *iuvat Emathiam non cernere terram* (7.794).

¹³⁶ Rossi (2001) 318.

¹³⁷ For Virgil it was kinsman helping kinsman, but for Lucan, whose subject matter is civil war, it is kinsman against kinsman.

desire for possessions' (*Aen.* 8.325-327). Aeneas is taught about the recurring nature of history, including civil war and migration. Having learnt through story-telling (without the help of physical *monimenta* or texts), Aeneas' first day at Pallanteum finishes where it began, at Evander's home. Thus the episode itself acts as its own small cycle.¹³⁸

At *Aen.* 8.337 Evander shows Aeneas around the landmarks of the future city. Unlike the character of Caesar in Lucan's Troy episode, Virgil's Aeneas is given no direct speech; we are shown no reaction of his (once Evander has started speaking) and there is no focalisation through him. Aeneas is passively learning. *Monstrat* ('[Evander] shows') is repeated three times within nine lines (at *Aen.* 8.337, 343 and 345); in Lucan's Troy episode the Phrygian local is called a *monstrator* (*Phars.* 9.979) when (s)he addresses Caesar, but nowhere does this person do any actual 'showing'. Similarly, in the Virgil episode Evander leads Aeneas (*ducit*, *Aen.* 8.347; *duxit*, *Aen.* 8.367); in the Lucan episode Caesar does not have a person as his leader but the abstraction *fama* (*fama duce*, *Phars.* 9.953). Despite clear similarities, then, how each character is shown interacting with the scene before him differs greatly. Both Aeneas and Caesar are 'seeing' sites which are not actually there. Those in Virgil's scene lie in the distant future and are accessed by Aeneas through the story-telling of an experienced guide. Those in the Lucanian episode lie in the distant past and are accessed by Caesar through his recollections of the texts (the story-telling) of, primarily, Homer. Each epic offers a complex layering of past, present and future events and each deals with the subject of interpretation.¹³⁹ Therefore while Aeneas cannot be expected to understand fully the significance of what he sees, Lucan's Caesar should understand but he does not. He fails to learn from the past; his optimistic and blinkered view of history means that he forgets about the repetitive cycle of nature. He sees hope in the ruins of Troy when others (including the reader) see devastation.

Closing the Troy episode, the narrator apostrophises Caesar and discusses the role that literature plays in the perpetuation of memory (9.980 ff.). He declares that 'future ages will read me and you; our Pharsalia shall live and be condemned to darkness by no era (9.985-986)'. Lucan is adding his text to Caesar's as a second vehicle for the continuation of the memory of the civil war. Future generations will read Lucan's version and they will read Caesar's version, and different people will make different interpretations of the protagonists and authors.

¹³⁸ Gransden (1976) 131.

¹³⁹ See Hardie (2013a) 110 who directs us to Barchiesi (1999).

As Caesar himself sinks into history, he becomes the victim of the very poetic history he seeks to exploit. Lucan has more of the past at his disposal than Caesar, both historical and literary, and can play on the reader's knowledge of that past to change the way he understands the present.¹⁴⁰

Just as Lucan's Caesar reads selectively, so all accounts of history, be they in written form or passed down orally, are selective and subjective. Like Aeneas as he is shown round Pallanteum, we must attempt to learn as much as we can about our nation's past, present and future. We must not suppress difficult elements of the past or try to write these aspects out of history. Firstly, this can be utterly futile due to the fact that uncomfortable parallels often continue to exist regardless of one's silence. It is clear to the reader, for example, as well as to various characters in the *Pharsalia* (including the narrator), that the figure of Marius is in many ways a prototype for Lucan's Caesar – despite the fact that the character of Caesar never vocalises such a comparison. Secondly, while looking to the past can evoke feelings such as fear (as we saw with the lamenting elders and the soldiers in the Massilia episode) or dismay (the narrator himself refers to his subject matter as *nefas* at 1.6), it is nevertheless something that we must do if we are to learn lessons for the future.

Concluding remarks

Caesar provided one of the main sources for the action related by Lucan, and he is also the epic's protagonist. This combination straightaway raises the question of possible tensions between Lucan's Caesar and Caesar's Caesar, and Lucan the narrator and Caesar the narrator, and it demands consideration of genre, intertextuality and reader responsibility. These have been crucial elements of my investigation into Lucan's Caesar, particularly when it came to the subjectivity of memorialisations (that is, the different ways in which memorialisations might be interpreted).

Since my investigation is concerned with the issue of memory and the figure of Caesar, my starting point in this chapter has been to examine how Lucan approached the subject of memory within his characterisation of Caesar. The speeches of the Lucanian character, on my reading, revealed a highly selective view of the past that went hand in hand with both a lack of fear and a lack of understanding about his present. Exploring the text from a historiographical perspective has enabled us to see Lucan's Caesar building new

¹⁴⁰ Seidman (2017) 92.

memories through the creation of *exempla*. Lucan showed him cleverly suppressing certain memories (because they were not beneficial to him) and actively constructing new ones. This selective view of history produced, in my analysis, a Caesar who completely overlooked certain elements from the past and who never engaged with the past as a means of influencing his behaviour; he was concerned with breaking boundaries and creating new precedents.

Caesar's trip to the ruins of Troy in book 9 was a rare instance in which this character had to confront the past. His blinkered approach to history, which was accessed entirely through his recollection of epic poetry, led him to conclusions that were different from those of the narrator and – due to their own knowledge of Rome's literary past – those of the invited reader. The end of the episode, as others have noted, was characterised by 'a blurring of borders between reality and fiction',¹⁴¹ when Lucan the narrator apostrophised Caesar and told him that 'our Pharsalia shall live and be condemned to darkness by no era' (*Phars.* 9. 985-986). Directly addressing the author of the *commentarii*, Lucan seemed to remind his (and Caesar's) readers that history could be narrated in very different ways.

Examining Lucan's *Pharsalia* in light of my preceding chapter's reading of Seneca's *De Beneficiis* and *Epistulae Morales*, it has become clear that Caesar's textual presence during Nero's reign stood in sharp contrast to his absence from the non-literary material from this period. Like Seneca, whose *Epistulae* suggested that Caesar's civil wars were linked to the degeneracy of the modern age, Lucan also identified a chain that stretched from Nero back to Caesar (*Caesareaeque domus series*, *Phars.* 4.823). Once again, in my analysis we witnessed Caesar impacting upon a first-century author's vision of current affairs. Further, the precedent of (and frequent intertextual allusions to) Virgil's *Aeneid* invited us to ask whether Lucan's Caesar somehow stood for Nero. As far as we can tell from the extant evidence, Nero never made a connection between himself and Caesar. My research has suggested that Seneca and Lucan did. As we will see, after Nero's death, others would make that connection too.

¹⁴¹ Dimitrova (2018) 17.

POST-NERO:**Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* and Statius' *Silvae***

This chapter explores Caesar's place in the literary and physical spaces of post-Neronian Rome. My first concern is to examine the extent to which Lucan represents a watershed in Caesar's literary reception by exploring how post-Neronian authors draw upon Lucan's representation of Caesar. I hope to show that the literary reception of Caesar is now being shaped largely, but not exclusively, as a response to Lucan's Caesar. This is a particularly interesting and under-explored strand of Caesar's early reception. In addition to conqueror, writer, assassinated tyrant (for example), Caesar now appears as a fictional epic character that could be utilised by authors wishing to draw upon the character's association with themes including tyranny, civil war and even 'beginnings' (as we will see with allusions to Lucan's Rubicon episode). The Flavian era is especially interesting because of the apparent incongruity between Flavian writers' interest in the Lucanian Caesar and the seeming lack of interest on the part of the emperors in Caesar the historical figure.¹ I will thus consider the idea that there is a series of writings which incorporate Caesar the literary construct that gathers its own momentum and represents a new strand in Caesar's already fragmented reception.

To begin, I shall analyse particularly relevant monuments, buildings and coinage in order to show that the figure of Caesar did not disappear with the collapse of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, but was instead highly controversial during this period of political transition. I will start by discussing the lingering memory of Caesar during the civil strife of AD 68-69 and then during the reigns of the Flavian emperors. I will consider, for example, the coin that was minted for Galba which depicted the cap of liberty between two daggers, imitating those coins that celebrated Caesar's death as the slaying of a tyrant. It will also be useful to reflect on Vitellius' refusal of the name 'Caesar' but his willingness to display Caesar's sword (Suet. *Vit.* 8.1). In light of such complexities surrounding Caesar's evocation during the Year of Four Emperors, Vespasian's reign will be especially important for this

¹Marks (2010a) 14 asserts, for example, that 'none of the Flavian emperors took much interest, as far as one can tell, in Julius Caesar'.

study because, as Antony James Boyle explains, when Vespasian reached the seat of power 'his most immediate concern was his projected relationship to the Julio-Claudians'.² The positioning of Vespasian with regard to the Julio-Claudian dynasty will be a discussion underpinned by the concept of extolling the present regime through implicit comparison with what it has replaced.

The idea of remembering and comparing / contrasting will also inform my approach to the literary material; intertextuality and reader responsibility are central to this study. While exploring the role of Lucan's epic in Flavian texts, I do not wish to suggest that this is their only intertext, or even their main intertext. Of course, a host of material is drawn upon by the authors of this period. Further, even when Lucan is being evoked, he often serves as a prism through which the reader is invited to see Virgil, or other authors.³ Nonetheless, as Paul Roche points out with regard to Lucan's influence on Statius' *Thebaid*, 'A natural locus for gauging the reception of an epic poem in its successor texts lies in the epic genealogy of its protagonists'.⁴ I also do not wish to imply that the literary memory of Lucan's Caesar is the only strand of Caesar's legacy at play in Flavian literature. Statius is interested in Caesar's monumental legacy, for example, which will be discussed in detail below (*Silv.* 1.1). Frontinus, in his military handbook presents Caesar as the most significant Roman military model, featuring more frequently than any other Roman figure.⁵ Such strands of Caesarian reception have received some attention but the trace of Lucan's Caesar in particular, and how this relates to Caesar's broader reception (both literary and non-literary) has so far been underexplored. Hence evocations of the Lucanian Caesar and their significance will be the main but not the exclusive focus of this chapter. In order to suggest how alert a Flavian reader might be to the trace of Lucan's Caesar, I will provide an overview of where the Lucanian Caesar is evoked in a range of post-Neronian texts, namely Statius' *Thebaid*, Silius Italicus' *Punica* and the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*, all of which have been shown to engage not just with Lucan's *Pharsalia* generally but with the character of Lucan's Caesar specifically.

After that, the first text to be discussed in detail is Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* because this is one of the first times – perhaps even the first time – that Lucan becomes an

² Boyle (2003) 4.

³ On the history behind such terminology as 'double allusion', 'window reference' and 'two-tier allusion', see the overview of Nelis (2001) 5.

⁴ Roche (2005) 395.

⁵ As noted above, Frontinus' *Strategemata* will be used to exemplify contemporary interest in Caesar's military success but not discussed in detail.

intertext.⁶ citing two representative examples of the ways in which Valerius calls Lucan's Caesar to mind (the storm of book 1 and the Cyzicus episode of book 3), I will discuss Valerius' Troy episode – a physical space which has a strong relationship with literary space, loaded as it is with epic memories of foundation, destruction and the *gens Iulia*. This episode sees Valerius' Hercules standing in the very same place in which Lucan's Caesar has stood / will stand, and I have chosen it because its relationship to Lucan and the consequences of its connection with Lucan for the literary reception of Caesar have received so little attention.

The final part of this chapter will return to the relationship between literary space and physical space through consideration of two of Statius' *Silvae*. Firstly, Statius considers Caesar's honorific architectural manifestation: *Silvae* 1.1 celebrates Domitian's equestrian statue and cites both the Aedes Divi Iulii and the equestrian statue of Caesar (located in the Forum Iulium) as points for comparison. By now the Aedes Divi Iulii had been standing for over a hundred years. It had been dedicated by Augustus after Actium and housed numerous spoils of war (Dio 51.22). The equestrian statue had been erected by Caesar himself (Suet. *Iul.* 61) and had previously carried a different 'rider' (or 'ruler') (1.1.84-88) – discussed below. It is important to consider the agenda, context and 'author' of physical monuments, just as it is for literary works. Both types of monument – that is, physical and literary – are able to be adapted and appropriated, as we will see. Secondly, Statius incorporates the monstrous literary persona constructed by Lucan: *Silvae* 2.7 commemorates Lucan's birthday and is the only extant Domitianic text which incorporates both Lucan and Caesar. Could Caesar's monumental legacy in Rome have rendered an ancient viewer / reader more alert to literary echoes of (Lucan's) Caesar? Or were they unrelated? My approach will incorporate close readings of the literary material as well as stimulate wider questions about the relationship of literature to the state regarding the memorialisation of Julius Caesar.

⁶ Since I read the text as a product of Vespasianic Rome, a brief outline of the main arguments for this date is necessary. The fact that the proem addresses Vespasian as a living emperor and places his apotheosis in the future (*instituet... lucebis*, 1.16-17) indicates that the lines at least present themselves as being written before Vespasian's death in AD 79. The simile in book 4 which likens the Harpies' flight to the eruption of Mount Vesuvius of AD 79 (soon after Titus became emperor) only proves that this simile was composed after this date. There is no reason to assume that the books of the *Argonautica* were completed in order. The Harpies simile may have been a relatively late insert, meaning that the body of the poem could have been written before Vespasian's death but that Valerius was still working on it as late as AD 79. See Stover (2012) 12-14, Spaltenstein (2002) 32, Taylor (1994) 215 and Kleywegt (1986) 321-322.

4.1. The lingering memory of Julius Caesar after Nero

The recollection of Caesar continued to be highly evocative in radically different ways after the collapse of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The events that followed Nero's death provide a case in point. For the first time since the establishment of the Principate, Rome would be ruled by someone who did not belong to the *gens Iulia* through either blood or adoption. In late AD 67 or early 68 Gaius Julius Vindex, the Roman governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, led a revolt against Nero. Vindex was later killed by Verginius Rufus (who was hailed as emperor but refused the position) but not before Vindex had written to Galba, calling upon him to become the liberator and leader of mankind (Suet. *Galb.* 9.2). Galba's own forefather had joined the conspiracy of Brutus and Cassius in the name of liberty and had subsequently been condemned to death by the Peditian Law (Suet. *Galb.* 3.2).⁷ Galba accepted Vindex's proposal and marched into Rome (Suet. *Galb.* 11). Suetonius famously opens his *Galba* with the declaration that 'the race of the Caesars (*progenies Caesarum*) ended with Nero' (*Galb.* 1.1), soon reinforcing that Galba was 'related in no degree to the house of the Caesars (*Caesarum domum*)' (*Galb.* 1.2). A coin was minted for Galba (fig. 6) which directly drew on the memory of Julius Caesar's assassination (fig. 7), depicting the cap of liberty between two daggers. The fact that Caesar is neither named nor depicted on the coin – and yet it so clearly evokes his assassination as an act of liberation – only serves to underline further his continued presence in Rome's cultural memory.⁸

Despite imitating the coinage of Brutus, Galba assumed the name 'Caesar' as soon as he heard of Nero's death (Suet. *Galb.* 11). This suggests that the use of the name 'Caesar' – now a title denoting supreme power – had become quite separate from other elements of Caesar's legacy (such as his association with tyranny which provided a justification for his assassination, illustrated by the cap and dagger coin). Galba's successor, Otho, also incorporated 'Caesar' into his titulature as we can see in his coinage (see, for example, fig. 8). Moreover, according to Suetonius, even when he was a private citizen Otho so loathed civil strife that he shuddered at the mere mention of the fate of Brutus and Cassius (*Otho* 10.1). Thus it was not only Caesar's name and assassination that remained in Rome's cultural memory but also the troubling consequences of the assassination.

When Vitellius was hailed as *princeps*, 'he was carried about the most populous villages, holding a drawn sword of the Deified Julius' (*strictum Divi Iuli gladium*, Suet. *Vit.* 8.1). The fact that an item could hold such significance over one hundred years after its

⁷ Introduced by Quintus Peditius (one of Caesar's heirs), this law punished with banishment anyone who played a part in Caesar's assassination (see Vell. Pat. 2.69.5).

⁸ For the continued presence of the Ides of March in Roman cultural memory, see chapter 3.

owner's death raises some interesting questions about memorialisation through objects. Could the sword represent Caesar's military prowess without also reminding the viewer of tyranny, assassination and the horrors of civil war? With the incident taking place away in the north (in territory associated with Caesar, albeit Germany rather than Gaul), would it carry suggestions of bearing the sword southwards into Italy, like Caesar did in 49 BC? In the very same chapter as the sword anecdote, Suetonius tells us that Vitellius 'eagerly accepted the surname of Germanicus, which was unanimously offered him, put off accepting the title of Augustus, and forever refused that of Caesar' (*Vit.* 8.2).⁹ Tacitus also notes that Vitellius rejected the name of Caesar, but that he rejected none of the powers (*Hist.* 2.62).¹⁰ Vitellius therefore exhibited Caesar's sword and yet refused Caesar's name. Galba, on the other hand, had quickly assumed the name 'Caesar' but had used iconography that explicitly evoked the celebration of Caesar's death. Thus different components of the memory of Caesar – his association with civil war, his name as a signifier of political supremacy, his assassination and its aftermath, even his possessions – were very carefully exploited or avoided during this time. Furthermore, this was the first civil war since that between Caesar's heirs and his assassins. It should therefore come as no surprise that the figure of Caesar was extremely significant during the civil wars of AD 68-69.

Against this complex backdrop, let us remember that Caesar's birthday was still celebrated annually. A host of buildings and other public spaces remained associated with Caesar such as the Forum Iulium (called *celeberrimus locus* by Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 8.6.13, as we have seen) and the Basilica Iulia, which continued to go by this name despite the fact that in AD 12 Augustus rededicated it in the names of Gaius and Lucius, calling it the Basilica Gai et Luci.¹¹ Statues depicting Caesar which had been erected by Augustus still stood in various prominent locations in Rome, and Caesar's image and chariot continued to be part of the *pompa circensis*. In AD 69 the Arvals had their meeting in the Aedes Divi Iulii (*CIL* VI 2051, 2055). This may also have been used as a place of asylum by Titus Vinius (Galba's colleague in the consulship) when he was murdered in front of the Aedes Divi Iulii,

⁹ In contrast, Vespasian would take the name 'Caesar', and Titus and Domitian would subsequently be honoured with the designation 'Caesar'.

¹⁰ Cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.62: 'the appellation Caesar he forbade even after he was victorious'. At *Hist.* 3.8, however, Tacitus relates that Vitellius 'even went so far as to wish to be called Caesar, a title which he had rejected before, but now accepted'. See Morgan (2006) 149-152 and Hekster (2015) 10n21, the latter noting that if Vitellius did take on the name Caesar, this cannot be traced to contemporary coins or inscriptions.

¹¹ The changed name appears in only three extant sources: *RG* 20, Dio 56.27.1, and Suet. *Aug.* 29. Martial and Statius, writing at the end of the first century, call it the *tecta Iulia* (Mart. *Ep.* 6.38.6; Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.29). See Platner and Ashby (1929) 79.

perhaps in an attempt to seek refuge here (Tac. *Hist.* 1.42).¹² Thus even after the demise of the *progenies Caesarum*, the memory of Caesar remained part of Rome's social fabric and physical landscape in contradictory ways.

How did Vespasian treat the memory of Caesar once he came to power at the end of AD 69? An important starting point must be our acknowledgement of the very high level of authority and prestige that Vespasian enjoyed under the Julio-Claudian regime. How would he square his successful career under Caligula, Claudius and Nero with his position at the head of a brand new dynasty? It was probably through his mistress Caenis, the private secretary of Antonia Minor,¹³ that Vespasian first met Caligula (Antonia's grandson) and Claudius (Antonia's son).¹⁴ Vespasian reached the praetorship in AD 39 or 40, seemingly having courted Caligula's favour by suggesting special games to celebrate his victory in Germany, by recommending further mistreatment of the bodies of the conspirators Lepidus and Gaetulicus, and by thanking him in the Senate for deigning to offer him an invitation to dinner (Suet. *Vesp.* 2.3).¹⁵

Vespasian's standing only increased under Claudius.¹⁶ Claudius' conquest of Britain provided Vespasian with the opportunity to obtain *ornamenta* and priesthoods, and in AD 51 he reached the consulship. (It is Vespasian's contribution to Roman expansion into Britain that Valerius' *Argonautica* purportedly celebrates.) Under Nero, Vespasian and his family enjoyed a substantial amount of power: Vespasian secured the proconsulship of Africa (Suet. *Vesp.* 4.3); in AD 67 he was given the command of the Eastern army against the Jews (Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.3);¹⁷ his brother, Titus Flavius Sabinus, also pursued the *cursus honorum*, holding the post of *praefectus urbi* for twelve years under Claudius and Nero.¹⁸ It has been suggested that Vespasian's desire to distance himself retrospectively from Nero accounts for numerous inconsistencies in the sources.¹⁹

¹² Tacitus is by no means explicit on this point, simply relating that '[Vinius] fell in front of the temple of the deified Julius at the first blow' (*Hist.* 1.42). In her discussion of this passage, Damon (2003) 186 notes that the temple offered asylum but she does not elaborate on whether this might have accounted for Vinius' being there. See further Sumi (2011) 220.

¹³ Antonia Minor was the daughter of Octavia (Augustus' sister) and Antony.

¹⁴ See Mellor (2003) 71.

¹⁵ Mellor (2003) 71

¹⁶ Levick (1999) 21 calls Vespasian 'a protégé of Claudius'.

¹⁷ Boyle (2003) 4.

¹⁸ Mellor (2003) 77 points out that he was returned to this post by Otho and kept by Vitellius.

¹⁹ We hear, for example, that although Vespasian was governor of Africa, he was so poor that he had to resort to a mule business (Suet. *Vesp.* 4.3); that he bitterly offended Nero in AD 66 by either leaving or falling asleep at one of his performances during a Greek concert tour of AD 66 (Suet. *Vesp.* 4.4), and yet it was in the following year that he was promoted to commander of the Eastern forces (Tac. *Hist.* 1.10.3). See Mellor (2003) 72 who concludes that Vespasian was in all probability as sycophantic towards Nero as he had been towards Caligula. See also Levick (1999) 55: 'Vespasian's

A policy of disassociation from Nero can also be seen in Vespasian's building programme once *princeps*. Most notably, he built the Colosseum – a space designed for the entertainment of the Roman people – on Nero's private lake (Suet. *Vesp.* 9; Mart. *Spec.* 2.5; Aur. Vic. *Caes.* 9.7). That the ancients viewed the significance of this transition, this shift in how the space was used, in exactly these terms is clear from Martial's comments in AD 80: 'what used to be the pleasure of a master (*domini*) is now the pleasure of the people (*deliciae populi*)' (*Spec.* 2.12). Nero's colossal statue was changed into the god Sol, with Vespasian adding a sun-ray crown and renaming it Colossus Solis (Suet. *Vesp.* 18; Pliny, *NH* 34.45; Dio 65.15). As Ronald Mellor puts it, 'he buried his close connection with Nero (who had given him his consulship and the Judaeian command) as thoroughly as he had buried Nero's Golden House under the Colosseum'.²⁰

Using certain Julio-Claudian precedents as points of contrast and departure is an important dimension of Vespasian's Templum Pacis, the forum complex that he created following the precedent set by Julius Caesar and Augustus. While it was similar to the fora of his two predecessors in its location and alignment (see fig. 9), there were several key differences. It was a completely different shape, more square than rectangular. Rather than incorporating colonnades along the two long sides, it had a *porticus* that surrounded at least three of the sides (probably four) equally.²¹ The prominence of the temples to Venus in Caesar's forum and Mars in Augustus' forum – imposingly set high on their podiums, their scale further emphasised by their location on a short side of their rectangular site – reminded the spectator of the lofty, mythological ancestry of the *gens Iulia*. Vespasian, in contrast, appears to have advertised his lowly origins (Suet. *Vesp.* 12) and he displayed in the Templum Pacis works of art that had previously been hidden away in Nero's Domus Aurea (Pliny, *NH* 34.84). There is a strong possibility that items were also placed in the porticoes surrounding the precinct, making the art even more visible to onlookers.²²

Another key difference between Vespasian's forum and his predecessors' was the name. Vespasian's was not called 'forum' in literature until after the time of Constantine.²³ Pliny the Elder refers to the temple and the surrounding precinct as *pacis opera* (*NH*

servility to Gaius and careerism under Claudius and Nero... made his reputation almost as equivocal as his predecessors''.

²⁰ Mellor (2003) 81-82.

²¹ Anderson (1984) 110.

²² See Anderson (1984) 106-107 who points out that this was the case in the Flavian restoration of the Porticus Deorum Consentium.

²³ 'Forum Pacis' is found in Ammianus, Polemios Silvius and Marcellinus Comes. See Platner and Ashby (1929) 387 for references.

36.27).²⁴ Further still, the function of Vespasian's complex seems to vary from the previous two. According to the ancient sources, Caesar's had mainly been a centre for business (App. *B. Civ.* 2.102) and Augustus' was designed to provide additional room for the courts and for other needs of the increasing population (Suet. *Aug.* 29.1). In the *Templum Pacis*, on the other hand, no legal affairs or business transactions are known to have taken place. Instead, it featured a library (Gell. 5.21.9; 16.8.2) and it exhibited works of art previously housed in Nero's *Domus Aurea*, as noted above. Recent excavations suggest that the enclosure contained water-channels covered in marble facing as well as rose bushes planted in amphorae.²⁵ Only the outer edges were paved in marble; the rest had an earth floor which gave the area the appearance of a garden.²⁶ It was therefore a completely different type of space when we compare it with the fora of Caesar and Augustus. Such variances lead Anderson to conclude that the *Templum Pacis* may not have been designed to be a forum at all.²⁷ Crucially, however, by positioning it so close to the other two, indeed parallel to that of Augustus, Vespasian would have invited such comparisons. Just as 'the dismemberment of the *Domus Aurea* indicated what the Flavians were not',²⁸ the fora of Caesar and Augustus served as a point of contrast for Vespasian's precinct.²⁹

Examination of contemporary coinage suggests that under Vespasian there was a conscious return to Republican and Augustan coin types.³⁰ The barbarian *capta* type which had been used by Caesar, and not seen since the Augustan period, re-emerged at the start of Vespasian's reign. A *denarius* from AD 69-70 which portrays a captured Judaeian woman (fig. 10) bears a striking similarity to Caesar's *denarius* depicting Gallic prisoners (fig. 11).³¹ (It is important to note that Caesar's image did not appear on coins at this time.) Caesar's Gallic conquest, it seems, represented a touchstone of military excellence. Jane Cody explores the relevance of such iconography to the manner in which Vespasian had acquired supreme authority: 'On coins of Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar and Octavian-Augustus, whose power also had been based on leadership of the army, [he] found a visual language suitable for the representation of ... power'.³² Similarly, styles of portraiture changed under

²⁴ In contrast, in his *Res Gestae*, Augustus calls his own building complex and Julius Caesar's by the term 'forum': Forum Augustum, 4.21, 6.35; Forum Iulium, 4.20.

²⁵ Patterson (2010) 227-228.

²⁶ Patterson (2010) 228.

²⁷ Anderson (1984) 110-111, declaring that 'the most striking feature of the plan of the *Templum Pacis* is how unlike the other Imperial fora it is' (p110).

²⁸ Boyle (2003) 30.

²⁹ For the suggestion that Domitian planned to reorganise the imperial fora, see Jones (1992) 90-94.

³⁰ Cody (2003) 103.

³¹ See Cody (2003) 103-107.

³² Cody (2003) 103-4.

Vespasian. Official Flavian art returned to traditional Republican realism, with Vespasian's most common portrait type presenting an aged, lined, starkly realistic image (fig. 12).³³ (For Nero's change of portraiture, see chapter 2.)

Finally, regarding the literary culture at this time, Vespasian appears to have supported the arts. Suetonius tells us that he encouraged men of talent, established a regular salary for Latin and Greek teachers of rhetoric, presented eminent poets with sizeable gifts, revived musical entertainments, and paid numerous artists and actors very generously (Suet. *Vesp.* 17-19). Very little is known about poets writing under Vespasian, including Valerius Flaccus. His reference to the Cymaeian prophetess at the opening of the *Argonautica* (1.5-7) suggests that he may have been one of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis* whose priestly duties included the guarding of the Sibylline books.³⁴ Thus while it is probable that Vespasian was interested in the arts, and possible that poets like Valerius Flaccus were rewarded at times for their work,³⁵ there is no real evidence for the kind of calculated patronage of, for instance, Augustus and Maecenas, which had represented such a significant institution designed to stimulate the production of literature favourable to the regime.³⁶ Domitian, on the other hand, would institute poetic competitions as Nero had done before him (Suet. *Dom.* 4; Suet. *Nero* 12). Moreover, Suetonius relates that Domitian spent a great deal of money restoring libraries that had been destroyed by fire, 'seeking everywhere for the copies of lost works, and sending scribes to Alexandria to transcribe and correct them' (Suet. *Dom.* 20).³⁷

In sum, once *princeps*, Vespasian had a complicated relationship with the Julio-Claudian regime. He detached himself from Nero but did not detach himself from the dynasty as a whole. At some points his conduct suggested continuity; at others his engagement with the past saw him leapfrog over the Julio-Claudian dynasty and use Republican imagery in his self-representation. Caesar stood as a Janus-like figure between Republic and Principate, and his reception at this point demands further consideration. My discussion will demonstrate that the process of inverting and replacing Neronian (and

³³ See Pollini (1984) 549 and Mellor (2003) 83.

³⁴ For the significance of the Sibylline books under Augustus (who placed them in the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine and ordered that the texts be written out again because they had faded over time), see Suet. *Aug.* 31, Tac. *Ann.* 6.12 and Dio 54.17.

³⁵ Woodside (1942) 124 points out that the only orator we know to have received a grant from Vespasian was Quintilian; the sole poet, Saleius Bassus.

³⁶ For the role played by poets in the society of Augustan Rome, see White (1993). For the problems with using such terminology as 'patronage' and 'client', see White (1978) especially 78 where he notes that no Latin writer of antiquity ever used the words *patronus* or *patrocinium* in a literary context.

³⁷ On poetic competitions and libraries, see Augoustakis (2016) 376-382.

sometimes broader Julio-Claudian) models extends to the world of literature. In Valerius' *Argonautica*, for example, the trace of Lucan's Caesar – a character associated with Nero in the *Pharsalia* – serves as an implicit point of contrast and departure.

4.2. The trace of Lucan's Caesar in post-Neronian literature

Recent scholarship has shown how Lucan's *Pharsalia* represents a watershed in Caesar's literary depiction. He now becomes an epic construct that can be alluded to in order to evoke despotism and civil war. Tim Stover's monograph *Epic and Empire in Vespasianic Rome* (2012) argues that Lucan is the primary intertext for Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* and that Lucan's Caesar represents an anti-model for Valerius' Argonauts.³⁸ Stover takes a literary-historical approach and contends that Lucan's deconstructive tendencies act as a 'poetic point of departure'³⁹ for Valerius' narrative of renewal and recovery. At this time, messages of hope and stability were being transmitted by the new regime. An *aureus* from the start of Vespasian's reign, for example, depicts a togate Vespasian stretching out his hand to lift up the kneeling figure of Roma (fig. 13), implying that Vespasian was rescuing a state that had collapsed.⁴⁰ (Might a viewer contrast this image of Vespasian nurturing Roma with that of the Lucanian Caesar ignoring Roma on the bank of the Rubicon at *Pharsalia* 1.185-205?) Inscriptions record that monuments previously neglected were now restored,⁴¹ and a host of statues of Vespasian were reworked from likenesses of Nero.⁴² The *libertas* that had (it is implied) been absent under Nero was restored by Vespasian, serving as a reminder of the freedom established by Galba at the dethroning of the tyrant.⁴³ Ideas about reworking images from the likenesses of others, and about – through absence – allowing a viewer to remember but reject an unfavourable predecessor, will be important for our discussion of Valerius' handling of Lucan's Caesar.

³⁸ See especially pp. 100-111 on the storm episodes of both epics, with the Argonauts' humility contrasting with the audacious and arrogant behaviour of Lucan's Caesar ('the gigantomachic mariner').

³⁹ Stover (2012) preface.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the *Roma Resurgens* coinage, see Levick (1999) 65-66.

⁴¹ For Vespasian's restoration projects resulting from the neglect of this earlier era, see *CIL* VI 931 and *CIL* XII 1257). See further Ramage (1983) 213.

⁴² Pollini (1984) discusses two in particular. See also Bergmann and Zanker (1981). Champlin (2003) 30-31 maintains that this practice was not necessarily negative but rather economic (a desire not to destroy valuable stock), pointing out that portraits of Nero continued to be created after his death.

⁴³ Ramage (1983) 209. For the LIBERTAS PUBLICA types, see RIC vol. 2 (Vespasian) numbers 267, 429 and 492; for the LIBERTAS RESTITUTA types, see RIC vol. 2 (Vespasian) numbers 290 and 430; for the LIBERTAS AUGUSTI S.C. types, see RIC vol. 2 (Vespasian) number 428.

The pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* demonstrates how Lucan's *Pharsalia* represents a watershed in Caesar's literary depiction. The only surviving example of a fully-preserved *fabula praetexta* ('Roman historical drama'), the *Octavia* centres upon three days in early AD 62 during which Nero divorces and exiles Octavia and marries Poppaea Sabina.⁴⁴ It was written at some point after Nero's death, perhaps as early as Galba's brief reign (June 68 – January 69)⁴⁵ by an unknown author who engages heavily with Lucan's *Pharsalia* throughout. Emma Buckley has shown that the character of Nero uses language and imagery which confirms that 'the aggressive tyranny of Lucanian Caesarism' is the blueprint for his rule.⁴⁶ When Nero refers to the end of the civil wars that followed Caesar's assassination – 'at last the weary victor cached the swords, blunted by dealing savage wounds' (*Oct.* 523-525) – he evokes the image of Lucan's Scaeva famously fighting until his sword is so blunt that it is unable to wound ('the sword-point, blunt and dulled by clotted blood, has lost the function of a sword', *Phars.* 6.187-188). In this way the character of Nero also links Lucanian Caesarism with Augustus' approach to rule.⁴⁷ Buckley understands the character of Nero to be 'a Julius who ... confirms his Caesarian identity with civil war against his own people and wife', and she reads *Octavia* as a 'Pompey to Nero's Caesar'.⁴⁸

Lauren Donovan Ginsberg also suggests that the struggle between Nero and Octavia replays the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, with Nero cast as a Caesar-figure, and Octavia (as well as Agrippina) cast as a Pompey-figure.⁴⁹ When the character of Octavia wishes for Nero's death and makes reference to a comet (*Oct.* 227-237), her language calls to mind the death of Caesar – an episode 'seared into the cultural memory of the Roman people which appears (at least in the textual tradition) very much like the events which Octavia describes'.⁵⁰ Octavia's speech contains echoes of the references to Caesar's death found in Horace (*Ode* 1.2) and Virgil (end of *Georgics* 1) as well as traces of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The omens that follow the Lucanian Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon include a comet that flashes across the sky and portends death (*Phars.* 1.524-532), and the four different terms for 'fire' that Octavia uses in her speech (*flammis... ignibus... ardens... facem*) are all found in the Lucanian passage (*ardentem... flammis... faces... ignis*).⁵¹

⁴⁴ For a recent, comprehensive study of the *Octavia*, see Kragelund (2016).

⁴⁵ See Kragelund (2016) 307.

⁴⁶ Buckley (2012) 142.

⁴⁷ Buckley (2012) 142-143.

⁴⁸ Buckley (2012) 149-151.

⁴⁹ Ginsberg (2013).

⁵⁰ Ginsberg (2013) 657.

⁵¹ Ginsberg (2013) 662-663.

Ginsberg explains the significance of these two Caesarian dimensions – civil war and assassination – to Octavia’s speech:

As Octavia’s language looks back to Vergil’s and Horace’s accounts of the aftermath of Caesar’s death, it also recalls Lucan’s account of Caesar’s guilty rise to power. Thus through Octavia’s intertexts, the play alludes to two crucial moments in the cultural memory of Caesar. In doing so, her language further underscores both her wish that Nero will die and also the reasons why he deserves to die as Caesar did: like Lucan’s Caesar, Nero is guilty of harming his family, his people, and his country.⁵²

Ginsberg also points out that the character of Nero himself appears to be mindful of Caesar’s fate, alluding in direct speech to Caesar’s clemency towards Brutus which ultimately cost him his life (495-502). Finally, when Nero visualises countering a revolution he imagines Rome becoming wet with slaughter (*caede ... madet*, 823). There is an echo of Ovid’s reference to the slaughter that followed Caesar’s assassination (*Emathique iterum madefient caede Philippi*, *Met.* 15.824). Ginsberg suggests that what lies behind Nero’s violent visualisation here is his fear of sharing Caesar’s grisly end.⁵³ Finally, she uses the literary-historical memory of Caesar’s civil wars to argue for a date of composition that falls within Galba’s brief reign or the start of Vespasian’s – the civil war of 69 reigniting memories of Caesar’s. As further evidence of Caesar’s place in Rome’s collective memory at this point, she draws our attention to the ‘cap and dagger’ coin that was minted at this time which casts the revolution against Nero in terms which are identical to the assassination of Caesar.

Statius’ *Thebaid* likewise draws on Lucan’s *Pharsalia*. Charles McNelis and Paul Roche have convincingly shown how the war between Polyneices and Eteocles is heavily modelled upon Lucan’s portrayal of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey.⁵⁴ One of the ways in which Statius utilises the reader’s memory of Lucan is by alluding to the Lucanian Caesar’s crossing of the Rubicon, in particular the river’s changing size.⁵⁵ In book 7 of the *Thebaid*, arriving at Thebes, Hippomedon crosses the Asopus. The waters are first described as ‘swollen’ (*tumidus*, *Theb.* 7.317) and then become ‘smaller’ (*mollior*, *Theb.* 7.439), calling to mind Lucan’s Rubicon which is first described as ‘small’ (*parvi Rubiconis*, *Phars.* 1.185)

⁵² Ginsberg (2013) 663.

⁵³ Ginsberg (2013) 665.

⁵⁴ McNelis (2007) and Roche (2005).

⁵⁵ Smolenaars (1994) 189.

but then becomes 'swollen' (*tumidum*, *Phars.* 1.204).⁵⁶ Both passages suggest multiple reasons for each river's size (*Theb.* 7.426-429; *Phars.* 1.217-219), and both include a speech by the man who has crossed the river (*Theb.* 7.432; *Phars.* 1.223).⁵⁷ McNelis argues that by evoking Lucan's description of the Rubicon, Statius denotes the beginning of a new phase of the poem; following this moment of transition, the second half of the epic will be characterised by horrific violence.⁵⁸

Similarly, Lucan's Ariminum is evoked by Statius in his description of the Theban crowd in book 1 of the *Thebaid*, the Thebans' reaction to Eteocles mirroring that of the people of Ariminum towards Caesar: both harbour concerns silently (*Theb.* 1.169-170; *Phars.* 1.247), both consider precedents for their occupation (*Theb.* 1.180-185; *Phars.* 1.254-256), and both emphasise the roll of fate and fortune (*Theb.* 1.174-177; *Phars.* 1.251, 256).⁵⁹ The protagonists' speeches also have parallels. For example, the Lucanian Caesar's apostrophe to Pompey at Ariminum is echoed in Tydeus' advice to Eteocles: 'let your Sulla at least teach you to step down from this reign (*regno descendere*)' (*Phars.* 1.334-335); 'put off your high estate and cheerfully climb down from the throne (*descendere regno*)' (*Theb.* 2.395-396).⁶⁰ Roche suggests that echoes of Lucan can serve to make bold political statements regarding, for example, the moderating effect of partners. The image in book 1 of the *Thebaid* of 'power rising up more tyrannically in the absence of his fellow' (*Theb.* 1.186-187) evokes Lucan's declaration in book 1 of the *Pharsalia* that 'for all time, all power will be unable to endure a partner,' *Phars.* 1.92-93).⁶¹

Recent scholarship has also shown the extent to which Silius Italicus' *Punica* engages with Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Raymond Marks, for example, writes:

[Lucan] can be found in details, a motif, a name, an allusion, and as the reader enumerates these instances, and as patterns of reference begin to emerge, it becomes clear that his presence is much more pervasive and more integral to the big ideas and themes of the *Punica* than it appears on first glance.⁶²

⁵⁶ McNelis (2007) 121 n81.

⁵⁷ McNelis (2007) 121.

⁵⁸ McNelis (2007) 122: 'With the allusions to Lucan, the delays and threats to civil war are abandoned and Statius' poem reaches, finally, its intended narrative goal: Lucanian *fraternas acies*'.

⁵⁹ Roche (2005) 400.

⁶⁰ Roche (2005) 399.

⁶¹ Roche (2005) 401. This sentiment is echoed at *Phars.* 1.125: 'Caesar could accept non above him; Pompey no equal'. See also Velleius' description of the triumvirate as *exitiabilis* at Vell. Pat. 2.44.1 (discussed in chapter 1). For Pompey's inability to bear an equal, see Sen. *Marc.* 14.3 and Caes. *BC* 1.4.4 (discussed in chapter 2).

⁶² Marks (2010b) 128.

Marks discusses Silius' habit of using Lucanian 'beginnings' to signpost seminal moments in the *Punica*, and the Lucanian Pompey's death to signpost ends of phases.⁶³ Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, we find echoes of Lucan's Caesar at the Rubicon. During the Battle of Ticinus narrated in book 4 of the *Punica*, Scipio's words to his troops call to mind Lucan's Rubicon scene: both passages ask where the standards are being taken (*Pun.* 4.402; *Phars.* 1.191); both describe 'towers' on Rome's head (*Pun.* 4.408; *Phars.* 1.188); and both refer to the 'Vestal hearths' (*Pun.* 4.411; *Phars.* 1.199).⁶⁴ The context of the Lucanian passage is Caesar's vision of Roma; it is Roma whose references to the standards Silius' Scipio echoes. While Lucan's Roma is in distress at impending war (*Phars.* 1.183-190), Silius' Scipio describes Roma stretching out her hands in supplication (*Pun.* 4.409). Silius' Scipio is clearly not mapped onto Lucan's Caesar; Scipio acts on behalf of Roma and not against her. It is the figure of Hannibal who in fact most closely evokes Lucan's Caesar during the first half of the epic, but, as Marks points out, 'as his fortunes decline and final defeat approaches, his likeness to Pompey becomes increasingly evident'.⁶⁵ The allusion to Lucan's Rubicon scene invites Silius' reader to see the battle as a watershed moment in history and indeed the text. This was the first armed conflict between Rome and Hannibal, during which the first Roman to die was a man called Catus, who shares his name with the first character to die in Lucan's epic (*Phars.* 3.585-591).⁶⁶

The *Punica* also includes a direct reference to Caesar in the Underworld. When Scipio descends to the Underworld in book 13, the Sibyl shows him the shades of Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Caesar (*Pun.* 13.850-867), a sight which causes Scipio to weep in grief at the destiny Rome has in store (*Pun.* 13.868-869). The fact that Scipio goes to the Underworld to visit his father immediately evokes book 6 of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Indeed, Caesar's Trojan heredity along with his divinity are highlighted by Silius' Sybil: 'The other, whose high head is crowned with a star, is Caesar, the offspring of Gods and the descendant of Trojan Iulus' (*Pun.* 13.862-864). When the Sibyl describes Pompey and Caesar breaking forth from Hades, she bemoans how often they will wage war over land and sea, recalling Anchises' lament over the shades of Caesar and Pompey (*Aen.* 6.826-

⁶³ Marks (2010b) *passim*.

⁶⁴ Marks (2010b) 133.

⁶⁵ Marks (2010b) 146. For references to Hannibal as Caesar, see 146 n52, where he also directs us to von Albrecht (1964) 54–55, 165; Kißel (1979) 108–11; Brouwers (1982) 82–83; and Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2511–13, 2515–16. For references to Hannibal as Pompey, see 146 n53, where he also directs us to Brouwers (1982) 82–84, Ahl, Davis, and Pomeroy (1986) 2516–17, Fucecchi (1990b) 157–66, and Marks (2008) 81–83.

⁶⁶ Marks (2010b) 133.

835).⁶⁷ Marks argues that the harsh words about civil war do not individualise Caesar, with the result that he is somewhat distanced from the civil war context; whereas the flattering description of his divine descent is brought to the fore.⁶⁸

Discussing the trace of Lucan's Caesar in post-Neronian literature, I therefore have the opportunity to build on exciting new scholarship. Previously, the main focus of scholarly attention when it came to intertextuality and the Flavian poets was their engagement with the *Aeneid*.⁶⁹ Now, we understand a lot more about literary interactions generally and the pivotal role of Lucan specifically. Growing interest in reader responsibility and narratology have also helped inform my investigation, particularly when it comes to unpacking the temporal complexities that can stem from allusions to other texts, and the different interpretations of the internal characters and external readers. This is especially the case with the *Argonautica*'s engagement with the *Aeneid* and the *Pharsalia* since the plot-lines of these source texts take place in the narrative future. We the reader, in recognising similarities and set-pieces that we have seen before, find ourselves considering Valerius' epic predecessors and pondering a range of historical and mythic times, when Valerius' internal characters cannot.⁷⁰ Different voices also add to this complex picture. Particularly instructive has been Kathleen Coleman's approach to the different voices in Statius' *Silvae* insofar as she has shown how independent the voices of the internal characters are from that of the narrator of the *Silvae*.⁷¹ When we see a reference to Lucan's Caesar in the *Silvae*, therefore, it is notable that it occurs in the direct speech of an internal character, the muse of epic poetry, who communicates in a different poetics from the narrator. Lucan appears bound to his own subject matter, genre and (crucially for this investigation) characters – and disconnected from Statius' own authorial persona. Potential implications for Caesar's reception include the idea that his Lucanian incarnation was still loaded with controversy, reignited by events of AD 69 and fresh in the reader's mind (along with the fate of Lucan himself).

⁶⁷ Marks (2010a) 27-28, following Reitz (1982) 129 and Spaltenstein (1990) ad 13.861. See also Ahl (1976) 56.

⁶⁸ Marks (2010a) 28.

⁶⁹ See Bernstein (2016) 396.

⁷⁰ For more on the mismatch between what the implied external readers know and what the internal characters know, see Zissos (2004).

⁷¹ Coleman (1999).

4.3. Valerius Flaccus: contrast and departure in the *Argonautica*

Valerius Flaccus demands a high level of knowledge from his reader as he relates the story of the Argonauts' quest for the golden fleece in an (almost certainly unfinished) epic of eight books.⁷² Our constant awareness of Valerius' engagement with his predecessors is what 'makes the text signify'.⁷³ Though it is paradoxical that we might find Caesar in a narrative about the Argonauts given the poem's temporal setting, there are many points at which Valerius invites his reader to remember Lucan's monstrous Caesar only then to invert the Lucanian episode by portraying the diametrically opposed, admirable conduct of the *Argonautica*'s epic heroes. The issue of chronology is particularly interesting since Argonautic heroism is located before the time of Caesar, meaning that for Valerius' internal characters the *gens Iulia* is completely unknown. The internal characters are breaking new ground; yet in the poem's persistent intertextuality, the external reader constantly remembers earlier epics and their protagonists, including Lucan's. This chapter therefore asks what such echoes might mean for Caesar's broader reception during the Flavian age. What is at stake when an author evokes the Lucanian Caesar given that the historical Caesar still loomed large in Rome's cultural memory and indeed physical landscape?

Another important dimension to our discussion is the very topic that Valerius' epic celebrates: Vespasian's opening up of the seas through expansion into Britain. The *Argonautica*'s proem – the structure of which has been shown by Andrew Zissos to be modelled on the opening of Lucan's *Pharsalia*⁷⁴ – declares that the ocean had previously been *indignatus* to the 'Phrygian Iulii' (Val. Flac. 1.9), explicitly inviting the reader to recall and contrast members of the previous regime in a way that we do not see in other contemporary references to Vespasian's success in Britain.⁷⁵

The first four lines of the proem see Valerius announcing his subject and declaring his distinction from the account of Apollonius Rhodius. Notable differences include Valerius' lack of reference to the remoteness in time and the status of the Argo (though it is not yet named) as the 'first' ship (Val. Flac. 1-4).⁷⁶ As well as the strong forward momentum that pervades the opening lines, sweeping the reader along just as the Argo sweeps through the

⁷² For discussion and scholarship on the end-point of the epic, whether it is unfinished or whether the end was lost in transmission, see Manuwald (2015) 5-7.

⁷³ Malamud and McGuire (1993) 194. See also Hershkowitz (1998) 35-105.

⁷⁴ Zissos (2004) 36.

⁷⁵ Joseph. *BJ* 3.4-5. and Sil. *Pun.* 3.597-8 do not cite Vespasian's Julian predecessor(s) or invite us to compare the two imperial houses.

⁷⁶ Kleywegt (2005) 5-6 discusses these and other noteworthy differences between the opening four lines in Valerius and the opening four lines of Apollonius.

seas and up into the sky,⁷⁷ we cannot help but look backwards at what texts and vessels have gone before. The first word *prima*, for example, calls to mind Catullus 64 since this was the word Catullus used to emphasise the Argo's status as the first ship (Catull. 64.11).⁷⁸ Valerius' use of the word *canimus* also invites his reader to consider earlier texts. This verb is found in the first line of Virgil's *Aeneid* (*cano*), and it appears in the same form (*canimus*) in the opening of Lucan's epic (*Phars.* 1.1-2). An emphatic note of primacy is juxtaposed with the resounding echo of past literary works.

During the subsequent invocation to Apollo (lines 5-12), praise of Vespasian is coupled with a reference to his Julian predecessors – again, forcing the reader to look backwards in what is a passage ostensibly about beginnings. Valerius celebrates Vespasian's unprecedented opening up of the sea which, he says, was previously hostile to the Phrygian Iuli (*Phrygios prius indignatus Iulos*, 1.9).⁷⁹ The term 'Phrygian' might be designed to mock the Eastern decadence of the previous ruling family.⁸⁰ As noted above, Vespasian seems to have promoted his lowly origins, which contrasted with the mythological ancestry of the Julian dynasty. The image of indignant waters may call to mind the two aborted attempts of Augustus (Dio 49.38, 53.25) and the abandoned campaign of Caligula (Suet. *Cal.* 46-47), with Vespasian being shown to reach somewhere previously untouched by others.⁸¹ The reader must also remember Caesar's expeditions to Britain. During the first in 55 BC his fleet almost destroyed by a storm (Caes. *BG* 4.28-29; Suet. *Iul.* 25). The second in 54 BC saw Caesar successfully cross the Channel, and a senatorial decree declared twenty days of thanksgiving in Rome (*Caes. BG* 4.38). This might offer Valerius a more impressive comparison with which to illustrate Vespasian's superiority. Intertextually, too, a successful crossing is evoked. The word *indignatus* echoes the description of the river Araxes on Aeneas' shield at *Aen.* 8.728 (a stretch of water resentful at being spanned by a member of the *gens Iulia*) as well as the reference to the Portus Iulius at *Geor.* 2.161 (where the waters resent being confined by Agrippa's artificial harbour). Alluding to the successful taming of water means that Caesar's successful crossing into Britain – though of course inferior when

⁷⁷ For the 'ship of poetry' metaphor see Davis (1990) and Dinter (2009) 549.

⁷⁸ Catullus went on to undermine this claim later in his poem by incorporating images of Theseus' boat in the famous ekphrasis of the bedspread. As well as subtly alluding to this contradiction with *prima*, Valerius destabilises the unprecedented nature of the Argo when he depicts the Lemnian men sailing back from Thrace (2.77-305) and when he notes the existence of a port in Cyzicus (2.655). See Malamud and McGuire (1993) 105, 195-196; Vessey (1985) 329, and Spaltenstein (2002) 484.

⁷⁹ OLD *Iulus* b (pl., app.): the people of Ilium or their descendants. The only other extant usage in the plural is by Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.* 1.45. For rivers and seas as deities, see Braund (1996) 10-23.

⁸⁰ Stover (2012) 64-65. For the negative connotations of the term *Phryx* in Virgil's *Aeneid*, see Zissos (2008) 84 and Hardie (1994) 189.

⁸¹ See Zissos (2008) 83.

compared with that of Vespasian – is evoked in addition to (perhaps over and above) the nautical failures of Augustus, Caligula and Caesar himself. The next time we witness a form of *indignatus* is at 1.202 when Jason prays that Neptune may receive their vessel *tantum non indignantibus undis* ('with only non-indignant waters'). Valerius invites us to view both Vespasian and the epic heroes of the *Argonautica* as pointedly un-Julian. The opening lines serve as a programmatic statement about the poem's interest in time and chronology, and they assert the work's reliance on the poetic memory of the reader.⁸²

As noted above, much of Valerius' engagement with the literary tradition comprises 'window allusions'. Sometimes, however, it is possible to determine a linguistic nod to a specific author, even within a set piece such as an epic storm. The ferocious storm in Book 1 of the *Argonautica* provides an illustration. Though it inevitably calls to mind the storm in book 1 of the *Aeneid*, this passage might also be read as a response to the storm in book 5 of Lucan's *Pharsalia* which had thwarted Caesar's attempt to sail from Dyrrachium to Italy (and which also, of course, engages with Virgil's model).⁸³ The historical Caesar's association with storms off the coast of Britain coupled with the Lucanian Caesar's link with this epic set-piece makes the trace of Caesar in Valerius' storm particularly interesting. The effect of the wind on the Argo (*vela super tremulum subitus volitantia malum turbo rapit*, 'a sudden whirlwind tears away the sails that flap over the tottering mast', 1.620-621) is clearly modelled on the effect of the wind on Caesar's boat (*turbo rapax fragilemque super volitantia malum vela tulit*, 'a greedy whirlwind ... bore the flapping sails over the flimsy mast', *Phars.* 5.595-596).⁸⁴ Kleywegt points out that Virgil does not relate a comparable event during the storm of *Aeneid* 1.⁸⁵ Furthermore, like Lucan (*Phars.* 569-572) and unlike Virgil, Valerius incorporates all four winds into his storm in the space of just a few lines (1.611-613): the North (the 'Thracian horses' belong to Boreas),⁸⁶ West (Zephyrus), South

⁸² Malamud and McGuire (1993) 196-197 discuss how, at several points in the text, the reader must rely on other versions of the Argo story to understand exactly what is going on. The example they give is the exceptional – and unexplained – impatience of Calais to leave behind Hercules and Hylas (3.690-692). The reader must recall a poem of Propertius in order to understand Calais' eagerness to depart before the return of Hercules: Calais and his brother Zetes had recently attempted to rape Hylas (*Prop.* 1.20.25-30). For more on Valerius' engagement with Propertius' Hylas, see Heerink (2007). For more on how Valerius demands active participation from his readers, see Dinter (2009) 533.

⁸³ For the literary background to Lucan's storms, see Morford (1967) 20-36. For the storm episode of *Pharsalia* book 5, see Morford (1967) 37-44 and Matthews (2008).

⁸⁴ See Zissos (2008) 343 and Stover (2012) 103.

⁸⁵ Kleywegt (2005) 370.

⁸⁶ See Zissos (2008) 340.

(Notus) and East (Eurus).⁸⁷ In what is virtually an identical situation, Valerius' presentation of the Argonauts' reaction is diametrically opposed to Lucan's presentation of Caesar's behaviour. Lucan's Caesar has experience sailing (*Phars.* 5.486-7), he believes that all dangers will yield to him (*Phars.* 5.573) and he asserts that the gods will never desert him (*Phars.* 5.581-2). Valerius' Argonauts, in contrast, are inexperienced (1.626), reluctant (1.631-632) and reverential (1.659-680). Crucially, the end result of Caesar's voyage is failure (he has to turn back) when that of the Argonauts is success (they make it to Colchis). Looking at it from a literary viewpoint, Valerius' characters appear to prosper *after* the Lucanian Caesar's failure, paralleled in Vespasian's programme of restabilising / correcting Rome following the implied failures of the past.

Valerius' engagement with Lucan's Caesar is also evident in the Cyzicus episode. It has been well noted that Valerius' *Argonautica* puts great emphasis on the theme of civil war, much more so than Apollonius' poem.⁸⁸ Even the Argonauts' conflict with Cyzicus and the Doliones – a war which is not strictly civil – is intriguingly presented as such by Valerius. In depicting two peoples who should be kin but are not, Valerius evokes the second half of Virgil's *Aeneid* as well as Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The connections that Valerius makes with Lucan's Caesar during this passage enhance the Valerian scene since, for the reader, the horror is brought into sharper focus by the memory of the Lucanian Caesar's civil war. When the Argonauts arrive in the land of Cyzicus, the Argonauts are warmly welcomed. Cyzicus sees the Haemonian ship and rushes down to the shore before declaring 'O ye from Emathia, strangers to our land till now, methinks the sight of you is even greater than rumour' (2.636-640). In Apollonius' account, the arrival of the Argonauts is also characterised by cordiality (Apoll. 1.961-971). Both also feature a report (*fama* in Valerius, φάτις in Apollonius) forecasting the arrival of the men. In Apollonius, Cyzicus had no direct speech and there is no mention of Emathia. Addressing the Argonauts as 'soldiers of Emathia' forces the reader to recall the very first line of Lucan's epic: 'wars across Emathian plains (*per Emathios campos*), worse than civil', *Phars.* 1.1).⁸⁹ Valerius' Cyzicus inadvertently points proleptically towards the quasi-civil war that these men will cause for him and his people.⁹⁰ It also calls to mind the Lucanian narrator's lament at the end of *Pharsalia* 7.

⁸⁷ Kleywegt (2005) 365 points out that Virgil starts with two names (introducing Notus and Eurus at 1.85), later adds Aquilo (the equivalent of Boreas) at 102, and does not mention Zephyrus until the end (line 131).

⁸⁸ See especially McGuire (1997) *passim*.

⁸⁹ Both in Thessaly, Pharsalus and Iolcos were only around 50 miles apart.

⁹⁰ For a similar instance of dramatic irony occurring in direct speech, see Zissos (2004) 24-25 who suggests that Jason's *cohortatio* to Acastus at 1.168-169 seems to quote Lucan's outburst at *Phars.*

References to Haemonia and Emathia are juxtaposed with the image of the sailor arriving at the shore when the narrator bemoans the never-ending cycle of destruction (*Phars.* 7.858-862). For Lucan, Caesar's civil wars are unequivocally linked with those that occur later.⁹¹ In having Cyzicus address Jason and the Argonauts as 'Emathian', Valerius invites the reader to see Jason as a Caesar figure, linked to both Julius and Augustus in an ongoing cycle of civil war. Unlike the Lucanian Caesar who remains undaunted by nightmares after Pharsalus (*Phars.* 7.781-795), the Argonauts are tormented by images of the slain (*caesorum*) (3.362-363). With Lucan's Emathian civil war in the reader's mind, perhaps *caesorum* plays on the sound of *Caesarum*. The poetic memory of the Valerian reader ensures that he/she is haunted by the civil-war-loving Caesars.

In an episode completely absent from the *Argonautica* of Apollonius, at 2.445 the Argonauts land at Troy.⁹² Despite the close association that the Julio-Claudians had with Troy, interest in this region continued under Vespasian. In Ilium at this time, construction projects increased, a host of statues of the Flavian dynasty were set up, and coins depicting Vespasian and his sons were minted (fig. 14).⁹³ Perhaps unsurprisingly, another development in this region was the disappearance of references to 'kinship' from local inscriptions.⁹⁴ This makes Valerius' inclusion of this episode – and above all his allusions to the *gens Iulia* – particularly interesting. Another important dimension is that it is Hercules (and not Jason) who leads the action. Some critics view Hercules as representative of Augustus, the Augustan regime and the wider Julio-Claudian dynasty, and Jason to be representative of Vespasian.⁹⁵ Indeed a symbolic relationship between Hercules and Augustus had been established by Virgil; in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, for example, Virgil compares Augustus' future greatness with Hercules' past achievements (6.801-803).⁹⁶ But it is another member of the *gens Iulia* and another Julian foundational text that is most

1.13-14. 'Thus, Jason's words "inadvertently" foreshadow the Argonauts' rather dubious involvement in an extended episode of Lucanesque conflict' (p25).

⁹¹ At *Phars.* 7.853 Lucan speaks of 'a second crime' (*scelerique secundo*) and he ends the book by declaring that 'Mutina and Leucas have made Philippi innocent' (*Phars.* 7. 872). 'Mutina' refers to the war with Antony in 43 BC and 'Leucas' refers to the Battle of Actium in 31 BC (fought near the promontory of Leucas). For 'Philippi' embracing both Pharsalus and Philippi, see Braund (1992) 296.

⁹² Barnes (1981) 366 points out that the episode was included in the *Argonautica* of Dionysius Scytobrachion (at 4.42 and 49.3 ff) whose prose version was written at around the same time as Apollonius was writing.

⁹³ Rose (2014) 238-239.

⁹⁴ Rose (2014) 238.

⁹⁵ See, for example, Taylor (1994), especially 219 and 222-226.

⁹⁶ Taylor (1994) 222.

significant for Valerius' Troy episode. My analysis will suggest that Lucan's Troy episode in book 9 of the *Pharsalia* stands behind Valerius' scene.⁹⁷

It is against a backdrop of heightened temporal awareness within the narrative that Hercules and Telamon arrive at Troy (2.445 ff.):⁹⁸

Alcides Telamonque comes dum litora bando
anfractu sinuosa legunt, vox accidit aures
flebile succedens cum fracta remurmurat unda.
Attoniti pressere gradum vacuumque sequuntur
vocis iter.

While Hercules with Telamon at his side passed along the shore that broke back in a pleasant inlet, a voice fell upon their ears, ever and anon sounding mournfully as each wave broke and murmured away again. Full of amaze they went slowly, and they followed the voice's empty path.⁹⁹

Argonautica 2.451-455

Just as we had been able to sense the excitement of Lucan's Caesar to be in Troy (see chapter 3), *bando* ('pleasant'), focalised through Hercules and perhaps also Telamon, reveals the joyful frame of mind of the Valerian spectator(s). The word *legunt* and the phrase *vacuum iter* invite a metapoetic reading: a literary journey made along an untried path. If we consider the mythic timeframe, Hercules is stepping on unknown territory since neither Virgil's Aeneas nor Lucan's Caesar has walked on Troy's soil yet. Valerius sets his narrative before the texts of Virgil and Lucan, and thus avoids (for his internal characters) any Julian footprints. The external reader, in contrast, is able to recognise allusions to previous texts. As Hercules and Telamon move around, following the voice they can hear, there is a subtle echo in *attoniti pressere gradum* of Lucan's Troy episode (*Assaraci pressere domos, Phars. 9.967*) which comes at the same starting position of its line. In Lucan, barren woods and trunks of rotting timber were pressing down on Assaracus' property; in Valerius, the footsteps of Hercules and Telamon are pressing down on the ground. Yet both, in their own way, are symbolic of the devastation that ultimately bears down on Troy. As Hercules

⁹⁷ Caesar himself seems to have had a personal interest in Hercules: as a youth he wrote the *Laudes Herculis* (Suet. *Iul.* 56.7).

⁹⁸ The Argonauts' departure from Lemnos brings 'a new pain' (*novus dolor*)... grief and its old appearance (*facies antiqua*) were in every home' (2.393-394). Hypsipyle gives Jason a tunic which commemorates the past (her father's escape from the Lemnian women's massacre) and a sword so that she might be by Jason's side in future wars (2.408-421).

⁹⁹ My translation of *vacuumque sequuntur vocis iter*.

moves towards rescuing Hesione, Troy's disastrous fate is one step closer to being sealed by Laomedon's treachery.¹⁰⁰ Though it is not part of Valerius' narrative, the reader knows that the failure of Laomedon to pay Hercules the agreed fee for rescuing Hesione – in short, his ingratitude – leads to Hercules sacking the city of Troy in revenge.¹⁰¹

An important dimension to Valerius' characterisation of Hercules, especially in the Troy episode, is that he feels compassion even though he does not yet know what or who he is seeing. The shackles that he observes on Hesione are 'grim / harsh' (*truces*), her face is 'weak' (*defecta*), he notices that she is young (*virginis*) and he sees tears in her eyes (*ad primos surgentia lumina fluctus*) (2.462-464). In contrast, the character of Caesar in Lucan's corresponding Troy episode views the landscape from a later perspective which makes his interpretation of the site even more shocking. The unknowing Hercules must ask questions to ascertain what he is seeing. Unlike Lucan's Caesar, he has no literary accounts on which he can rely. Hercules addresses the maiden, enquiring about her name, her family and what has led to these circumstances (2.468-469). Hesione's twenty-one line reply (2.471-492) begins as follows:

'non ego digna malis' inquit. 'suprema parentum
dona vides ostro scopulos auroque frequentes'.

She replied: 'I do not deserve these sufferings; thou seest here the last gifts of my parents, these rocks covered over with purple and gold'.

Argonautica 2.471-472

As yet unnoticed by scholars,¹⁰² Valerius' line 2.472 is remarkably similar to the corresponding line in Lucan's Troy episode:

aspicit Hesiones scopulos silvaque latentes (Luc. *Phars.* 9.970)

dona vides ostro scopulos auroque frequentes. (Val. Flac. 2.472)

¹⁰⁰ For Laomedon's dishonesty in the literary tradition, Rossi (2001) 319 draws our attention to Homer *Il.* 21.441-457; Ovid *Met.* 11.215; Virgil *Geor.* 1.501-502; Horace *Carm.* 3.3.22-24; Virgil *Aen.* 4.541-542. Virgil's Anchises alludes to Hercules' destruction of Troy (without citing Laomedon's treachery) at *Aen.* 2.642-643.

¹⁰¹ The issue of ingratitude, of not repaying an act of kindness, is something we have already come across during this investigation (along with its connotation of tyranny, destruction and retribution). For Velleius Paterculus and Seneca, the conspirators' ingratitude was a decisive factor in Caesar's assassination (Vell. Pat. 2.56.3; Sen. *Ira* 3.30.4-5). Caesar's ingratitude and cruelty towards Rome was condemned by Seneca (*Ben.* 5.15.4 ff.) and Antony's failure to reprimand the conspirators was used as evidence of his ingratitude to Caesar (*Ben.* 5.16.6).

¹⁰² Spaltenstein (2002), for example, does not refer to Lucan at all in his discussion of the Hesione episode. He only cites Ovid (*Met.* 11.194 ff) and Manilius (6.540 ff) as models for Valerius (p432).

In Lucan, Caesar sees Hesione's rock. In Valerius, Hesione herself is speaking, telling Hercules that he is seeing her rock. Thus what is fundamentally the same event is narrated from different characters' viewpoints and from different temporal locations. Both lines contain an active, present tense verb of 'seeing' (*aspicit, vides*); both situate *scopulos* in the same place within the line, immediately after the caesura, causing the reader to linger over this key word;¹⁰³ both then include an ablative singular noun with *que*; and *latentes* is clearly echoed in *frequentes*. Valerius has expanded upon the one line in Lucan's Troy episode in which Caesar sees Hesione's rock (and is aware of what he is looking at even if he does not understand its full significance) and has developed an entire episode (where this time the internal viewer is unaware of what he is looking at and soon learns of its full significance). The differences are particularly striking. The colours in Valerius (*ostro ... auroque*) call to mind the robes given by Dido to Aeneas that he later drapes over Pallas' body at *Aen.* 11.72 (*auroque ostroque*). The colour purple also evokes a marriage couch (see, for example, Catullus 64 lines 49 and 163).¹⁰⁴ In both of these respects, Valerius is utilising the reader's poetic knowledge to provide the scene with ever greater pathos, especially given that the internal characters do not have this knowledge. Lucan's line, on the other hand, features not gold and purple fabric but *silva*: the landscape is covered in 'wood'. Crucially, this word could be used metaphorically of literary material, as we see with Statius' *Silvae*, for example.¹⁰⁵ 'Enter the woods,' says Shane Butler, 'and we are in the poet's workshop'.¹⁰⁶ Lucan's Caesar, then, sees a site steeped in poetry; Valerius' Hercules, due to this narrative's temporal setting, cannot.¹⁰⁷

As soon as Hesione finishes speaking, it is clear that Hercules understands the seriousness of the situation. The *facies* of his surroundings is focalised through Hercules as *maestissima* (2.492) and Hercules is described as *miseratus* (2.493). As he judges what he sees and hears, and relates this to his past experiences, he alludes to three of his twelve labours (the slaying of the Nemean lion, the capture of the Erymanthian boar and the killing of the Lernaean hydra, 2.495-496). Similarly, although we are invited to wonder at his great strength,¹⁰⁸ Valerius portrays Hercules as humble (piously praying to his father, the gods of

¹⁰³ In contrast, Ovid's account uses *saxa* (*Met.* 11.212).

¹⁰⁴ Spaltenstein (2002) 440 points out that the contrast between a virgin's death and her marriage is natural (citing Iphigenia at Lucretius 1.95 ff.).

¹⁰⁵ See also Quint. *Inst. Orat.* 10.3.17; Gell. *praef.* 6; Suet. *Gram.* 24.

¹⁰⁶ Butler (2011) 18.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Hinds (1998) 11-14 who sees in Aeneas' voyage into the *antiqua silva* of *Aen.* 6 (*Aen.* 6.179-82) an allusion to Virgil's poetic voyage into the *antiqua silva* of Ennius (*Ann.* 175-9 Sk.).

¹⁰⁸ 'Lo, Telamon stands in amaze at the hero growing fiercer with the frenzy of the chosen battle, at the swelling muscles and the body so huge in armour, and how the loaded quiver smites his back' (2.509-511).

the sea and his own weapons, 2.512) and human in his apprehension (*horruit*, 2.514). When he sees the monster, its bulk is described as horrifying (*horrificam*, 2.518), its back mountainous (*scopulosa*, 2.518), its shadow huge (*ingenti*, 2.519) – all three adjectives are focalised through Hercules and add to his very natural sense of horror and dread. Furthermore, the use of the second person (*putes*, 2.519) – this time not in direct speech – compels the reader to be drawn into the action, to see through Hercules’ eyes and to empathise with his terrifying situation. We understand his frustration when his arrows prove ineffectual (2.525-526) and rejoice when his rocks and club defeat the monster (2.527-536).

Finally, the episode is replete with temporal complexities. Hercules catches sight of Laomedon’s young son, for example, whom the reader recognises as Priam, the future king of Troy (2.550 ff.). Yet the reader also knows that the expedition of the Argo only precedes the Trojan War by one generation.¹⁰⁹ Many of the Argonauts’ sons – Telamon’s son, Ajax, for example – took part. Yet Priam is a young boy here, when the reader knows that during the Trojan War he is an elderly man.¹¹⁰ In addition, Hercules and his weaponry are unfamiliar to the internal onlooker (*ignotis iuvenem miratur in armis*, 2.554). For the external reader, on the other hand, Hercules’ appearance can be easily visualised, his characteristic lion skin and club ingrained on both the ancient and the modern reader’s mind. Time, chronology, reader participation and poetic memory therefore continue to be significant components in Valerius’ Troy episode.

Valerius utilises Lucan’s Troy episode to enhance the reader’s appreciation for the humanity of the heroes who are treading new ground. For the internal characters there are no Julian footprints. In contrast, the external reader’s literary awareness means that (s)he can identify the absent presence of (literary) figures associated with the *gens Iulia*. The relationship of Val. Flac. 2.472 to *Phars.* 9.970 (where Valerius’ Hercules and Lucan’s Caesar see Hesione’s rock) illustrates how Hercules’ compassion and understanding could be brought into sharper focus by our recollection of Lucan’s Caesar: heroism and morality are uncharted territory (*vacuum iter*) in this epic for a new, un-Julian regime.

¹⁰⁹ Spaltenstein (2002) 461.

¹¹⁰ Consider *Aen.* 2.509-510, for example: ‘old as he is, he vainly throws his long-disused armour about his aged trembling shoulders’.

4.4. Statius *Silvae* 1.1 and 2.7: physical and literary space

In contrast to Valerius' implicit evocations of (Lucan's) Caesar, the opening poem of Statius' *Silvae* – addressed to the emperor Domitian – contains explicit references to Caesar (*Silv.* 1.1). Statius celebrates Domitian's equestrian statue which had been voted by the Senate in AD 89 to commemorate victories in Germany and Dacia.¹¹¹ The statue was one of many monuments either erected or restored during Domitian's vast building programme (Suet. *Dom.* 5). He also carried out extensive work in the Forum Iulium and a complete rebuilding of the Temple of Venus Genetrix, though the temple was not rededicated until much later, by Trajan (see chapter 5).¹¹² Warfare and monuments are central themes of *Silvae* 1.1, and both are vehicles for comparison with Caesar. Statius considers the statue's relationship to the Aedes Divi Iulii in the Forum Romanum. The statue's location is suitable given its proximity to Caesar's temple: 'the setting matches the work' (1.1.22). One problem we face in approaching this text is the question of sincerity regarding the poem's praise of Domitian, especially given the different manuscript readings of the preface which details the motivation for the poem: Did Statius 'venture' (*ausus sum*) to hand over his text on the equestrian statue to Domitian, or was he 'ordered' (*iussus sum*) (*praef.* 1.19)?¹¹³ Subversive or not, the poem is evidence of what was allowed to be said: Domitian could be compared with Caesar.

A glance at Frontinus' *Strategemata* confirms that, under Domitian, Caesar could be presented as an exemplum of military success.¹¹⁴ A military handbook aimed at teaching future generals through 'examples of planning and foresight' (*Str.* 1, *pr.*),¹¹⁵ the *Strategemata* incorporates Caesar's conduct in twenty-eight passages. Specific conflicts include the civil wars, Germania or Gaul. In contrast, there are no references to Augustus at all; there is one reference to Tiberius (before he was *princeps*); there are none to Caligula,

¹¹¹ For the double triumph he celebrated, see *Dom. Suet.* 6. For the question of when he adopted the title *Germanicus*, see Southern (1997) 81.

¹¹² Anderson (1984) 55.

¹¹³ Geysen (1996) 28-29 asserts that 'any form of *iubeo* is, at this point, inconsistent with the context of the prefatory epistle'. Combining this with Statius' habit of emphasising the boldness of his undertaking, and the fact that no individual poem is described as having been requested, he concludes that the initiative must have come from Statius himself and so reads *ausum sum* (p29-30). Housman (2014) 9-10, in contrast, points to other uses of *iubeo* in Domitianic poetry as well as to portrayals of Domitian in later texts (such as the strict controls of literature described in Tacitus' *Agricola*), and argues for *iussus sum*. He agrees with Ahl (1984) 78-102 that the poem should be understood as subversive.

¹¹⁴ On military manuals in the imperial period, see Campbell (1987). Frontinus served as governor of Britain under Domitian. In addition, he held the post of 'curator of aqueducts' and served three consulships.

¹¹⁵ See König (2007) 178.

Claudius or Nero; there are two to Vespasian; there are none to Titus, and there are five to Domitian.¹¹⁶ Frontinus thus presents Caesar as the most valuable Roman military model for his educational text. (The only person to receive more mentions than Caesar is Hannibal with forty-five.) The vast majority of the Caesarian tactics that Frontinus includes are overwhelmingly successful, such as his ability to exploit the geography of a site. He uses a hill's location to his advantage (*Strat.* 2.2.3) and successfully diverts a river (*Strat.* 3.7.2), for example.¹¹⁷ Given that Pompey is the second most referenced Roman in the *Strategemata*, with sixteen appearances in total, it is striking that there is only one occasion on which Caesar is shown in a negative light (where Pompey's actions provide the exemplum): an opportune charge by Pompey at Dyrrachium leads to serious losses for Caesar (*Strat.* 3.17.4).¹¹⁸ Thus what is important for Frontinus when it comes to Caesar's role is military success, which is also important for Statius in *Silvae* 1.1.

Statius' poem is our main source of information about Domitian's equestrian statue.¹¹⁹ A *sestertius* also records its appearance, an image of military aggression and glory: Domitian, the rider, has one arm outstretched, and underneath one of the horse's feet is a head (fig. 15).¹²⁰ The poem begins with the narrator asking a number of rhetorical questions as he speculates about the statue's origin and marvels at its size:

Quae superimposito moles geminata colosso
 stat Latium complexa forum? Caelone peractum
 fluxit opus? Siculis an conformata caminis
 effigies lassum Steropen Brontenque reliquit?

What is this mass that stands embracing the Latian Forum, doubled by the colossus on its back? Did it glide from the sky, a finished work? Or did the effigy, moulded in Sicilian furnaces, leave Steropes and Brontes weary?

Silvae 1.1.1-4

¹¹⁶ The military handbook of Onasander, dedicated to Quintus Veranius who was consul in AD 49, names only Augustus and Homer (in addition to Quintus Veranius).

¹¹⁷ An example of a less 'positive' incident occurs at 2.13.6: shortly after pitching camp, Caesar is eluded during his pursuit of Afranius.

¹¹⁸ Caesar himself relates this episode at *BC* 3.65-71, noting that these events happened 'contrary to Pompey's expectations' (3.70).

¹¹⁹ For the destruction of Domitian's statues following his assassination, see Pliny, *Paneg.* 52.4-5 and Suet. *Dom.* 23.1.

¹²⁰ On whether the depicted head is that of a captive or an allegorical representation of the Rhine, see Geysen (1996) 23.

Stattius had used the verb *fluo* in the preface to book 1 to denote the poems that have flowed (*fluxerunt*) onto the page (*praef.* 1.3-4). Its reappearance here forecasts the importance of metapoetics, as do the Virgilian references to Steropes and Brontes, Cyclopes who helped forge Aeneas' shield (*Aen.* 8.425). The allusion to Aeneas' shield invites us to view the statue through a Virgilian lens, provoking questions about genre ('the statue, so it is implied, has outdone the most epic of endeavours')¹²¹ and the identity of the ruling family (the shield of Aeneas being inextricably linked to the achievements of the *gens Iulia*).¹²² Similarly, the term *colosso* in the first line means that we might initially have the *colossus Neronis / Solis* in our minds, especially since Domitian's name is delayed until line 5. We might recall one of Martial's epigrams in which he bids his book make its way via the venerable palace of Domitian and his many shining images, without lingering in wonder at the colossus (*Ep.* 1.70.5-9).¹²³ The reader / spectator is invited to marvel at this new *opus* – another word that Stattius applies to both the monument and his poetry (*operibus, praef.* 1.9). In this opening poem of a brand new collection, then, Stattius celebrates new statuary and new poetry bestowed upon the latest member of the *gens Flavia*, but he does so in such a way that we cannot help but compare monuments and literature constructed previously, and the people they commemorate.

When Stattius describes its location within the forum, he suggests that it is fitting for Domitian's equestrian statue to face the Aedes Divi Iulii and to run alongside the Basilica Iulia because of Caesar's connection to the realms of deification and dynastic power: 'the setting matches the work' (*par operi sedes, 1.1.22*).¹²⁴ Caesar's temple is identifiable by the references to the facing threshold, numerous wars, the adoption of a son, and apotheosis (1.1.22-24). Such associations of the temple might call the Julio-Claudian dynasty to mind in general, rather than Caesar in particular;¹²⁵ but then Stattius highlights Domitian's military gentleness (*mitior armis, 1.1.25*) and tacitly mocks Caesar's famous *clementia*. Further, with Domitian raging 'not even' against foreign enemies (*nec in externos, 1.1.26*), we cannot

¹²¹ Newlands (2002) 53. There is also a sense that, as Virgil had reworked Homer's description of the shield Vulcan makes for Achilles (*Il.* 18.478-606), so Stattius appropriates and reworks Virgil. On the host of complex allusions to the epic genre in *Silvae* 1.1, see Marshall (2011).

¹²² *Aen.* 8.628-629: 'There, every generation of the stock to spring from Ascanius, and the wars they fought in their sequence'.

¹²³ Geysen (1996) 25 sees an implicit contrast with the former grandeur of Nero ('the anti-model') whose image the colossus previously embodied, who is now to be ignored. For colossal statues traditionally portraying gods, see Newlands (2002) 55.

¹²⁴ For the topographical location of a monument being essential to that monument's significance, see Flower (2006) 276.

¹²⁵ For the integration of Caesar's rostra into imperial funerals, see above (chapter 1).

help but remember that Caesar raged *in internos*.¹²⁶ Strikingly, Caesar is described as ‘the first’, with *primus* emphatically placed at the start of line 24. Caesar’s association with beginnings is especially relevant when we consider that this is the first poem in the collection. We have already seen how allusions to the Lucanian Caesar’s Rubicon crossing could signpost new beginnings in post-Neronian texts. As we turn to Statius’ *Silvae* and note the stress placed on Caesarian monuments and their relationship to Domitian’s new equestrian statue, it seems as if Caesar is being presented as a ‘beginning’ again, programmatic for Domitian just as this poem is programmatic for the collection. Of course, we expect the current *princeps* to win any comparison. As Hardie points out, however, the very fact that there is a comparison at all ‘implies that they were rulers of fundamentally the same type’.¹²⁷

Just as *fluo* described both the equestrian statue and Statius’ poetry, so *opus* is used for both ‘works’: for the statue in line 3 and again here in line 23, and for poetry in the preface to book 1 as noted above.¹²⁸ Both ‘works’ serve as monuments in which the persona of Domitian is contained.¹²⁹ Similarly the Aedes Divi Iulii contains the persona of Divus Iulius who is shown ‘opening’ his threshold, ‘showing’ the way to heaven and ‘learning’ about Domitian’s gentleness (*pandit, ostendit, discit*, 1.1.22-25). Statius displays a level of communication – a two-way exchange – between the figures of Caesar and Domitian. He seems to imagine what would have happened if Domitian had played Caesar’s role in the civil wars – ‘had you borne the standard, his lesser son-in-law and Cato would have submitted to Caesar’s ordinances’ (*te signa ferente et minor in leges gener et Cato Caesaris irent*, 1.1.27-28) – but the text here remains extremely uncertain.¹³⁰ The memory of Caesar in *Silvae* 1.1 is thus alive, active and relevant, tied up with his temple but also still connected to the wider issues of war, clemency, adoption and deification.

Statius also refers to the Basilica Iulia, dedicated by Caesar in 46 BC (*Iulia tecta*, 1.1.29). Statius personifies the building, describing it ‘gazing at’ (*tuentur*, 1.1.29) Domitian’s

¹²⁶ See Dewar (2008) 73 who speaks of the ‘knife-twisting little *nec* in line 26’, inviting us to remember that Caesar raised his sword against his own people. See also Geysen (1996) 67.

¹²⁷ Hardie (1983) 190.

¹²⁸ For Velleius Paterculus’ use of *opus* to denote literary texts and military feats, see chapter 1.

¹²⁹ The idea that a statue or monument represented the person whom it depicted was widespread in Roman society. McCullough (2008/2009) 149 cites the law implemented by Tiberius which forbade inappropriate behaviour (such as beating a slave or changing one’s clothes) close to a statue of Augustus, or the carrying of his image (such as on a ring or even a coin) into a latrine or brothel (Suet. *Tib.* 58).

¹³⁰ See Geysen (1996) 82 for the scholarship on the manuscript reading *iret gener et cato castris*, and different variations offered by critics.

statue, 'protecting' it even.¹³¹ There continues to be a strong sense of viewing, both for us the reader whose imaginary view is directed by the demonstratives *hinc* (1.1.22) and *illic* (1.1.29,30) and for the deities that are personified in their monuments (Vespasian and Concord are described as seeing the back of the statue at 1.1.31). There is also a real feeling of height (*tecta, sublimis*, 1.1.29-30), reminding us that Domitian's statue would not only be viewed from the ground but also from the upper galleries of the two basilicas here mentioned, the Basilica Iulia and the Basilica Aemilia.¹³² To an extent, we are cast alongside Caesar, Paullus, Vespasian and Concord since we too are surveying the equestrian statue. The only gaze which differs is, of course, that of the statue (and by implication Domitian himself): we are looking at Domitian while Domitian is looking at Caesar.¹³³

In his investigation into the location of the *equus Domitiani*, Michael Thomas builds upon the work of Mario Torelli and explores the significance of sightlines in Flavian urban planning.¹³⁴ Discussing Roman architects' interest in lines of vision as a means of setting up specific topographical relationships, Thomas suggests that the statue may have been positioned on the spot later taken up by the column of Phocas. This would mean that it was in the sightline from Domitian's Forum (later dedicated to Nerva and called the Forum Transitorium) via the Argiletum (fig. 16).¹³⁵ He also points out that other monuments seem to have exploited this visual link between the Forum Romanum and the Forum Domitiani / Transitorium, as is clear from the irregularly repaired pavement in this part of the Forum Romanum's central area (marked 2 and 3 on fig. 17). The sight of Domitian's equestrian statue would have greeted the visitor as they entered the Forum Romanum from this direction. Furthermore, soon after the description of the orientation of Domitian's statue, Statius tells us that its left hand holds a statuette of Pallas which, in turn, holds the head of Medusa (who was traditionally depicted on Pallas' shield) (1.1.37-38). Domitian had built a temple to Pallas in the Forum Transitorium: 'With this location for the *Equus Domitiani*, the goddess greets visitors immediately as they enter the Forum Romanum from her Forum Transitorium'.¹³⁶

¹³¹ *Tueor*, Lewis and Short, II: to look to, care for, guard, defend, protect.

¹³² See Dewar (2008) 80 who draws a parallel with the column of Trajan, the upper friezes of which were surely designed to be viewed from the upper floors of surrounding buildings.

¹³³ On the statue's orientation, see Dewar (2008) 77: 'We are told unambiguously that the statue faced not the Capitol, the traditional heard of the Roman state, but to the east. That is, it faced the Temple of the Divine Julius'.

¹³⁴ Thomas (2004) and Torelli (1987).

¹³⁵ Thomas (2004) 37 ff., building on Giuliani and Verduchi (1987).

¹³⁶ Thomas (2004) 40.

Thomas also discusses the idea that, if a viewer were standing directly in front of the statue and facing it, the Temple of Vespasian would have partly framed it from behind.¹³⁷ He draws on the idea of Penelope Davies that the Arch of Titus served to frame the view of the new amphitheatre (a space previously occupied by Nero's Domus Aurea) for people coming from the Forum Romanum.¹³⁸ Thomas juxtaposes this part of his discussion with Torelli's suggestion that, standing in front of the Temple of Vespasian (and looking out), a viewer's sightline would have incorporated both the Arch of Titus and Domitian's equestrian statue. If what was behind the statue were of such great significance, why does Statius in *Silvae* 1.1 give greatest attention to what was in front of it? He uses just three lines to refer to the basilicas at either side of the statue and the temples behind it (1.1.29-31); he dedicates seven lines to the significance and relevance of its orientation towards Caesar's temple (1.1.22-28). Does this point to a lesser significance for what was 'framing' it for the spectators? Or does it point to an emphasis in the poem on what was in front of the statue (the Aedes Divi Iulii), when the architectural emphasis in fact lay in what was behind it (the Temple of Vespasian)? We must not assume that ideological guidelines contained strict views about orientation, and of course there must be room for authorial freedom. Nonetheless, Statius' comments show that the statue's orientation towards Caesar's temple was allowed to be described as a significant feature – perhaps the most significant feature – of the statue's location.¹³⁹

The importance placed upon Caesar's monumental legacy means that the reader is not surprised when another Caesarian monument makes an appearance later in the poem.¹⁴⁰ At line 84 Statius invites us to compare Domitian's equestrian statue with Caesar's equestrian statue in the Forum Iulium.

Cedat equus Latiae qui contra templa Diones
 Caesarei stat sede fori, quem traderis ausus
 Pallaeo, Lysippe, duci (mox Caesaris ora

¹³⁷ Thomas (2004) 41.

¹³⁸ Davies (2000) 142-148.

¹³⁹ The locations of statues represented an important means of navigating one's way around the streets of Rome. Stewart (2003) 123 n12 examines the custom of using statues for locating and directing. For example, people were directed to a tribunal in the Forum of Augustus according to which statue it stood in front of. Similarly, an inscription (*CIL* VI 9673) locates a business in reference to the 'statue of Plancus'.

¹⁴⁰ The ring composition of the poem may also alert the reader to a forthcoming link to Caesar. As Geysen (1996) 22 notes, the format of the poem is as follows: (A) questions on the statue's construction, including speculation that it has descended from heaven; (B) link to past (mythological exempla); (C), the figure of Julius Caesar; (D) physical description; (D) Curtius; (C) the figure of Julius Caesar; (B) link to future (permanence of statue); (A) Domitian's family descend from heaven.

mirata cervice tulit); vix lumine fesso
explores quam longus in hunc despectus ab illo.
Quis rudis usque adeo qui non, ut viderit ambos,
tantum dicat equos quantum distare regentes?

Let that horse yield that stands in the Forum of Caesar facing Latian Dione's temple, which you, Lysippus (for so they say), dared make for the Pellaeon general. After that it bore upon its marvelling back the image of Caesar – scarcely could you with wearied eyes discover how far the downward view from this rider to that. Who could be so much of a boor that, when he had seen both, he would not declare the horses as far different from each other as their riders?¹⁴¹

Silvae 1.1.84-90

Dewar challenges Robin Darwall-Smith's comment that Domitian's statue upstages 'older equestrian statues in the vicinity', pointing out that Statius does not mention other statues in the plural.¹⁴² Statius singles out just one rival and this is Caesar's equestrian statue. Thus he is 'apparently not interested in drawing the standard Flavian comparison with Nero. The comparison is not with the last representative of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, but with its founder'.¹⁴³ There were – or at least had been – other equestrian statues within the surrounding area that Statius might have mentioned. Closer than the statue in the Forum Iulium, for example, was the Rostra in the Forum Romanum which contained the equestrian statues of Pompey, Sulla and Augustus, as well as another equestrian statue of Caesar.¹⁴⁴

After specifying its location Statius points out that Caesar's equestrian statue once carried a different rider, Alexander the Great. Statius shows the horse marvelling at its new owner (*mirata cervice*, 1.1.87) when the horses of both Alexander and Caesar famously would not tolerate any rider other than their owner.¹⁴⁵ Nonetheless, just as Alexander had to cede to Caesar, so Caesar now cedes to Domitian. The word *regentes* can, of course, mean 'rulers' as well as 'riders'. The unschooled spectator (*rudis*, 1.1.89) is encouraged to consider the changeability of rulers and to make comparisons between 'then' and 'now'.¹⁴⁶ The statue is static and inanimate, seeking to transmit an inflexible past, but is then given a

¹⁴¹ Translation by Dewar (2008) 81.

¹⁴² Dewar (2008) 81.

¹⁴³ Dewar (2008) 81. He quotes Darwall-Smith (1996) 232.

¹⁴⁴ See Zanker (1988) 38, Richardson (1992) 371 and Housman (2014) 35.

¹⁴⁵ On the connection between Caesar's horse and Alexander's horse, see Weinstock (1971) 86-87.

¹⁴⁶ Housman (2014) 61: 'The allusion to reworking one equestrian portrait of Alexander the Great into Julius Caesar most clearly reflects such a concern with history repeating for the worse'.

new identity and a new significance.¹⁴⁷ The reader is encouraged to compare and contrast Domitian and Caesar as ‘rulers’ and ‘riders’, their difference emphasised by Statius most emphatically when he asks ‘who ... would not declare the horses as far different from each other as their riders?’ (1.1. 89-90).

The second (and only other) time that Julius Caesar is referred to in the *Silvae* occurs in 2.7. The preface to book 2 tells us that this poem is a *genethliakon*, or birthday poem, for Lucan (it is the only surviving *genethliakon* in honour of a person already dead); that the work was commissioned by Polla, Lucan’s widow; and that Statius has chosen not to use hexameters so as to avoid comparison with Lucan himself (*praef.* 2.24-27).¹⁴⁸ Therefore, as Martha Malamud points out, we see Statius ‘both removing himself as a challenger to Lucan on the field of epic poetry and at the same time distancing himself from the task of celebrating his predecessor’¹⁴⁹ – all before we get to the poem itself. A key consideration for this discussion will be how the narrator positions himself with regard to the content of Lucan’s poem.¹⁵⁰ While in *Silvae* 1.1 Statius includes *in propria voce* references or allusions to Caesar’s temple, equestrian statue, civil war, adoption of Octavian / Augustus, and divinisation, the reference in *Silvae* 2.7 to the Lucanian Caesar comes in the direct speech of Calliope, who has a distinctly different voice from the Statian narrator. The result is that Statius appears somewhat detached from Caesar’s Lucanian incarnation – when Caesar’s historical and monumental legacy had played an explicit and important part in the opening poem of Statius’ collection, and a figure worthy of comparison with the emperor.

Statius’ commemoration of Lucan’s birthday opens with a Greek setting: those wishing to celebrate are invited to the Acropolis of Corinth and its temple of Aphrodite, which was home to the poetic spring Pirene (2.7.1-4). The familiar image of the fountain of poetry is combined with another metaphor of poetic creation, the poet frenzied with inspiration from the gods (2.7.1-4).¹⁵¹ Carole Newlands observes that Statius’ preference for Graecisms serves to detach him from Lucan’s Roman poetics.¹⁵² In contrast, forty lines later, Calliope’s speech opens with a proclamation of Lucan’s *Romanitas*: his poetry encompasses

¹⁴⁷ Shaya (2013) 5 n30.

¹⁴⁸ For Statius’ choice of hendecasyllables for *Silvae* 2.7, see Morgan (2010) 106-113 and Nagle (2004) 4.

¹⁴⁹ Malamud (1995) 170.

¹⁵⁰ Martial, for instance, wrote three epigrams for Lucan’s birthday, *Ep.* 7.21-23, and in none of them does he refer to the subject matter of Lucan’s epic or any of Lucan’s characters.

¹⁵¹ See Malamud (1995) 172.

¹⁵² Newlands (2011). Statius is the first Roman poet to use *oestro* in connection with poetry. See also Malamud (1995) 173.

the quintessentially Roman images of the seven hills, the river Tiber, knights and the Senate (2.7.45-47).¹⁵³ Just like the purple stripe of the senators' togas alluded to at line 47 (*purpureum senatum*), Lucan's poetry is described as *togatam* (2.7.53). Thus the character of Calliope links Lucan's poetry to Rome – the landscape, the ruling class, the dress – whereas Statius the narrator, at the start of the poem, provides us with a location which is non-Roman (Corinth) and figures which are both mythological and divine (when Lucan's *Pharsalia* had famously not incorporated the divine machinery). Unlike Calliope, therefore, Statius the narrator appears decidedly un-Lucanian.

The only reference to Caesar occurs at line 67. Unnamed, he is described as a *fulmen* by Calliope:

mox coepta generosior iuventa
 albos ossibus Italis Philippos
 et Pharsalica bella detonabis
 quo fulmen ducis inter arma divi

 libertate gravem pia Catonem
 et gratum popularitate Magnum.¹⁵⁴

Presently, nobler in early manhood, you shall thunder Philippi, white with Italian bones, and Pharsalian wars. The thunderbolt of the divine leader amid arms ***, Cato, unyielding in his devotion to liberty, and Magnus, winning the favour he courted.¹⁵⁵

Silvae 2.7.64-69

Raymond Marks uses this passage to argue that Statius carefully misrepresents the character of Caesar constructed by Lucan and that 'Statius extensively uses misdirective techniques to clean up Caesar's civil war past and to rehabilitate him'.¹⁵⁶ He suggests that the reference to the battle of Philippi is significant because it is a battle which occurred two

¹⁵³ Of course, the Roman civil war narrated by Lucan is fought on foreign soil. The lack of Greek references here is thus even more striking.

¹⁵⁴ Since there is no verb in the *quo* clause, Courtney suggests a lacuna of one line after 67. Newlands (2011) 239 posits that the lack of verb could be intended to convey the speed of Caesar as thunderbolt and the frightening uncertainty of his intentions.

¹⁵⁵ I have slightly altered the translation of Shackleton Bailey and Parrott.

¹⁵⁶ Marks (2010a) 29-30.

years after Caesar's death 'and, therefore, does not involve him'.¹⁵⁷ Marks is right that, in the lines as we have them, Caesar does not appear to be belittled or criticised. However, given that Philippi was where Octavian and Antony defeated the forces of Caesar's assassins, one must concede that Philippi was inextricably linked to Caesar's memory. Caesar is relevant to both battles which make up, according to Statius' Calliope, the content of Lucan's epic. Further, a distinction between Philippi and Pharsalus seems somewhat anachronistic: Roman poets – including Lucan himself – often conflated the two locations.¹⁵⁸ Since these lines in Statius are voiced by Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, it is only right that she shows herself to be familiar with such poetic topoi and with Lucanian nuances specifically.

Van Dam points out that *fulmen* is frequently used to describe a general,¹⁵⁹ but coming within a description of Lucan's epic we cannot help but recall that Lucan himself uses this image to describe Caesar. One instantly thinks of the thunderbolt simile in book 1 of the *Pharsalia* (1.135-157). We also recognise Lucan's Cato here, a character committed to liberty,¹⁶⁰ as well as Lucan's Pompey.¹⁶¹ More than that, we glimpse the complications that exist in Lucan's characterisation of Cato and Pompey: 'The possible ambiguities of *gravem* (Cato so admirably relentless in one way, so Stoically intransigent in another) and *gratum popularitate* (Pompey so committed to the Republican cause in one way, so craving popular favor in another) also capture major tension points in the Lucanian original'.¹⁶² Calliope appears to align Lucan and Caesar when she uses *detono* for the former and *fulmen* for the latter.¹⁶³ It seems clear that Statius' Calliope is not saying that Lucan is *like*

¹⁵⁷ Marks (2010a) 30. Some scholars believe that Lucan's epic, if completed, would have featured an account of the Battle of Philippi. Van Dam (1984) 483 believes it probable that Polla and Statius would have had some knowledge of what Lucan had planned. For a discussion on the end-point of the *Pharsalia*, see Bruère (1950).

¹⁵⁸ In the *Georgics*, Virgil writes that 'Philippi beheld for a second time Roman armies clash in the shock of matching arms' (*Geor.* 1.489-490). Postgate (1987) 144 notes that Virgil may have meant the two battles of Philippi, 'but in any case it suited rhetoric to identify the two sites'. In the first book of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Philippi is used twice during the speech of a frenzied matron (at *Phars.* 1.680 and *Phars.* 1.694). In book 7 the Lucanian narrator speaks of 'a second crime' (*Phars.* 7.853) before declaring that 'Mutina and Leucas have made Philippi innocent' (*Phars.* 7.872). In addition, Propertius conflates Pharsalus and Philippi (4.10.40), as do Ovid (*Met.* 15.824), Manilius (1.906) and Juvenal (8.242). See Fairclough (1999) 132-133.

¹⁵⁹ Van Dam (1984) 484.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *Phars.* 2.302-303: 'I will follow to the grave the mere name and empty ghost of Freedom'. See Newlands (2011) 239-240.

¹⁶¹ Newlands (2011) 240 notes that Calliope's reference is in keeping with Lucan's depiction of Pompey as 'courter of favour' as seen in passages such as *Phars.* 1.129-43.

¹⁶² Williams (2017) 94.

¹⁶³ This is the only known occurrence of *detono* relating to the writing of poetry. See Lewis and Short, I B.

Caesar; rather, Lucan is *linked with* Caesar, having memorialised him poetically.¹⁶⁴ It is the reader's poetic memory that fully enables this connection to be made. We are struck by the word *detonabis* and recognise the allusion to Lucan's thunderbolt simile. When we think of thunder and Pharsalus, we think of Lucan and Caesar simultaneously. It is impossible to separate Lucan from his poetic construction and vice versa.

Martha Malamud points out that the character of Calliope is 'a close reader of Lucan, with her own idea of the structure and themes of the poem. She distinguishes three major characters in the poem: Caesar, Cato and Pompey'.¹⁶⁵ I would suggest that Calliope finds a fourth character in the *Pharsalia*: Lucan the narrator. Lucan is in control (he is the subject of *detonabis*) and is responsible for constructing the characters' poetic personae (including his own as narrator). The Lucanian narrator had recognised that a poet becomes immortalised through their poem's content – we need only consider the lines *Pharsalia nostra vivet* at *Phars.* 9.985-986. I propose that Statius the narrator understands this uncomfortable reality. By placing the reference to Lucan's Caesar in the direct speech of Calliope, and assigning to Calliope Lucanian words, phrases and actions,¹⁶⁶ Statius succeeds in distancing his own, narratorial, poetic persona from Lucan's.

Calliope's speech ends with a lamentation for Lucan's untimely death. She compares Lucan's death at a young age to that of Alexander:

Sic natum Nasamonii Tonantis
 post ortus obitusque fulminatos
 angusto Babylon premit sepulchro.¹⁶⁷

So does Babylon cover the Nasamonian Thunderer's son, whose lightning struck east and west, with a narrow tomb.

Silvae 2.7.93-95

The reoccurrence of the thunder imagery which linked Lucan to Caesar earlier in Calliope's speech now relates to Alexander.¹⁶⁸ One might consider here the visit that Lucan's Caesar

¹⁶⁴ Contrast Marks (2010a) 31: 'Statius' identification of Lucan with Caesar in *Silvae* 2.7 could not happen if Caesar were portrayed as Lucan portrays him'. For Statius's strategy of presenting Lucan as intricately bound to his own subject matter, see Lovatt (2007) 153.

¹⁶⁵ Malamud (1995) 175.

¹⁶⁶ Calliope depicts Lucan moving his plectrum to perform his song (*plectro*, 2.7.44); the narrator depicts Calliope moving her plectrum to wipe away tears (*plectro*, 2.7.106)

¹⁶⁷ See Van Dam (1984) 351 for the preference of *angusto* over *augusto* (the latter appears in manuscript M).

¹⁶⁸ The 'Thunderer' is the North African Jupiter Ammon whom Alexander claimed was his relation. See Van Dam (1984) 491 for Alexander saluted as the son of the god. Newlands (2011) 244 sees an

makes to Alexander's tomb in book 10 of the *Pharsalia*.¹⁶⁹ There, Lucan describes Alexander as a *fulmen* (*Phars.* 10.34), recalling the description of Caesar in the thunderbolt simile of book 1. Lucan correctly locates Alexander's tomb in Alexandria; Statius' Calliope places it in Babylon which is where he had died. While the circumstances of death may be Calliope's concern (as opposed to the permanent resting place), the present tense *premit* nonetheless implies that she thinks Alexander's tomb is still there.¹⁷⁰ Pointing out that Statius gets the location right in *Silvae* 3.2, Malamud concludes that this 'apparent error' invites the reader to consider that the same theme (here Alexander's grave) can be appropriated and communicated by poets in very different ways.¹⁷¹ From the allusions to Lucan and the 'correct' location in *Silvae* 3.2, it is clear to Statius' reader that the narrator of the *Silvae* does not believe that Alexander's tomb is in Babylon. Similarly, the link between Caesar, Lucan and Alexander that is conveyed through use of thunder imagery is not made by Statius *in propria voce*; it is made by the internal character Calliope. Thus, to quote Kathleen Coleman, 'the mythological mouthpiece is the "focalizer" for the discourse'.¹⁷² Coleman also points out that in the recitation or dramatisation of poems like the *Silvae*, direct speech may well have been articulated by a new voice.¹⁷³ The only reference to Julius Caesar in this celebration of Lucan thus appears in the *oratio recta* of an internal character whose factual reliability is not always to be trusted, and whose voice (so nuanced in Lucanian poetics) is so different from that of the narrator.

Concluding remarks

The canonisation of Lucan's *Pharsalia* provided a new and important dimension to the cultural memory of Julius Caesar in post-Neronian Rome. Valerius Flaccus' reader, I have argued, was repeatedly invited to recall, re-evaluate and re-condemn Lucan's Caesar in order to emphasise what Valerius' epic heroes are not. In much the same way, Vespasian

allusion to the episode at *Phars.* 9.511-86 where Cato travels through the North African desert, following in Alexander's footsteps.

¹⁶⁹ Malamud (1995) 181 suggests that 'Calliope's apparent compliment thus associates Lucan himself with the Caesarism his poem so loudly condemns'. On the Lucanian Caesar's apparent fascination with Alexander, see Dewar (2008) 82.

¹⁷⁰ Calliope also refers to the deaths of Achilles and Orpheus (2.7.96-99), and there uses the perfect (*horruit*) and imperfect tense (*sequebar*).

¹⁷¹ Malamud (1995) 181-82.

¹⁷² Coleman (1999) 73.

¹⁷³ Coleman (1999) 73. See also Dominik (1994) who discusses *oratio recta* in the *Thebaid*. He points out, for example, that by using direct speech Statius is able to manipulate the reader's assessment of the narrative and of internal characters 'without editorial comment or interpretation' (p24).

tacitly evoked certain aspects of the Julio-Claudian dynasty in order to provide a point of comparison for his new regime, as we saw with contemporary inscriptions, coinage and monuments. Just as Vespasian advertised the absent presence of Nero – a tyrant who had been dispatched, a neglecter of Rome's *libertas* – so the trace of Lucan's Caesar (a proto-Nero in Lucan's text) represented an important point of contrast and departure in Valerius' *Argonautica*. Lucan's Caesar, in my reading, had become the literary embodiment of amorality, civil war, despotism and assassination. Moreover, in addition to these qualities and themes, specific actions of Lucan's Caesar could be evoked in post-Neronian literature to serve a particular purpose within a narrative, as others have observed: Silius and Statius both used allusions to the Lucanian Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon to signpost moments of transition within their respective epics.

The opening poem of Statius' *Silvae* identified Caesar's monumental legacy as a relevant point of contrast and departure for Domitian's equestrian statue. Statius declared that while its location in front of Caesar's temple was appropriate given that Caesar was the first to be divinised and to adopt a dynastic successor, even an unschooled observer could see how different the two *regentes* were. In *Silvae* 2.7 Statius presented Calliope the epic muse as bound to Lucan, just as Lucan was bound to the subject matter of his *Pharsalia*. The Lucanian Caesar was not maligned, but the allusion to the thunderbolt simile, according to my interpretation, invited the reader to remember the character's association with speed, destruction and anger, just as the reader also remembered the Lucanian Cato's (excessive?) steadfastness and the Lucanian Pompey's (self-indulgent?) courting of favour. Thus Statius spoke about Lucan's Caesar in what was unequivocally not his narratorial voice, whereas in *Silvae* 1.1 the idea of Caesar as the forefather of the Principate had been conveyed by the narrator himself.

My discussion of Statius' *Silvae* opened up wider questions about different types of memorialisation, the endurance of memory, and the changeability of monuments and rulers. I have argued that a physical *opus* could be rebuilt and rededicated, adapted (Alexander's head was replaced with Caesar's) and appropriated (which was more important: what was in front of a statue or what framed it from behind?). I have also explored how a literary *opus* could also be adapted and appropriated by later authors (through intertextual allusion, for example). Rather than seeing a contest between physical and literary memorialisations (which was the most enduring? which was the most effective or adaptable?), it is important to consider time, authorship and agenda: the Aedes Divi Iulii, for example, was now a century old and had been completed by order of Augustus, dedicated after his victory at Actium and decorated with the beaks of captured ships;

whereas Lucan's Caesar was constructed in the years immediately preceding the Flavian regime and so was fresh in the reader's mind, as was Lucan's fate and his involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow Nero. However, along with the temple's broader connotations of dynasty / succession (consider, for example, its use in imperial funerals and Statius' reference to adoption) and an additional association with Augustus' victory at Actium, *Silvae* 1.1 suggests that this monument still very much evoked the historical Caesar.

Finally, it seems reasonable to suppose that a person's awareness of Caesar's monumental legacy may have had some degree of impact on that person's awareness of Caesar's trace in literature. That is not to say that different evocations across different media could not be quite distinct – just as we saw with the varying appropriation and rejection of Caesar's objects, names and iconography in the Year of the Four Emperors. I am not implying that literary allusions to Lucan's Caesar might make a reader / viewer rethink their interpretation of, say, Caesar's equestrian statue (or vice versa). Rather, Caesar's extensive monumental legacy in Flavian Rome, along with other indicators of his role in Rome's cultural memory (his continued place in the calendar, for example), could have rendered ancient readers more alert to literary echoes of Lucan's Caesar. What might to modern readers seem a subtle or even ambiguous literary allusion, I would suggest, is brought into sharper focus when we realise that Caesar was, at that time, part of Rome's cultural memory in a way that was truly unprecedented.

THE DAWN OF TRAJAN'S REIGN:

Tacitus' Agricola, Germania and Dialogus

The reign of Nerva (AD 96-98) and the early years of Trajan (beginning in January 98) comprise an intriguing period for the literary depiction of Caesar since this new regime's political and ideological programme had not yet been developed.¹ Trajan later seems to experience a strong pull towards Caesar as his chosen model of military excellence and *pietas*: Trajan wrote a commentary on his Dacian wars (AD 101-102, 105-106) as Caesar had done for his Gallic and civil wars; Caesar's image was stamped onto Rome's coinage (after AD 106) for the first time since the principate of Augustus; he rededicated Caesar's Temple of Venus Genetrix (AD 113); he positioned his imperial forum on the same axis as that of Caesar (AD 113); and he realised Caesar's plans to conquer Parthia (AD 115-117). Begun at the point of transition between Nerva and Trajan, Tacitus' *Agricola* and *Germania* are particularly valuable for our investigation into Caesar's reception because they allow us to explore the extent to which Tacitus anticipates the top-down interest in Caesar that would become apparent later.² The final work to be brought into the discussion is the *Dialogus*, a fictionalised dialogue set in c. AD 75 regarding eloquence and the decline of oratory.³ The text explicitly reflects on time and memory, dealing with issues such as how far back into the past something needs to be in order to be called *antiquus* (16.4-16.5). This interest in time coupled with the numerous references to Caesar mean that it should be taken into consideration for this enquiry, though the problems associated with the date of composition mean that it will not feature as heavily as the other two texts.⁴

¹ König (2013) 362-363 describes Rome as being 'in political limbo, waiting to see how this "new age" would turn out'.

² The *Agricola* is usually considered Tacitus' first work; see Mayer (2001) 26 for its introduction sounding 'like a début'. At *Agr.* 3.1 Tacitus celebrates the return of liberty under Nerva and Trajan, suggesting that it was written in c. AD 98. The *Germania* also seems to date to c. AD 98. At *Ger* 37.2 Tacitus refers to Trajan's second consulship which was in the first half in AD 98. Rives (2012) 46 describes how the context of this passage (the survey of Roman wars with the Germani) suggests that Tacitus wanted to bring the story down to the time of writing.

³ The theme of oratory's decline was prevalent in the first century AD, treated by writers including Velleius Paterculus (1.16-18), Petronius (1-2, 88) and Seneca the Younger (*Ep.* 114.1-2). See Luce (1993) 13.

⁴ Unlike the *Agricola* and *Germania*, the *Dialogus* offers no temporal signposts. See Mayer (2001) 22-27 for an overview of evidence and scholarship, including the review of nine possible dates of

Items of material culture from later in Trajan's reign will be used to illustrate Trajan's strong pull towards Caesar as his chosen model of military excellence and *pietas*, but later texts – including Tacitus' major works (*Histories* and *Annals*) – will not be discussed here. As stated in the main introduction, this is because it is Caesar's literary reputation at the period of transition between Nerva and Trajan, and the early years of Trajan's reign, which form the end-point of my thesis. This is the end-point of what has been an underexplored era of Caesar's early reception, the period after Augustus and before the apparent revival of interest that took place under Trajan. The three texts under discussion here – prose works concerning the issues of war and oratory – engage not just with Caesar as an *actor* but also as an *auctor*.⁵ Inevitably, such double engagement carries political repercussions, and it will be interesting to view this against the backdrop of a new ruling family.

The *Agricola* is a text which honours the life and achievements of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, Tacitus' father-in-law who had governed the province of Britain under Vespasian, Titus and Domitian. Caesar is relevant to this text in a number of ways, not least because of his association with expansion generally and Britain specifically. The very first piece of information that Tacitus provides about Agricola is his place of birth: Agricola comes from the Roman colony of Forum Iulii in Gallia Narbonensis (*Agr.* 4.1), a site founded by and named after Caesar. Tacitus goes on to name Divus Iulius as 'the first' with regard to Roman advancement into Britain (*Agr.* 4.1), when previously Caesar had not been explicitly singled out in literature as 'the first' with regard to crossing the Channel. The *Agricola* also provides evidence for the continued relevance of Caesar's *commentarii*. Certain aspects of Tacitus' account are indebted to Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* (arguably also the *Bellum Civile*) linguistically, thematically and structurally. Tacitus' description of the Britons' assembly at section 15, for example, shares many similarities with Caesar's description of the Gallic revolt at *BG* 7. In addition, just as Lucan's monstrous Caesar played a role in defining Valerius' commendable Argonauts, so the figure of Sallust's Caesar helps shape the text's portrayal of the character of Agricola, who is also noted for his *misericors* and *facilitas* (*Agr.* 9.3)

composition by Brink (1994). Mayer (2001) 25 concludes that on reflection it was probably published early in the first decade of the second century. In contrast Keene (2018) 234-235 suggests that the *Dialogus* pre-dates the *Agricola* and *Germania*, arguing that it represents a direct response to Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* which was published shortly before the death of Domitian in 96 AD. See also Syme (1958) 670-673, Murgia (1980), Barnes (1986) 229-232 and Rutledge (2012) 64.
⁵ For this phrasing, see Winkler (1985).

The *Germania* – a text describing the land, institutions and character traits of the Germani – was written soon after the *Agricola* in c. AD 98 and also incorporates references to Caesar.⁶ The very appearance of Caesar is striking given that he has very little relevance for Germanic territory. Caesar himself indicates in his *commentarius* that his entry into Germania was merely symbolic, leaving after just eighteen days having won sufficient *laus* and *utilitas* (*BG* 4.19.4). As Christina Kraus succinctly remarks, ‘the *Germania* does not in fact need Caesar at all’.⁷ What we find, however, is that the text heavily engages with Caesar in his capacity as author. This is clear not just from an explicit citation of Caesar’s *commentarius* but also from Tacitus’ choice of words and content, the very first sentence of the *Germania* famously echoing the very first sentence of Caesar’s *Bellum Gallicum*.⁸

The *Dialogus* is valuable for this investigation because it opens up an additional dimension to the study of the reception of Caesar since he is here seen as an orator, as the context requires; the political and military dimensions appear to fade into the background. Caesar is representative of a period of flourishing rhetoric, part of the rollcall of great Republican orators. The dialogue format means that different (sometimes contradictory) views are put in the mouths of the characters; it would be foolish to try and ascertain what Tacitus himself may have thought. Instead the text will be interpreted as a document of reception, indicating which aspects of Caesar were discussed in literature of this time. Characters converse about how Caesar is remembered in the 70s (invader of Britain, writer of poor poetry, exemplar in rhetoric) and the mechanisms by which he is remembered (eyewitness accounts, texts which he has written, texts into which he has been written). These varied strands of Caesar’s post-Domitianic reception in Tacitus’ *opera minora* – conqueror, author, and personification of late-Republican politics and oratory – deserve to be investigated within a broader political and ideological context.

As with my other chapters, before conducting close readings, I will explore the political and literary context of the period and texts under discussion. This will enrich our appreciation of the place that Caesar has in Tacitus’ early works. First and foremost the ‘restoration’ coinage of Nerva and of Trajan will be taken into consideration. In the former, Caesar does not appear at all; in the latter, he appears more frequently than any other figure. Further, Caesar’s presence in both the ‘Republican’ and ‘Imperial’ strands of Trajan’s ‘restoration’ series illustrates his Janus-like position between these two (now quite distinct) eras. I will then outline Tacitus’ high social status in Roman society. His texts would have

⁶ Rives (2012) 46 notes that arguments for other dates have not received much acceptance, including that of Beck (1998) 63-101 who believes that the *Germania* was written before the *Agricola*.

⁷ Kraus (2017) 284.

⁸ For a comprehensive overview of linguistic echoes, see Thielscher (1962).

been circulated and read out, and so offer a compelling demonstration of what it was acceptable to say about Caesar among Rome's elite.⁹ Next, given that Domitian's assassination was widely considered to have brought about *libertas*, I will ask whether the memory of Caesar's assassination was once again evoked.

In exploring Tacitus' interest in Caesar as a man of letters, I have the opportunity to draw on exciting new scholarship. *The Cambridge Companion to the Writings of Julius Caesar*, edited by Luca Grillo and Christopher Krebs (2017), aims to bring to the fore Caesar's status as a writer and speaker, noting that until now the predominant view of Caesar has been as a historical figure and a man of power. The editors note that this view has actually impacted upon the reception of his writings since 'they were studied primarily with historical, linguistic, and, above all, didactic interest rather than a literary-aesthetic sensibility'.¹⁰ A new approach has been pioneered by scholars such as Andrew Riggsby, William Batstone and Cynthia Damon, one which uses (for example) narratology and intertextuality to pose questions to what are actually complex works of literature.¹¹ I am also indebted to Christina Kraus whose method – combining general Caesarian influences (style and structure, for example) with precise Caesarian references and intertexts – has paved the way for further research into the intricacies of Tacitus' treatment of Caesar in his *opera minora*.¹²

5.1. Political and literary context

Each chapter of this thesis has situated discussions of Caesar in literature against the often complex and progressively more distant connections of the current regime with the Republican dictator. As we turn to the brief reign of Nerva (before exploring the early years of Trajan), it is clear that the relationship of Nerva's family to the Julio-Claudian regime was long-standing and complex. His grandfather had been part of the small retinue that accompanied Tiberius to Capri (Tac. *Ann.* 4.58). His son, the father of the future emperor, married Sergia Plautilla who came from a branch of the Octavian family. He became consul under Caligula in AD 40 by which time he had had two children, the future emperor and his sister (who would marry Otho when he was consul in 52).¹³ Nerva's family was thus of high

⁹ See Mayer (2001) 24 for the different stages that Tacitus' texts would have gone through: *recitationes*, revisions and final publication in written form.

¹⁰ Grillo and Krebs (2017) 2.

¹¹ Grillo and Krebs (2017) 2 direct readers to Riggsby (2006) and Batstone and Damon (2006).

¹² Kraus (2017).

¹³ Grainger (2004) 28-29. See also Syme (1939) 628.

social standing and was involved with the Julio-Claudian line in a variety of ways. Connections to the imperial family could, of course, be dangerous in a climate of fear about conspiracy and rebellion.¹⁴ Nerva successfully navigated his way through Nero's reign. Following the suppression of the Pisonian conspiracy, Nerva was one of the men awarded the *ornamenta triumphalia*, presumably for having disclosed to Nero some information of value, and his statue was erected in the Forum Romanum and the palace (Tac. *Ann.* 15.72).¹⁵ He also composed verses which won Nero's favour (Mart. *Ep.* 8.70.7).¹⁶ Despite his links with Nero and his family's connection to Otho, Nerva survived the Year of Four Emperors to prosper under the Flavian regime, reaching the consulship under Vespasian in AD 71 and again in AD 90 under Domitian.¹⁷ Domitian was assassinated in AD 96 (a plot which was known about beforehand by Nerva, according to Dio 67.15) and the Senate elected Nerva as the new *princeps* on the same day, despite the fact that he was in his sixties, childless, and not from a military background.¹⁸ With apparent pressure from the Praetorian Guard, which demanded the execution of Domitian's assassins, Nerva adopted Trajan as his son and heir, the successful general who was currently governing Germania (Dio 68.3). In January of AD 98, fifteen months after his accession, Nerva died and Trajan – who would remain at the Rhine for another year – became *princeps* (Dio 68. 3-4). It was at this point of transition that Tacitus began to compose the *Agricola* and *Germania*.

As Trajan would go on to do, Nerva issued a series of 'restoration' coins which evoked the memory of Augustus only,¹⁹ both by displaying Augustus' image and by reintroducing the iconography that Augustus had used on his own coinage (see, for example, fig. 18 and 19). It is interesting to note that the link back to Julius Caesar communicated by *divi filius*, a phrase so prominent on Augustus' coin and so important for Augustus' self-presentation, is absent from the *denarius* of Nerva. The focus, instead, is on Augustus' own divinity. In fact, no extant 'official' evidence from Nerva's brief reign refers to Caesar.²⁰ The only exception is the incorporation of 'Caesar' into his official titulature (and Trajan's, upon adoption) – by now a title used by emperors and their heirs.

¹⁴ Grainger (2004) 29 points out that Nerva's uncle (through his mother Sergia Plautilla) was married to Rubellia, the great-granddaughter of Tiberius through Julia. Under Nero, Rubellia's brother (Rubellius Plautus) was considered a candidate for *princeps* after a comet was interpreted as portending revolution. He was sent to Asia and later killed (Tac. *Ann.* 14.22, 14.58).

¹⁵ See Syme (1958) 2.

¹⁶ See Syme (1958) 1.

¹⁷ For a discussion of 'the adept political manoeuvrability' of Nerva, see Grainger (2004) 30. For the dates of the consulships, see Gallivan (1981) 187 and 191.

¹⁸ See Syme (1985) 2.

¹⁹ For the possibility of Nerva's restoration of a coin of Agrippina the Elder, see Harvey (2002) 95.

²⁰ On the very sparse evidence from Nerva's reign, see Murison (2003).

Imperial coinage from soon after Trajan came to power depicts a personification of Germania sitting on shields; on the obverse is the laureate head of Trajan with 'Germanicus' incorporated into his titulature (fig. 20). This coin type seems to recall one of Domitian's (fig. 21). The Domitianic coin also depicts a personification of Germania sitting on a shield, with the obverse also displaying the emperor's laureate head and his new title 'Germanicus'. One should also note the more impressive number of shields under Germania on Trajan's coin, compared with the lone shield on Domitian's.²¹ This invitation to view Trajan favourably through comparison with Domitian can also be seen in Pliny (throughout the *Panegyricus*²² as well as in certain epistles such as *Ep.* 6.2.4 and 10.2.3) and of course, with regard to the new regime more broadly, in Tacitus' *Agricola*.²³ At this point it therefore seems to have been Domitian and not Caesar who provided a point of comparison for Trajan's relationship with Germania – not altogether surprising given that Caesar had little to do with Germania, as noted above.²⁴

As noted above, items of material culture from later in Trajan's reign will be used to illustrate Trajan's apparent gravitation towards Caesar as his chosen model of military excellence and *pietas*. The monetary reform enacted after his second conquest of Dacia (AD 105-106), which initiated the reminting of fifty-one *denarius* Republican types and twenty-three *aureus* Imperial types, is particularly interesting.²⁵ Caesar appears in coins from both series (Republican and Imperial), strengthening the conception of Caesar as a bridge between Republic and Principate. This is the first time since Augustus' reign that Caesar's image has appeared on Rome's coinage. Of all the people who are commemorated with this coinage, Caesar is the person most represented. Examples of reproductions of the types that Caesar had minted include the *denarius* that shows (on the reverse) Aeneas carrying the palladium and supporting Anchises on his shoulder, accompanied by the name 'Caesar' (fig. 22 and 23). On Trajan's version is also the commemoration of his Germanic and Dacian conquests: [IMP CAES TRAIAN AV]G GER DAC P P REST – an inscription which appears on all of Trajan's commemorative issues. Other Trajanic reproductions include

²¹ The image of a figure sitting on armour was not in itself new. A denarius from 115 / 114 BC, for example, depicts Roma seated on a pile of shields (RRC 287/1).

²² See Manolaraki (2008), especially 377.

²³ *Agr.* 3.1-3, 44.5-45.3.

²⁴ I can find no evidence to suggest that Caesar's conquest of Gaul was ever commemorated numismatically like this. Caesar's coins include depictions of a trophy of arms with a Gallic shield and carnyx (RRC 452) and a trophy of arms with two Gallic captives sitting below (RRC 468).

²⁵ On Caesar's appearance in Trajan's monetary reform, see Harvey (2002) 94.

Caesar's 'elephant' *denarius* of 49-48 BC, which depicts an elephant on the reverse,²⁶ and Caesar's 'pietas' *denarius* of 46 BC, which displays the head of Pietas accompanied by the legend C CAESAR COS TER.

Caesar is also commemorated on one of the restored Octavian types, the prototype of which dates to the early days of the second Triumvirate.²⁷ The obverse depicts the head of Octavian and the reverse portrays a curule chair on which is placed a wreath and the inscription CAESAR DIC PER.²⁸ Given that the title *dictator perpetuus* is never included on a coin which includes the face of Caesar or which has a prototype from Caesar's lifetime, it seems more likely that the viewer was invited to remember the dynastic connection between Caesar and Octavian (and perhaps even equate this with Nerva's adoption of Trajan as his son and heir) as opposed to his dictatorship.²⁹

The surviving Imperial types commemorate Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Galba, Vespasian, Titus and Nerva. Throughout this series, the images and wording are often new, leading Mattingly to comment that 'we have, in fact, an independent coinage, in which the restoration hardly extends beyond the obverse portrait'.³⁰ Thus while the Republican types had represented faithful / recognisable copies, the Imperial types are not really restorations but in fact innovations in imagery. Caesar appears on three of the Imperial types. One depicts Caesar's bare head on the obverse with the legend C IULIUS CAES IMP COS III and Venus (Victrix) on the reverse, standing and holding a helmet and spear (fig. 24). The second type again features Caesar's bare head, this time with the legend DIVUS IULIUS. On the reverse is Nemesis holding a *caduceus* and with a snake at her feet (fig. 25).³¹ The third type is very similar to the previous one but shows Caesar wearing a laurel crown (fig. 26). Syme suggests that on this coin (the only one of Caesar laureate) Caesar's face bears a strong resemblance to Trajan's.³²

Keeping in mind the possible portrayal of a physical likeness, it is interesting to note that Trajan would later restore and rededicate the Temple of Venus Genetrix in Caesar's Forum. (It had previously been rebuilt by Domitian, as noted in chapter 4.) This rededication occurred in AD 113, the very same year in which Trajan dedicated his own

²⁶ RRC 443/1 is thought to be the third most minted coin in the whole Republican era. See Nousek (2008) 293 who cites the die estimates of Crawford (1974) 640-695, especially 694. Note that the obverse-reverse arrangement is opposite on the original.

²⁷ Harvey (2002) 96-97.

²⁸ Harvey (2002) 96.

²⁹ See Zanker (1988) 36 who relates this coin type to Octavian's attempt to display Caesar's throne and wreath in order to arouse emotions.

³⁰ Mattingly (1926) 260.

³¹ On the coins depicting Nemesis, see Vojvoda (2008).

³² Syme (1958) 434.

forum. Trajan's complex lay on the same axis as that of Caesar, with the temples facing south-east; in contrast, the temple in the Forum of Nerva faced south-west, following the precedent of Augustus. (For a plan of the imperial fora, see fig. 9.) Perhaps the rededication of the temple created a symbolic as well as topographical connection between these two spaces. It was shortly afterwards that Trajan departed for Parthia, the conquest of which saw the realisation of a plan which Caesar is thought to have made shortly before his assassination – as noted in chapter 1.³³ Moreover, the coinage which was minted to celebrate Trajan's success in Parthia included the barbarian *capta* type (fig. 27), and this had previously been used by Caesar (fig. 11). As we saw in chapter 4, Vespasian had used similar iconography to depict Judean prisoners (fig. 10); but it is the Caesarian coin that appears to be a much closer *comparandum*. This evidence suggests that – after the composition of the works explored in this chapter – Trajan expressed a particular interest in Caesar, especially when it came to his military legacy. His 'restoration' coinage (the Imperial types) presented Caesar alongside the military figures of Venus Victrix and Nemesis; his 'Parthian' coinage appears to evoke Caesar's conquest of Gaul. Caesar's *pietas* and divine ancestry also played a part: the figures of Pietas, Aeneas and Anchises are depicted with Caesar on Trajanic coins, and Trajan rededicated the Temple of Venus Genetrix in AD 113. Lastly, considering Caesar's role in both the Republican and Imperial 'restoration' coins, Trajan seems to have viewed Caesar as a pivot between Republic and Principate.

All of this evidence comes from slightly later in Trajan's reign. As we turn to Tacitus, then, and his prose works incorporating the topic of expansion (*Agricola* and *Germania*), do we see a hint of the top-down interest in Caesar that would become apparent later? Answering this question, it is important to consider what Tacitus' background might suggest about his awareness of imperial attitudes towards Caesar. Tacitus tells us in the *Annals* that in AD 88 he was praetor and also a *quindecimvir sacris faciundis* (*Ann.* 11.11.1). The *quindecimviri* would have supervised the Secular Games of AD 88.³⁴ The following year he left Rome, presumably in public service and possibly with a legionary command on the Rhine or Danube.³⁵ He and his wife returned to Rome from this four-year absence after *Agricola's* death on 23rd August AD 93 (*Agr.* 45.5). In AD 97 he reached the consulship. The end of Domitian's reign, Tacitus tells us, had brought back the opportunity to speak freely: 'I shall not regret the task of recording our former slavery and testifying to our present blessings, even though with unpractised and stammering tongue' (*Agr.* 3.3). Without

³³ Vell. Pat. 2.59.4. See also Suet. *Iul.* 44.3.

³⁴ Birley (2000) 234 speculates that as praetor Tacitus would have had to put on games at his own expense.

³⁵ See Birley (2000) 235.

wading into the tension between Tacitus' successful career under Domitian and his later hostility towards him, what this brief overview shows is that when he was writing his early works Tacitus was a man of high political standing in Rome. He may well have had an intimate knowledge of the workings of the Principate, although this does not necessarily mean that he becomes its mouthpiece – especially if we take Tacitus at his word when he celebrates authorial freedom.

As Alice König points out with regard to this period of Roman history, 'the whole of the Roman elite participated in a process of "political periodization" which took pains to distance "now" from "then"'.³⁶ The images and monuments of the assassinated Domitian were torn down (Dio 68.1). *Libertas* was widely proclaimed, the phrase *libertas restituta* featuring in an inscription from the very day of Nerva's election (and so the very day of Domitian's death) (CIL VI 472). The previous time an emperor had been toppled in the name of liberty it was Nero in AD 68, and coins were minted displaying the 'cap and dagger' iconography that had celebrated Caesar's death as the slaying of a tyrant. Would the death of Domitian bring the death of Caesar back into the public's consciousness, as Nero's had done? While Nerva's coinage depicted *Libertas* holding a cap of liberty (fig. 28), this is a far cry from the unambiguous imagery of the 'cap and dagger' coin. There is no evidence to suggest that a direct connection was being made with Caesar's assassination. Yet both the period and the texts explored in this chapter are characterised by the interplay between past and present.

5.1. *Agricola*

There are two direct references to Caesar in the *Agricola*: 13.2 and 15.4. Both occur during the ethnographic digression on Britain (*Agr.* 10.1-17.2). They are found in the second half of the digression (*Agr.* 13.1-17.2) where the history of Rome's relationship with the island is outlined. Tacitus tells us that Divus Iulius was the first of all Romans to enter Britain with his army:

Igitur primus omnium Romanorum divus Iulius cum exercitu Britanniam ingressus, quamquam prospera pugna terruit incolas ac litore potitus sit, potest videri ostendisse posteris, non tradidisse; mox bella civilia et in rem publicam versa

³⁶ König (2013) 361.

principum arma, ac longa oblivio Britanniae etiam in pace: consilium id divus Augustus vocabat, Tiberius praeceptum.

It was, in fact, Divus Iulius who first of all the Romans entered Britain with his army: he overawed the natives by a successful battle and made himself master of the coast; but it may be supposed that he rather showed the island to his descendants than handed it down. Soon came the civil war, and the arms of Rome's leaders were turned against the state, and there was a long forgetfulness of Britain, even after peace came. Divus Augustus called this "policy"; Tiberius called this "precedent".³⁷

Agricola 13.2

Tacitus explicitly identifies Caesar as 'first' in relation to Rome's subjugation of Britain. The idea of Caesar being 'the first to show' recalls Statius' reference to Caesar at *Silvae* 1.1.24: 'he who first showed our divinities the way to heaven' (*primus iter nostris ostendit in aethera divis*), but there he was 'first' in the realms of divinisation and adoption, not explicitly conquest. We might also compare the proem of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* since this too commemorates Roman success in Britain. Valerius had created a link between the Argonauts' opening up of the seas and Vespasian's expedition (under Claudius) into an unknown region of the world. There, the sea was described as having previously resented the Phrygian Iulii: *Oceanus Phrygios prius indignatus Iulos* (*Arg.* 1.9). While Caesar is arguably the 'Julian' most evoked by these words, Valerius never directly singles him out as a model for, or rather instigator of, subsequent Roman conquest. Here in the *Agricola*, on the other hand, written around twenty years later, Tacitus pinpoints Divus Iulius as *primus* and creates a link between his accomplishments and those of his successors, with Caligula, Claudius and Vespasian all named in the ensuing lines. We should therefore read *posteris* not just as Caesar's Julio-Claudian descendants but as future generations of Roman conquerors.

Woodman considers this passage to be one of the many sources 'which agree in representing the campaign as a disappointment'.³⁸ Kraus describes the end of the reference (Caesar's failure to hand the territory down) as a 'typically Tacitean sting', all the more palpable because of its initial 'fanfare and praise-language' which includes a reference to

³⁷ I have slightly adapted the translation of Hutton and Ogilvie. Throughout this chapter, I will not include their translation of *divus* ('of happy memory') but will simply keep the Latin term.

³⁸ Woodman (2014) 314 quoting Pelling (2011b) on Plutarch, *Caes.* 23.4.

his divinity and the emphasis on his role as first.³⁹ Nonetheless Tacitus establishes Caesar as the first link in the chain that stretches all the way to Agricola. Even if Tacitus' readers would have perceived a sense of disappointment or even hostility, Caesar's primary positioning – his bearing (no matter how small) on future British conquest – is significant. As discussed in chapter 2, no extant evidence from Claudius' reign made a link back to Caesar with regard to Britain. The victory arch in Rome had, however, included a reference to Caesar's divinity when it memorialised Germanicus as 'the great-grandson of Divus Iulius' ([d]ivi Iulii pron(epoti) (CIL VI 921b), as noted above. On that occasion, Caesar's value had been in the realms of divinity and dynasty; he was not cited as a model for British conquest.

The second direct reference to Caesar comes at *Agr.* 15.4, within the *oratio obliqua* of British chiefs who, during the absence of their governor Suetonius Paulinus, advocate revolt: '(the Romans) would withdraw, as Divus Iulius had withdrawn, if Britons would but emulate the valour of their fathers' (*recessuros, ut divus Iulius recessisset, modo virtutem maiorum suorum aemularentur*). We find two sets of emulations or patterns here: the idea of the 'current' Romans imitating their Roman predecessor (Caesar), illustrated by the echo of *recessuros* in *recessisset*, and the 'current' Britons imitating their British predecessors. Once again Tacitus provides a clear link between the 'contemporary' campaigns of Agricola / Suetonius Paulinus and the 'past' campaigns of Caesar, this time focalised through the Britons. Despite the reappearance of such a connection, there are certain key differences. Tacitus invites the reader to recognise that they use *divus* sarcastically when Tacitus *in propria voce* had not (*Agr.* 13.2).⁴⁰ We are also invited to interpret their comparison as misguided (or deliberately skewed) given that Caesar had not withdrawn in defeat as the British hope Agricola will.⁴¹ The fact that the Britons' speech is placed after the narrator's reference to Caesar further adds to the sense that this comparison is flawed. Tacitus has already told us that Caesar helped pave the way for the later success in Britain: his entering Britain (*ingressus*, 13.2) was the model, not his departure. Tacitus invites the reader to draw a different conclusion from that expressed by the Britons. To go back to the different identities of Caesar that are present in the text – the *actor* and the *auctor* –, we can divide these further by exploring the varying ways that each identity is treated within the text. Caesar *actor* is utilised by two different voices (that of the narrator and that of the British chiefs) and for two different purposes (to provide a model for invasion and to provide a

³⁹ Kraus (2017) 284. For the elevated language see Woodman (2014) 314: '*potest uideri ostendisse posteris, non tradidisse: T. graces Caesar's achievement with an alliterative, assonantal and anagrammatic sententia*'.

⁴⁰ On the sarcasm here at *Agr.* 15.4, see Woodman (2014) 332.

⁴¹ Woodman (2014) 323-333.

model for retreat).⁴² The text thus exhibits the contrasting ways that Caesar's British campaign could be viewed, depending on the agenda and possibly temporal perspective of the speaker or writer.

A further Caesarian dimension here is the evocation of the Gallic revolt as narrated in Caesar's commentaries.⁴³ Book 7 of the *Bellum Gallicum* opens with Gallic chieftains gathered together to discuss how to drive the Romans from their territory. Like Tacitus' Britons, the Gauls in Caesar's scene are unnamed (*principes Galliae*, BG 7.1). For the Gauls, the absence of Caesar serves as the stimulus for their assembly (BG 7.1), just as the absence of Suetonius Paulinus does for the Britons in Tacitus' scene (*Agr.* 15.1).⁴⁴ The Gauls use the metaphor of slavery (BG 7.1) as do Tacitus' Britons (*Agr.* 15.1). Both passages include only indirect speech. In both scenes there is a glance backwards to *maiores*: Caesar's Gauls imagine recovering the freedom that they had received from their forefathers (BG 7.1); Tacitus' Britons envisage emulating the valour of their forefathers (*Agr.* 15.4). Both also cite past incidents (Acco's death for the Gauls, Caesar's withdrawal for the Britons) to rouse support and hope for the present mutiny.

What is the significance of this echo of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*? Firstly, the Gallic revolt of the *Bellum Gallicum* is an effective prototype for the revolt of Tacitus' Britons insofar as it helps to depict Tacitus' Britons as equally formidable, driven by a desire for independence. It also simultaneously points towards their ultimate defeat at the hands of the Romans. However, although the Gauls of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* are called to mind by Tacitus as a parallel for the Britons, the Britons themselves cite the Germani – and not the Gauls – as their model for resistance: 'this the people of Germany had done, and had shaken off the yoke' (*Agr.* 15.3). As far as the Britons themselves are concerned, then, to find a truly successful model of resistance they must choose one that lies outside the bounds of Caesar's campaigns. The Gallic revolt, of course, culminated in the defeat of Vercingetorix at Alesia. For Tacitus' Britons, using the Gauls as their model would point to their own defeat. Instead, they allude to AD 9 and the defeat of Rome at the Battle of the Teutoberg Forest.⁴⁵ The unnamed British chiefs in Tacitus thus implicitly differentiate

⁴² For Caesar *auctor* at times being corrected by the Tacitean narrator, see Kraus (2017) 285-287. When Caesar had emphasised the Britons' reliance on charioteers (BG 5.15-16), for example, Tacitus tells us that their strength lies in their infantry (*Agr.* 12.1). Kraus (*ibid.*) terms such instances 'corrective allusions'.

⁴³ The Gallic revolt is an interesting episode for Tacitus to evoke since it reminds us that the voice of Caesar the narrator is distinct from that of Caesar the internal character, the latter being entirely absent.

⁴⁴ Woodman (2014) 325.

⁴⁵ See Woodman (2014) 331.

between Caesar's lack of success in Britain (*recessuros ... recessisset*) and his military accomplishments elsewhere. In other words, as far as the Britons are concerned, Caesar is an appropriate model for early withdrawal from Britain; but for a prototype of a successful uprising against a Roman general, they must look to another era. The suggestion is that the narrator sees the Britons as 'like the Gauls' – formidable but ultimately unsuccessful – but the Britons see themselves as 'like the Germani (of AD 9)'. The reader, however, knows that the Britons in Tacitus' account, who fashion themselves as comparable with the Germani of AD 9, will in fact be conquered by Agricola. These (self-styled) pseudo-Germani are therefore not like their successful Germanic prototypes.

The invitation to the reader to view the Britons as misrepresenting their situation is also an important dimension of the characterisation of Calgacus.⁴⁶ In the famous speech of this Caledonian chieftain before the battle at Mons Graupius,⁴⁷ we see him misjudge his formidable opponent: 'Calgacus' denunciation of Roman maladministration is completely out of place when deployed against Agricola'.⁴⁸ The British chiefs had retrospectively misinterpreted Caesar's withdrawal; Calgacus now seems wrong about Agricola's campaign: 'to plunder, butcher, steal, those things they misname empire: they make a desolation and they call it peace' (*Agr.* 30.5). Of course the context of this 'mistake' is troubling. The connection between Agricola and Caesar (that is, the Roman general misjudged in the mouths of the British) becomes problematic when we consider that Calgacus' miscalculation of Agricola is based upon his assumption that he is similar to the earlier – and unjust – emperors, governors and generals.⁴⁹ We only understand Calgacus' misinterpretation of Agricola when we consider that he is *not* like his predecessors. The reader has already been told that Caesar paved the way for future campaigns. In this discourse on freedom versus servitude, then, Caesar is implicitly grouped by Calgacus – and by the reader – among the unjust authorities of the past.

The opening line of Calgacus' speech also includes a subtle allusion to the servility that existed under Caesar. The phrase *hodiernum diem* (*Agr.* 30.1) evokes Cicero's speech for Marcus Marcellus (*hodiernus dies, Pro Marcello* 1).⁵⁰ Delivered in 46 BC, the speech thanked Caesar for his generosity in allowing Marcellus to return from exile after he had

⁴⁶ For the rhetorical dexterity of Calgacus (and the paradox that this barbarian chieftain is more skilled at speaking Latin than the Romans), see Clarke (2001) 105.

⁴⁷ For the influence of Caesar's account of Pharsalus (*BC* 3.85-97) on Tacitus' account of Mons Graupius (*Agr.* 29-37), see Nutting (1929) 65-66.

⁴⁸ Braund (1996) 168.

⁴⁹ Braund (1996) 8-9.

⁵⁰ Ash (2006) 49.

fought on the side of Pompey at the Battle of Pharsalus. Rhiannon Ash summarises the significance of this intertext:

Many critics have characterised Cicero's whole speech for Marcellus as distastefully sycophantic and obsequious with regard to Julius Caesar.... so if Calgacus recalls it when calling his people to fight for liberty, it makes his point about the value of impending liberty all the more telling. Cicero, after all, lived under the republic, and if even he succumbs to servility, think how much worse the Romans are now and how crucial it is for the Britons to assert their independence from such oppressive masters.⁵¹

In addition to echoes of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* and Cicero's *Pro Marcello*, the reader is invited to remember Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*. It has been noted that the figure of Agricola combines certain attributes of Sallust's Caesar and Cato.⁵² Agricola has the compassion and easy-going nature of Sallust's Caesar (*misericors, facilitas, Agr. 9.3; misericordia, facilitas, Cat. 54.2-3*) as well as the rigorousness, self-restraint and uprightness of his Cato (*severitas, abstinenciam, integritatem, Agr. 9.3-4; severitatis, abstinencia, integritate, Cat. 54.2-6*).⁵³ Marion Lausberg asserts that using these two important figures from the outgoing Roman Republic gives greater depth to the character of Agricola, who needs to preserve his *virtus* under the political conditions of the Principate.⁵⁴ For the Tacitean narrator, Agricola seems to be a combination of both. It is interesting to note, however, when it comes to the internal characters' reading of the scene, that the Britons see not a Caesar but a Cato: *clarus ac magnus haberi Agricola* ('Agricola began to be regarded as a brilliant and a great man', *Agr. 18.5*).⁵⁵ Once again, our reading differs from that of the Britons.

The evocation of Cicero's Caesar in Calgacus' speech, his absent presence symbolising a lack of freedom, leads us to examine the speech's counterpart: that of Agricola at Mons Graupius (*Agr. 33.2-34.3*). In his speech all mention of freedom and servitude is avoided.⁵⁶ How does the internal character of Agricola see himself in relation to

⁵¹ Ash (2006) 49.

⁵² Guerrini (1977) and Lausberg (1980).

⁵³ Guerrini (1977) 500 n51.

⁵⁴ Lausberg (1980).

⁵⁵ Although the combination of *clarus* and *magnus* is not uncommon, the inclusion of *haberi* points unquestionably to a phrase used by Sallust to describe Cato: *Cato clarus atque magnus habetur* (*Bellum Catilinae*, 53.1). See Woodman (2014) 369.

⁵⁶ On the topics of freedom and servitude in these speeches and their conspicuous absence from Agricola's, see Rutherford (2010) 315-319.

Caesar? Answering this question will allow us to explore how and why different strands of Caesar's legacy are (and are not) utilised by different voices within the same text. At the outset of his speech, Tacitus' *Agricola* addresses his troops as *commilitones* (*Agr.* 33.2). This instantly strikes a Caesarian note since this was a term often used by Caesar (Suet. *Iul.* 67.2).⁵⁷ (In contrast, it was avoided by Augustus: Suet. *Aug.* 25.1.)⁵⁸ The reader, and presumably the internal audience of Roman soldiers, is invited to imagine *Agricola* as a Caesar-figure.⁵⁹ *Agricola*, however, refers to Claudius' invasion in AD 43: 'crown these forty years with a great day' (*imponite quadraginta annis magnum diem*, *Agr.* 34.3).⁶⁰ It is not surprising that *Agricola* refers to Claudius' invasion given that this is the most recent campaign. For the external reader, however, the positioning of this reference within the narrative is interesting since it comes after the narrator's assertion that Caesar was 'the first' and after *Agricola*'s own use of the Caesarian term *commilitones*.

Agricola does not discuss Caesar as 'invader of Britain' or Caesar as 'authority on Britain'.⁶¹ His use of *commilitones*, however, suggests an additional component to those aspects of Caesar's legacy at play: characteristics of Caesar's nature as detailed by external sources or reports (that is, not recorded in Caesar's commentaries or elsewhere in Tacitus' *Agricola*), the result being recognisable Caesarian attributes. So, for example, when the reader of the *Agricola* is told by the narrator that it was the quality of British pearls that was lacking rather than the greed of the Romans (*Agr.* 12.6), the reader recalls from their external knowledge that Caesar was supposedly greedy for pearls, as Suetonius would later

⁵⁷ It is interesting to note that nowhere in the *commentarii* do we see Caesar (the protagonist) use the word *commilitones*. It does not appear in the *Bellum Gallicum*. In the *Bellum Civile* it appears twice; neither time is the word spoken by the character of Caesar. At *BC* 2.29 we see it in the *oratio obliqua* of the troops in Curio's camp as they discuss alarming rumours. At *BC* 3.71 Labienus uses it to when killing the Caesarian captives (*commilitones appellans*).

⁵⁸ See Woodman (2014) 504-505.

⁵⁹ We might recall here that Frontinus (*Agricola*'s contemporary and indeed his predecessor as governor of Britain) does hold up Caesar as a model of military excellence in his educational handbook, as noted in chapter 4. No reference in the *Strategemata*, however, relates to Britain. When specific occasions are made clear, they concern Germania, Gaul or the civil wars. If we consider the narrative timeframe of Tacitus' *Agricola*, then, Caesar could be cited as an important military model, though not necessarily with regard to operations in Britain. For Frontinus in the *Agricola*, see König (2013).

⁶⁰ Woodman (2014) 520 points out that the paradosis reads *quinquaginta* but that numerals are often corrupted in transmission.

⁶¹ The character of *Agricola* never alludes to Caesar's commentaries. Rather, without mentioning Caesar's texts, he dismisses all previous accounts about Britain as mere *fama* and *rumor*, claiming that 'we have both discovered and subdued Britain' (*Agr.* 33.3) Tacitus voices a similar idea at *Agr.* 10 with regard to how *Agricola*'s campaigns advance knowledge about Britain. See Woodman (2014) 508. In the *Germania*, however, he highlights the role of Caesar's commentaries in transmitting information, calling Caesar *summus auctor* (see below).

record at *Iul.* 47.⁶² When we are told that Agricola knew everything but did not punish everything (*Agr.* 19.3), we consider that for Caesar it was a lack of knowledge that prevented him from punishing everything (*Suet. Iul.* 67). If there is an aspect of Agricola's death (in having enough glory, *Agr.* 44.3) which recalls the statement attributed to Caesar by Cicero about having enough glory (*Marc.* 25) then, again, it is the reader's pre-existing / external knowledge which enables this connection to be made. The information does not come from Tacitus or Caesar. This is important for our investigation into Caesar's early reception since it suggests that anecdotes about Caesar's personal qualities must have abounded, making themes such as 'greed for British pearls' recognisable Caesarian motifs.

In addition, the reader's recollection of Caesar's description of his landing at Anglesey is important for his/her interpretation of Agricola's landing at Anglesey since both are faced with a similar challenge (*Agr.* 18.4-5 and *BG* 4.24.2). Kraus compares these two episodes: '[Agricola] had a worse problem than Caesar (Caesar's difficulty was that his ships drew too much, Agricola's that he has no ships): but when the shallows cause Caesar the problem, they prove advantageous to Agricola's tactical genius'.⁶³ If we explore the relevant passage of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* we will see that, crucially, Caesar highlights his men's inexperience due to the unprecedented nature of the situation: '(our troops) did not know the ground (*ignotis locis*) ... wholly inexperienced (*imperiti*) in this sort of fighting' (*BG* 4.24).⁶⁴ Further, Caesar himself is not marked out as being present. It is only at the start of chapter 25 that the figure of Caesar appears and his quick thinking proves effective, startling the Britons and forcing them to retreat (*BG* 4.25). Despite the unprecedented nature of such a battle for the Romans (chapter 26 again highlights the Britons' familiarity with this terrain, further underscoring the Roman's unfamiliarity with it), Caesar is ultimately successful. After a reference to his long-standing fortune (*pristinam fortunam*, 4.26), chapter 27 opens as follows: 'so the enemy were overcome in the fight' (*BG* 4.27). What is emphasised in Caesar's episode is thus Caesar's excellence in the face of unforeseeable difficulties. They are, of course, unforeseeable because no Roman army has landed in Britain before. Comparing this with Agricola's landing at Anglesey, the placement of the Tacitean episode within the wider narrative takes on renewed significance when we consider that it is located after Tacitus has told us that Caesar was the *primus* to land in

⁶² See Deutsch (1924) for Caesar's interest in pearls being in part to rival (in his own triumph) those pearls which had featured in Pompey's triumph.

⁶³ Kraus (2017) 286.

⁶⁴ Contrast the enemy's knowledge of the terrain (*notissimis locis*, *BG* 4.24) and their cavalry's experience (*equos insuefactos incitarent*, *BG* 4.24).

Britain (*Agr.* 13.2). The parallel with Caesar reminds the reader that British terrain is no longer uncharted territory for the Romans.

5.3. Germania

'With Domitian's "mock triumph" over Germania unforgotten and Trajan's presence at the Rhine a cause for wonder in Rome, Tacitus, the *consul suffectus* of the autumn of 97, wrote the *Germania*, his second work'.⁶⁵ Christopher Krebs' succinct contextualisation incorporates the argument that, at the end of the first century, the issue of Germania invited a glance both backwards and forwards. (For Trajan's Germanic coins inviting comparison with Domitian, see above.) A recollection of previous campaigns was coupled with an excitement about future Roman success.⁶⁶ At several points in the *Germania* readers are invited to cast their minds back to Caesar's expeditions in the north.⁶⁷ One of the ways that Tacitus does this is by presenting Germania in terms which recall Caesar's presentation of Gaul.⁶⁸ (As suggested in chapter 4, Caesar's Gallic conquest appears to be a touchstone of military excellence.) Caesar as writer and Caesar as conqueror of Gaul are important for this investigation into Tacitus' *Germania*. The opening sentence ('Germany as a whole is separated from the Gauls and Raetians and Pannonians by the rivers Rhine and Danube; from the Sarmatians and Dacians by mutual misgivings or mountains', *Germ.* 1.1) compels the reader to recall Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* ('Gaul is a whole divided into three parts... The Galli are separated from the Aquitani by the river Garonne, from the Belgae by the Marne and the Seine', *BG* 1.1). More than the verbal resonances between their two opening sentences, it is their very position at the start of their respective texts which makes this allusion unmistakable.⁶⁹ Straightaway, then, the reader is invited to view the language (Tacitus' *Germania omnis* echoing Caesar's *Gallia est omnis*), the land (divided from its neighbours by rivers) and the author (who has chosen to package his work's introduction in this deliberately evocative way) through a Caesarian lens. The need for readers to involve themselves in the text, to recognise what is absent from the surface of the text and to

⁶⁵ Krebs (2010) 202.

⁶⁶ Domitian's victory over the Chatti had already been mocked by Tacitus (*Agr.* 39.1) and in AD 100 it would be mocked by Pliny in the *Panegyricus* (82.4-5). See Rives (2012) 47.

⁶⁷ For Caesar's introduction of Germania as a third major ethnos (between the Celts and the Scythians), see Krebs (2010) 203.

⁶⁸ See Krebs (2010), especially 203-205.

⁶⁹ Krebs (2010) 203. Pliny the Elder, for example, refers to *Gallia omnis* (*NH* 105) but not as a means of commencing the work. Contrast Anderson (1961) 33 who believes that the formula was common and would not have been recognised by Tacitus' readers as an allusion to Caesar.

supply the unstated point of reference, has been shown to be a vital element of the *Germania* as a whole.⁷⁰

At section 28 Caesar is named. He is the only author directly referred to in the *Germania*:

Validiores olim Gallorum res fuisse summus auctorum divus Iulius tradit; eoque credibile est etiam Gallos in Germaniam transgressos.

That the fortunes of the Gaul were once higher than that of the German is recorded on the supreme authority of Divus Iulius, and therefore it is easy to believe that the Gauls even crossed over into Germany.

Germania 28.1

Although Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* was undeniably well-known at the time,⁷¹ it is still striking that this 150-year-old text is the only source named in the *Germania* given that elsewhere across the corpus Tacitus refers to more recent sources on this land.⁷² The passage in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* to which Tacitus alludes here is as follows: 'There was a time in the past when the Gauls were superior in valour to the Germans' (*ac fuit antea tempus, cum Germanos Galli virtute superarent, BG 6.24*). Tacitus praises Caesar the author in the highest terms (*summus auctorum*) and he uses Caesar's authority as the basis for his own conclusions (*eoque credibile est*). The present tense (*tradit*) indicates the continued use and relevance of Caesar's text. It also picks up on the reference in the *Agricola* to Caesar showing but not passing down (*non tradidisse*) the island of Britain to future generations (*Agr. 13.2*).⁷³ By describing the Gauls crossing over into Germania, Tacitus presents the Germani as akin to Caesar's Gauls. Similarly, while Caesar had reported that the Gauls worshiped Mercury the most out of all the gods (*deum maxime Mercurium colunt, BG 6.17.1*); Tacitus tells us that the Germani worship Mercury the most out of all the

⁷⁰ Rives (2012) 50 notes an abundance of 'negative observations'. In describing something that the Germani do not do, the unstated point of comparison that is brought into the reader's mind is the practice of the Romans.

⁷¹ Rives (1999) 230 discusses the engagement of Tacitus' contemporaries with Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*, directing us to Plutarch (*Caes.* 22.2), Suetonius (*Iul.* 56.1-4) and Appian (*Celt.* 18).

⁷² Krebs (2010) 202 draws our attention to the appearance of Pliny the Elder and Aufidius Bassus in the Germanic parts of the *Annals*. Gudeman (1900) 97 points out that Caesar himself consulted literary sources (see *BG 6.24.2*) 'which were, of course, equally accessible to Tacitus'. Rives (2012) 49 advocates the assumption that Tacitus consulted what must have been a fair number of sources on the Germani, both literary and non-literary. (In the latter category he refers to oral testimony and itineraries of merchants.)

⁷³ See Kraus (2017) 285 on the metaliterary aspect to *non tradidisse*: 'Neither Caesar *actor* nor Caesar *auctor* really knows his ABCs about the competitive business of creating empire'.

gods (*deorum maxime Mercurium colunt, Germ. 9.1*).⁷⁴ Again, Tacitus' Germani are comparable with Caesar's Gauls.

The second and final direct reference to Caesar in the *Germania* comes in a passage about the difficulties that the Romans have faced at the hands of the Germani: 'neither Samnite nor Carthaginian, neither Spain nor Gaul,⁷⁵ nor even the Parthians have taught us more lessons' (*Germ. 37.3*). After listing the defeat of five consular armies (those of Carbo, Cassius, Aurelius Scaurus, Servilius Caepio and Cneius Manlius), Tacitus cites Augustus' loss of Varus before referring to more Roman losses but this time during successful Roman campaigns:

Nec impune C. Marius in Italia, divus Iulius in Gallia, Drusus ac Nero et Germanicus in suis eos sedibus perculerunt.

Nor was it without paying a price that Marius smote them in Italy, and Divus Iulius in Gaul, and Drusus, Nero [Tiberius] and Germanicus in their own homes.

Germania 37.5

This is an extremely carefully constructed passage. There are certain conspicuous absences and discrepancies, as explored by Jan-Wilhelm Beck.⁷⁶ Tacitus does not mention the defeat of Marcus Junius Silanus in 109 BC or that of Marcus Lollius under Augustus in 16 BC, for example.⁷⁷ A significant Roman victory is also missing: that of Marius over the Teutones.⁷⁸ There also seem to be some inaccuracies. Tacitus includes Aurelius Scaurus, for example, in the sequence of consular armies defeated at the hands of the Germans but Scaurus was actually legate at this time; Mallius Maximus was consul.⁷⁹ Furthermore, the opponents of Cassius (who forced his army to surrender) were the Helvetic Tigurini, allied to the Germani but not the Germani themselves. After emphasising the danger that the Germani posed to Rome from 113 BC to 105 BC, Tacitus cites the Romans' defeat at the Battle of the Teutoberg Forest. (We saw the Britons in the *Agricola* referring to this as a model for their

⁷⁴ Contrast Krebs (2010) 205 who asserts that 'this quotation undermines Caesar's central thesis that the Germani differ from the Galli', citing *BG* 1.31.11, 6.21.1, 6.24.6.

⁷⁵ See Rives (1999) 275 for this being a reference to the Gallic sack of Rome in c. 386 BC. This had made the Gauls 'the greatest symbolic enemy of Rome: although the Romans soon recovered, the episode took on a semi-legendary aura'. Anderson (1961) 175 agrees, on the basis that Caesar's campaigns are mentioned later.

⁷⁶ The following points are made by Beck (1995) 101-102.

⁷⁷ See Vell. Pat. 2.12 and 2.97.

⁷⁸ Beck (1995) 102 notes that this would have impacted upon the picture of the journey from Rome to Germany.

⁷⁹ Scaurus was an ex-consul. See Vell. Pat. 2.12.

uprising at *Agr.* 15.3.) We then go back in time once again for the list of Roman victories. As Tacitus moves our gaze farther away from Rome (Vercellae, modern-day Alsace, the Elbe) our eyes pass briefly over Caesar in Gaul. This sweeping motion guides us from Italy to Germany, illustrating neatly the concept of expansion and suggesting that Rome is moving ever closer towards a definitive conquest of Germanic territory.

Chronology is followed except for the defeat of Varus which therefore gains greater significance. The list is thus actually divided into losses and victories, as opposed to being a timeline of events. This structure creates the impression of improvement upon what came before: the first set (the losses) is surpassed by the following set (the victories). In addition, there is a subtle instance of ring composition insofar as the sequence of victories begins after the Teutoberg disaster and it ends with Germanicus' avenging of this disaster in AD 16, when two of the three legions' eagles were recovered. Lastly, by placing Varus earlier on in the list, Tacitus is able to construct an unbroken line of family members which stretches from Marius, through Caesar, to Drusus, Tiberius and Germanicus. Just as the Teutoberg disaster closes the phase of defeats, it also closes the sequence of seemingly costly victories (*nec impune*, discussed below) under the Julio-Claudian family. Tacitus therefore takes his reader from loss to success and, within the success, along Rome's ruling family and out towards Germany. The image of Divus Iulius in Gaul is part of this arc of progress. Aided by the absence of Domitian (whose *falsum e Germania triumphum* Tacitus mocks at *Agr.* 39.1), this trajectory points implicitly towards even greater success and even further expansion for subsequent rulers of Rome.

The victories of Marius and the Julio-Claudians were not without losses, as is clear from the phrase *nec impune*. The word *impune* means 'without punishment or retribution'.⁸⁰ This type of double negative construction (*nec + im*) certainly draws our attention to the phrase, as does its position at the start of the clause. Beck resorts to repunctuating the text by attaching the phrase *nec impune* to the end of the previous clause, to read *abstulerunt, nec impune; C. Marius. . .*⁸¹ This phrase need not be problematic, however, when we think back to the pattern of the list: decisive defeats; losses in victories; the next implicit step is decisive victories. Does Tacitus suggest with *nec impune* that there is a level of justice in the losses suffered by the Romans in this list? This seems unlikely given Tacitus' lack of criticism elsewhere in the corpus when it comes to Roman warfare.⁸² Instead it picks up on the theme of reprisal that is bound up in the image

⁸⁰ OLD *impune* 1, 2.

⁸¹ Beck (1995) 106.

⁸² See Rives (1999) 259 on *Germ.* 33.2.

of Germanicus avenging Varus. It also serves to underscore the sheer extent of the devastation suffered by the Roman forces, perhaps even focalised through the Germani themselves. Thus it is part of the wider presentation of the Germani as a formidable enemy – but an enemy which, recalling the trajectory discussed above, is now conquerable.

In this passage of the *Germania*, the epithet *divus* enables the reader to distinguish Julius Caesar from Augustus (referred to earlier in the sentence as *Caesar*) and Caligula (referred to later in the sentence as *Gaius Caesar*), but Tacitus could have left it to the context alone to clarify who is meant. As the only *divus* in the list he automatically holds a noticeably elevated position. The reference is presumably to Caesar's campaign against Ariovistus in 58 BC. In Caesar's own account (*BG* 1.31-54) we hear of no significant losses.⁸³ This direct reference to Caesar therefore does not have a connection with his role as author. In other words, we see Tacitus briefly deal with Caesar as military forerunner but there is no overlap with the author of the *commentarii*. The previous reference to Caesar in the *Germania* worked in the opposite way: Tacitus cited Caesar as the highest source (*summus auctorum*) for the strength of the Gauls, but he did not suggest that that his source had been there on campaign and so knew this from first-hand experience. Caesar as author and Caesar as general are thus quite separate in the *Germania*. Both times that Caesar is explicitly incorporated into the text, however, it is his association with Gaul to which Tacitus draws our attention. As we saw earlier, Caesar's link with Germanic territory was insignificant, given that he departed after just eighteen days (*BG* 4.19.4); Tacitus did not need to include him in the *Germania*. Nonetheless, within a theme that was so very relevant for contemporary Rome when we consider the closing years of the first century and Trajan's relationship with Germania, Tacitus compels us to remember Caesar's association with Gaul – both the text and the conquest.

5.4. *Dialogus*

Tacitus' *Dialogus de oratoribus*, in its evident concern for oratory, presents Caesar as one of the best speakers of his day. Because of this focus, the political and military dimensions fade into the background, alongside other controversial elements such as Caesar's assassination. Brutus and Caesar in fact stand side by side in the rollcall of great orators.⁸⁴

⁸³ Rives (1999) 279.

⁸⁴ Contrast Velleius Paterculus' presentation of Brutus and Cassius as inextricably linked to the topic of Caesar's assassination, even before it takes place in the narrative: 'Brutus had maintained an unblemished character up to the day that swept away all his virtues with a single act of recklessness'

The text also touches on Caesar's campaign in Britain, a theme we have already seen in the *Agricola* – this time via the medium of an oral anecdote. The variety and scale of Caesar's undertakings also come to the fore. One character cites (as an explanation for Caesar's failure to reach his full oratorical potential) the same phrase that Velleius Paterculus had used when he likened Caesar to Alexander: 'the magnitude of his plans' (*magnitudinem cogitationum*, *Agr.* 21.5; *magnitudine cogitationum*, *Vell. Pat.* 2.41.1).⁸⁵ There are also some broader issues at stake which are relevant to this inquiry, such as the literary depictions of other figures from the Republican era and literature's power to offend. The text opens, for example, with the revelation that on the previous day, the character of Maternus had recited a *fabula praetexta* that he had written entitled *Cato*, 'by which it was said that he had irritated the feelings of certain great personages' (2). He is still holding this text in his hands when the other three characters arrive, and Secundus urges him to publish instead 'a safer Cato' (3). Well over a century after his death, Cato apparently remained a potentially dangerous subject about which to write, so synonymous was he with the opposition to tyranny.⁸⁶ The literary depiction of Republican figures is thus presented as being problematic in c.75 AD, the date at which the dialogue is set.

This blurring of temporal boundaries is important. The very first sentence asserts a distinction between 'the past' (*priora saecula*) and 'our age' (*nostra saecula*), setting up the theme of oratory's decline (1). The topic of the paucity of orators is highly evocative of Cicero.⁸⁷ As Van der Berg explains, 'to suggest ... an absolute distinction of the modern age from the age of Cicero through Ciceronian formulations establishes an ironic and inconclusive tension within the work.... From its first sentence, the conflict with the past is itself couched in conflicted terms'.⁸⁸ The reader is also invited to remember Cicero when Caesar's style is described as *splendidior* at 25.4, recalling the description of Caesar's style at *Brutus* 261.⁸⁹ To praise Caesar's eloquence while alluding to a work which criticises the loss of eloquence during Caesar's dictatorship creates a certain conflict.⁹⁰ Crucially it

(2.72.1). Similarly Valerius Maximus describes how Brutus destroyed all his own virtues by killing the father of his country: 'by a single act he hurled them into the abyss and drenched all memory of his name with inexpiable abhorrence' (6.4.5).

⁸⁵ This phrase is also found in Seneca's *De Tranquillitate Animi* 15 (with no mention of Caesar). See Mayer (2001) 156.

⁸⁶ Williams (1978) 33.

⁸⁷ Van der Berg (2014) 208-212. For Tacitus' use of Cicero, see also Luce (1993) 26, Bartsch (1994) 110 and Mayer (2001) 211-215.

⁸⁸ Van der Berg (2014) 211.

⁸⁹ Paraphrased by Suetonius at *Iul.* 55.1. See Van der Blom (2016) 146.

⁹⁰ Strunk (2010) 245 n10 .

reminds us of the impact of the reader's literary knowledge upon his/her interpretation of a literary text.

The first reference to Caesar occurs in a passage dealing with the blurring of temporal boundaries. The character of Aper does not agree with a distinction between past (good) and present (bad) and declares that he will not allow his age to be condemned. He points out the difficulties inherent in defining periods of time and deciding what counts as *antiquus*.⁹¹ He states that Cicero should not be assigned to antiquity; it is only one hundred and twenty years since Cicero's death, the lifespan of just one man (*unius hominis aetas*, 17.3):

Nam ipse ego in Britannia vidi senem, qui se fateretur ei pugnae interfuisse, qua Caesarem inferentem arma Britanniae arcere litoribus et pellere adgressi sunt. Ita si eum, qui armatus C. Caesari restitit, vel captivitas vel voluntas vel fatum aliquod in urbem pertraxisset, aequae idem et Caesarem ipsum et Ciceronem audire potuit et nostris quoque actionibus interesse.

I saw myself an old man in Britain who declared that he was present at the battle in which they strove to drive and beat back from their shores the arms of Caesar when he attacked their island. So, had this man who encountered Caesar in the field, been brought to Rome either as a prisoner, or by his own choice or by some destiny, he might have heard Caesar himself and Cicero, and also have been present at our own speeches.

Dialogus 17.4

Barnes believes that Aper's comment about a single person's lifespan 'is meant to look silly...He intended his readers to detect the implausibility'.⁹² What might this mean for Aper's comments about Caesar? If it is meant to sound ridiculous, does this place Caesar firmly in the past after all? While the reader may, as Barnes suggests, laugh off the claim that Aper had met someone who had fought against Caesar, the idea of the real Caesar being part of living people's memories up to a certain point in time is an interesting aspect to consider alongside Caesar's monumental legacy or the Lucanian character, for instance. Aper collapses the time difference between Caesar's campaign in Britain and his own

⁹¹ 'If you measure this space of time by the frailty of human life, it perhaps seems long; if by the course of ages and by the thought of this boundless universe, it is extremely short and is very near us' (16).

⁹² Barnes (1986) 237. For Britons aged 120 years old, see pseudo-Plutarch *Plac.* 5.30.6.

time.⁹³ Linked with the topic of Britain and with the figure of Cicero, Caesar is used (however implausibly) in an illustration of the proximity of Republican times to modern times (c. 75 AD). This is therefore a helpful reminder that individuals' memories and the oral tradition play a part in shaping Caesar's reception, alongside (for example) Caesar's own propaganda and other surviving texts.

The next time we see Caesar is later in Aper's speech, when he argues that not all of what was written in the past was good. Some makes him laugh or fall asleep:

Concedamus sane C. Caesari, ut propter magnitudinem cogitationum et occupationes rerum minus in eloquentia effecerit, quam divinum eius ingenium postulabat.

We may, indeed, make allowance for Gaius Julius Caesar, on account of his vast schemes and many occupations, for having achieved less in eloquence than his divine genius demanded from him.

Dialogus 21.5

He states that Caesar's speech for Decius the Samnite, just like that of Brutus for King Deiotarus, is barely read; he counts both men as lucky because their poetry is not known about by many people (21.6).⁹⁴ Caesar's poems, like those of Brutus, were not well known. Augustus mysteriously prohibited the publication of Caesar's early writings (Suet. *Iul.* 56.7). The idea of selectivity and bias behind the transmission of texts is important. Just as Tacitus must select which orators and which works to use as exemplars in the *Dialogus*, which to put into the mouths of his characters, which to ignore altogether⁹⁵ – so works themselves are published or suppressed, canonised or lost.

Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* confirms that Tacitus was not the only writer of this period to look at Caesar from this angle.⁹⁶ In this twelve-book opus on the theory and practice of oratory, Quintilian explains why Caesar did not reach his full oratorical potential: Caesar did not have the time to devote himself to judicial oratory; if he had, he could have been considered a serious rival to Cicero (*Inst.* 10.1.114). Nonetheless he praises Caesar's

⁹³ See Goldberg (1999) 231.

⁹⁴ On Caesar's poetry, see Casali (2017).

⁹⁵ At 26 Masalla posits that Aper failed to single out any modern orators because he feared that he would offend many if he selected a few.

⁹⁶ Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* was written before Domitian's death in AD 96 and so before Tacitus composed his *Dialogus*. Its brief inclusion here is to illustrate that Tacitus was not alone in drawing on Caesar's rhetorical legacy. Further, both treatments suggest that his reputation as orator was to some degree locked in with the political. On the date of composition of the *Institutio Oratoria*, see Ussani (2003) 300 n117.

‘force, shrewdness and drive’ and notes that ‘he spoke with the same spirit as he waged war’ (*Inst.* 10.1.114).⁹⁷ We also find Caesar in Quintilian’s discussion on the concept of aposiopesis, the breaking off of a sentence when what is left unsaid ‘is either uncertain or at least needs to be explained at some length’ (*Inst.* 9.3.60). An example of what is not aposiopesis, Quintilian relates, is when Cicero refers in one of his letters to the ‘Lupercalia, the day when *Antonius Caesari...*’. For Quintilian, this does not count as aposiopesis because ‘the only words that could be understood are “put the diadem on his head”’ (*Inst.* 9.3.62). Just as we see in Tacitus’ *Dialogus*, then, references to Caesar in a rhetorical context cannot be entirely separated from his political legacy.⁹⁸

Later on in the *Dialogus*, the alleged decline in oratory is explained by Messalla through cultural and educational reasons. Caesar is used as an *exemplum* from the past, epitomising a good household and a good education: ‘Thus it was, as tradition says, that the mothers of the Gracchi, of Caesar, of Augustus, Cornelia, Aurelia, Atia, directed their children’s education and reared the greatest of sons’ (28.5). Here he is not grouped with Cicero, Brutus and the other great orators, but with the Gracchi and Augustus. Similarly Messalla uses Caesar again in his next speech to exemplify talented youths. In the past, gifted young men would accompany skilled orators and learn their craft first-hand in the real world. He notes that the speech that Caesar gave against Dolabella is still read today (34.7). Velleius Paterculus had called Caesar’s speech against Dolabella *nobilissima* (2.43.3) and it is also recorded by Valerius Maximus (8.9.3).⁹⁹ Tacitus, as Suetonius would (*Iul.* 55.1), suggests that Caesar’s case against Dolabella was a defining oratorical moment.¹⁰⁰ Messalla compares this exemplary practice of the past with the current, poorer custom of learning rhetoric at school, where subjects are remote from reality (35.5).

The final reference to Caesar in the *Dialogus* comes within a speech offering the changed political circumstances as an explanation for oratory’s decline. Maternus argues that the crimes of the past – ‘electoral bribery, plundered provinces, and murdered citizens’ (37.4) – fostered greater eloquence than the sort of petty crime that takes place nowadays. The prominence of the centumviral courts (which deal with civil issues relating to inheritance and property, for example) illustrates the decreased significance of oratory,

⁹⁷ Caesar’s rhetorical force (*vis*) is noted again at *Inst.* 10.2.25.

⁹⁸ Plutarch (*Caes.* 3.1-2) would also relate Caesar’s decision to prioritise acquiring political supremacy over excelling in oratory, and that Caesar had urged against a comparison between himself and Cicero, with Cicero having the time to pursue his studies. See Van der Blom (2016) 151.

⁹⁹ See Van der Blom (2017) 196.

¹⁰⁰ Van der Blom (2016) 146 notes how unusual it is that ‘Caesar’s reputation for brilliant oratory stemmed from a speech unsuccessful in convincing the jury’.

according to Maternus.¹⁰¹ Once again Caesar appears in the rollcall of great orators: ‘not a speech of Cicero, or Caesar, or Brutus, or Caelius, or Calvus, or, in short, any great orator is now read, that was delivered in that Court’ (38.2). Caesar is thus associated by the speakers of the *Dialogus* not just with great oratory, great education and a great upbringing, but with the political turmoil of the late Republic.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter we have come across Caesar the general who first landed in Britain and who conquered Gaul, and Caesar the archetypal Republican orator who symbolised a good education. Yet the character of Agricola did not acknowledge Caesar as a model; the *Germania* included Caesar’s losses in Gaul; the *Dialogus* noted Caesar’s weak poetic endeavours and also characterised Caesar’s era as one of intense political turmoil, markedly different from the peace of ‘today’ (c. AD 75). Thus Tacitus’ early works convey the breadth and complexities of writing about Caesar’s multifaceted reputation. Moreover I have observed that the presence of Caesar as author of the *commentarii* can be felt both explicitly (in the citation in the *Germania*) and implicitly (in the numerous echoes of his commentaries in the *Agricola* and *Germania*). While he was held up in the *Germania* as a supreme authority, the Caesarian narrator was also on occasion apparently corrected by the Tacitean narrator. With regard to Caesar the great Republican orator, I noted that his speech against Dolabella was still read in the 70s. In contrast, some of his literary output seems to have been considered of poor quality and so was not widely known about – fortunately, according to the character of Aper. We thus remember that Caesar’s reputation as a man of letters hinged in part on the process by which his texts were selectively suppressed or recycled.

The political implications of Caesar’s evocation have been important in this chapter. Through the voice of Calgacus, for example, we were invited to recollect Caesar as a personification of a mode of rule that enforced sycophancy and that was characterised by a lack of *libertas*. Caesar was at this point, I have argued, an independent literary or rhetorical construct (the Caesar of Sallust, the Caesar of Cicero, the Caesar of Caesar’s own commentaries, and so on) which could be called to mind and utilised, just as the Caesar of Lucan was called to mind and utilised by the post-Neronian authors discussed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, I noted the suggestion (however implausible) that

¹⁰¹ Van den Berg (2014) 191.

individuals in the 70s could have met people who actually remembered Caesar, and that he was an almost fabled figure who could even be evoked by allusions to external (possibly non-textual) anecdotes such as his greed for pearls. Tacitus' *opera minora* as analysed here thus illustrate the many mechanisms that allowed Caesar's memory to endure into Trajan's reign.

Many of the most controversial elements of Caesar available for memorialisation that I have explored throughout this thesis are not dealt with by Tacitus here (such as Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon, his aspirations to kingship, his assassination) due to the subject matter of Tacitus' works. But, by equal measure, the subject matter of the *Germania* did not demand inclusion of Caesar at all. Yet on numerous occasions Tacitus described its land and people in terms which evoked Caesar's presentation of Gaul. In addition, Caesar as an authority on Gaul is explicitly cited, as is Caesar's campaign in Gaul. I drew a comparison with Trajan's coinage regarding Parthia and its evocation of Caesar's coinage about Gaul, suggesting that Caesar's Gallic success represented a model for military excellence. Similarly, the *Agricola* did not need to engage so heavily with Caesar's commentaries or name Caesar as 'the first' when it came to Britain. (Caesar's role in the *Dialogus* was perhaps less surprising due to Caesar's place in the canon of great orators.) While we cannot assume that anything can be inferred from Tacitus' texts about the top-down promotion of messages, it is interesting to observe the regime's comparable (but later) interest in Caesar the conqueror. As noted above, inscribed on all of Trajan's 'restoration' coinage would be the commemoration of his Germanic and Dacian conquests; and of all the people who would be commemorated by his coinage, Caesar would be the person most represented. My analysis of Tacitus' *opera minora* has suggested that Caesar was a foundation for the discussion of conquest and a foundation for the discussion of rhetoric. If Trajan's *De Bello Dacico* had survived, we could have seen whether Trajan engaged with Caesar's commentaries as much as Tacitus did.

CONCLUSION

Without question Caesar was a complex figure for an author of first-century Rome to handle. My analysis has shown that this was chiefly because of the sensitive issue of his assassination and the key question of whether it was justified. Was he the founder of an imperial dynasty, cruelly cut down, or the tyrannical destroyer of the Republic? A further complication was the multifaceted nature of his reputation, including his roles as general, orator, author and god. Which aspects authors would draw out or suppress seemed (I have observed) to depend on a number of factors ranging from the topic at stake, the drift of the argument, the form of the work and the agenda of the writer.

It became apparent during the course of this investigation that there was a great deal of authorial freedom when it came to ways of writing about Caesar, meaning that there were not always patterns / correlations among writers of the same period, and literary depictions did not always correspond with top-down messages regarding Caesar. Velleius Paterculus, for example, did not (explicitly) reference Caesar's divinity but Valerius Maximus regularly did. At that time, Caesar's divinity was arguably the chief aspect of his reputation being harnessed by Tiberius. My analysis has shown that Tiberius sometimes alluded to Caesar's divinity implicitly (using the term *divi filius* and the image of the *sidus Iulium* on his coinage, for example) in a way which was not, in fact, dissimilar from Velleius' implicit evocations of Caesar's divinity (by depicting him as almost godlike in his ability). At other times, Tiberius' unequivocal harnessing of Caesar's divinity – delivering his funeral oration for Augustus from the rostra of Caesar's temple, for example – was more in line with the treatment of Valerius Maximus, who regularly incorporated Caesar's apotheosis into his collection of anecdotes. I have shown that a sense of authorial freedom went alongside a broader understanding that Caesar represented an important figure in Tiberian Rome, who anchored Tiberius to the Republican past and played a part in the legitimisation of Tiberius' rule.

An important part of this study was the consideration of time. As we moved further away from Caesar's life, did the ways in which he was written about change? It was interesting to note, for instance, that Brutus and Caesar stood side by side in the ranks of great orators of the past in Tacitus' *Dialogus*; in texts written under Tiberius, Brutus was inextricably linked to the subject of Caesar's assassination (even before it had taken place narratively). Of course, this had everything to do with the topic at stake – there was no need for Tacitus to mention the Ides of March – but it nonetheless raised the question of

whether the memory of Brutus as assassin had become dimmer by the dawn of the second century. In fact, my initial survey of Augustan material showed that even from this early stage Brutus and Caesar could be praised in the same text. Perhaps this was because Brutus' reputation was as fractured as Caesar's: while Brutus would, inevitably, be forever linked with Caesar's assassination, his ancestry, virtue and oratory could be treated quite separately.

Rather than the real memory of Caesar simply fading, along with his political authority, my investigation has found that it seemed to spike with certain events or with the evocation of certain topics. Caesar's commentaries, for example, seemed to become an unavoidable touchstone when it came to prose on military matters. Conspiracies and assassination plots also seemed to reignite the memory of the Ides of March; however, here it was important to consider the context and agenda of texts which did or did not draw comparisons. Tacitus' presentation of the Pisonian conspiracy, for instance, would suggest that this plot was modelled on the one which killed Caesar, and that in its aftermath Nero exiled someone for possessing an image of the Cassius who had slain Caesar (Tac. *Ann.* 16.7.2). But, of course, Tacitus was writing with the benefit of hindsight and, he tells us, with complete authorial freedom. Suetonius would also later compare the name and manner of the deaths of Caesar and Caligula (*Gaius* 60). Seneca's *De Ira*, in contrast – written when the memory of Caligula's assassination was still fresh – seemed to differentiate the circumstances of this assassination from those of Caesar's. He showed Caligula acting arrogantly and immorally at *De Ira* 1.20.9, his anger at Jupiter providing a model to avoid. Caesar's avoidance of anger, in contrast, provided a model to emulate. (Caesar's assassination was down to the insatiable demands of friends.)

Problematic political scenarios made certain aspects of Caesar's political reputation more meaningful. The Year of Four Emperors was particularly interesting since different components of Caesar's memory – his association with civil war, his name as a signifier of political supremacy, his assassination and its aftermath, even his possessions – were very carefully exploited or avoided during this time. The topic of clemency was also loaded with extreme political significance retrospectively. It was an important virtue for Nero as it had been for Caesar, but Seneca could not have incorporated Caesar into his treatise on the benefit of clemency, addressed to Nero: Caesar was not a useful *exemplum* given the association between his *clementia* and his assassination. It is not, therefore, a question of memories of the political Caesar (and Brutus et al.) simply diminishing as time goes on, but a question of new political contexts making a range of Caesarian elements freshly troubling.

After AD 69 a new model for the toppled tyrant became available in the form of Nero (and another, after AD 96, in the form of Domitian). It was Nero's reign that served as a point of contrast and departure during the Flavian regime. I observed that allusions to the Lucanian Caesar's civil war were frequently made in post-Neronian literature, and that Nero's death was celebrated on coinage using the same iconography that had been used to celebrate Caesar's death as the slaying of a tyrant. Politically-charged aspects of Caesar's reputation – particularly his civil war and assassination – could be deployed after the fall of the Julio-Claudian dynasty in both literary and non-literary material, but they were more allusive, identifiable by (for example) an image or an intertext.

A key finding of this investigation was the importance of intertextuality. Incorporating Caesar into a text could be supremely useful or extremely disadvantageous because of the nexus of intertextual allusions made possible by the numerous texts dealing with Caesar written before and during the timeframe under discussion. A simple word or phrase could conjure up, for example, the Caesar of Cicero, the Caesar of Sallust, even the Caesar of Caesar himself. Alluding to a previous textual representation of Caesar could be enormously valuable because it might add an important additional layer of meaning to a text. The nod to Cicero's Caesar in the speech of Calgacus in Tacitus' *Agricola*, for example, evoked a sense of servility – the result being that Calgacus' argument (for the Britons to assert their independence from tyrannical rulers) was strengthened through the abhorrent memory of sycophancy that goes hand in hand with a lack of freedom.

The trace of Caesar as a literary construct could also cause problems for an author, and raise interesting questions. During Velleius' glowing account of Cato's speech in the Senate pressing for the execution of the Catilinarian conspirators, for example, Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* is evoked but the figure of Caesar is nowhere to be seen. Further investigation revealed that when Cato is praised by Velleius, Caesar is absent; and we saw a similar trend in Valerius Maximus. In both texts Cato is never singled out to compete with Caesar and vice versa, perhaps because of the chasm between what Cato had come to symbolise and the Imperial system of government under which Velleius and Valerius lived and worked, which had changed unrecognisably from Sallust's time. After Nero's reign, the dominant intertext was Lucan's *Pharsalia*: Caesar's literary reception was largely shaped as a response to Lucan's representation of Caesar. This was principally the case within the epic genre, as we found with Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Silius Italicus' *Punica* and Statius' *Thebaid*; but we also saw the importance of Lucan on occasional poetry (Statius' *Silvae*) and historical drama (pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*).

This brings us to the next key finding: the importance of genre on the literary reception of Caesar. Numerous genres were discussed – including historiography, philosophical treatises, epic, ethnography and fictional dialogues – and each brought its own problems with regard to how to include Caesar: for example, how to slot Caesar into the arc of imperial history; how to deal with the civil wars when using Caesar as an illustration of military proficiency; how to incorporate Caesar into philosophical discourses when in some respects he posed a model to emulate and in others a model to avoid. Over seventy years after Caesar’s assassination, the case of Cremutius Cordus demonstrated what might be at stake for a historian choosing to relate this historic event (even if his treatment of Caesar’s assassins was not what had originally led to his prosecution). Seneca was particularly valuable for our consideration of genre since he was someone who wrote across a variety of genres. We discussed Seneca’s first consolation, addressed to the daughter of Cremutius Cordus (*Ad Marciam*); two of his philosophical dialogues (*De Ira* and *De Beneficiis*); Caesar’s absence in the satire on Claudius’ deification (*Apocolocyntosis*), and finally Seneca’s deployment of the epistolary genre towards the end of his career (*Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*). The latter was a genre in which Seneca professed to eschew political content in favour of personal matters but which, on closer examination, did engage heavily with political material. Caesar’s civil wars and the end of the Republic, for example, appeared to be linked to the degeneracy of the Neronian age. There is no doubt that Caesar was appealing philosophically: many episodes of his life were open to interpretation and were regularly included in declamation exercises, especially when it came to the topics of generosity and ingratitude.

Important for the discussion of Seneca’s (philosophical) use of Caesar was the topic of exemplarity, made all the more complicated by the fact that Caesar was such an ambiguous figure. We also considered exemplarity in relation to the instructive use of historiography; that is, the idea that the past ought to be held up for display in order to learn how to behave in the present. Viewing Lucan’s *Pharsalia* through a partly-historiographical lens (given that Lucan was writing about relatively recent history), and exploring the relationship of Lucan’s Caesar to *exempla*, we observed that the character of Caesar consistently failed to learn lessons from history; he was more concerned with creating new precedents. Other internal characters, in contrast, were shown recalling the past and drawing historical parallels. This was what the epic narrator was doing too; my analysis suggested that the reader was invited to consider the relevance of Caesar’s civil wars to the Neronian age. We also reflected on exemplarity in Tacitus’ *Dialogus*. There,

Caesar exemplified talent in youth and a good upbringing, and of course was exemplary in rhetoric.

During the course of this investigation, it was important to consider whether references to Caesar were made in the author's own voice or whether they were put in the mouths of characters since this could influence both what authors might want to say and how audiences might react to it. For example, my analysis of the Lucanian Caesar's direct speech suggested that this character served as a warning for Lucan's readership about the folly of ignoring controversial or problematic aspects of the past. Just as the reader was invited to see in Marius a precedent for Caesar even though the character of Caesar never did, so by the frequent narratorial references beyond the bounds of the fabula to Lucan's own time, it was possible to recognise in Lucan's Caesar a precedent for Nero. Statius' *Silvae* 2.7 included a reference to Lucan's Caesar but the reference appeared in the *oratio recta* of Calliope, an internal character whose factual reliability was not to be trusted and whose voice (so nuanced in Lucanian poetics) was nothing like that of the narrator. Similarly, exploring the voices of Tacitus' *Agricola* revealed the contrasting ways that Caesar as historical model could be viewed, depending on the agenda and possibly temporal perspective of the speaker or writer. Caesar *actor* was utilised by two different voices (that of the narrator and that of the British chiefs) and for two different purposes (to provide a model for progress and to provide a model for retreat).

Throughout this thesis I have examined the relationship between non-literary and literary memorialisations of Caesar, and between 'official' memory and literary memory. I hope to have demonstrated how complex that relationship is – as time passes, as new political issues emerge, as texts create meaning from their relation to past texts, as Caesar is reshaped to suit another genre, and as (within a single text) different styles, voices and temporalities are deployed. All this is further complicated by the multifaceted status of Caesar whose parts can be emphasised, suppressed or played off against each other in any one reception. My research has also suggested that individuals cannot be researched on their own; attention must also be given to other figures whose receptions are connected. It would have been impossible, for example, to consider Caesar's literary reception without taking into account how Brutus and Cato (for instance) were treated in those same texts.

When the memory of Caesar was so ingrained in public consciousness – through his presence in Rome's religion, calendar and landscape, for example – it is not beyond the realms of possibility that an ancient reader might have noted Caesar's absence from a text or from part of a text. Of course it is a leap to presume that a literary absence was intentional, let alone an example of an author actively denigrating the memory of Caesar,

but it is important to remember that Caesar held a unique place in Rome's cultural memory and that, as noted earlier, 'ancient authors could direct their audiences to consider shared memories and historical circumstance even while avoiding specific references to persons or events'.¹⁰² Within my discussion of Caesar's place in the physical and literary space of post-Neronian Rome, I suggested that Caesar's monumental legacy may have rendered an ancient viewer / reader more alert to literary echoes of (Lucan's) Caesar. Intertextuality is the chief vehicle for creating and nourishing literature's memory.¹⁰³ This relationship between the literary and the non-literary, and how they impact upon one another when it comes to how individual figures are received and interpreted, would be an exciting avenue for further research. Looking ahead, it would also be interesting to explore Caesar's place in literature produced after the period investigated – the chain of literary receptions from later in Trajan's reign and beyond, particularly when it comes to intertextual allusions to Caesar's own texts and the trace of Lucan's Caesar.

¹⁰² Zarrow (2007) 62.

¹⁰³ See the comments of Lachman (2008) 309, discussed in introduction.

FIGURES

Fig. 1:

Sestertius, probably 38 BC, RRC 535 / 1
(obverse) Head of Octavian, right. CAESAR DIVI F
(reverse) Head of Julius Caesar, laureate, right. DIVOS IVLIVS



Fig. 2:

Aureus, AD 14-37, RIC 1, no. 24, p95
(obverse) Head of Tiberius, laureate, right. TI CAESAR DIVI AVG F AVGVSTVS
(reverse) Head of Augustus, laureate, right; above, star. DIVOS AVGVSTI DIVI F



Fig. 3:

Dupondius, AD 18-37, RIC 1, no. 38, p97

(obverse) Head of Tiberius, laureate, left. TI CAESAR DIVI AVG F AVGVST IMP VIII

(reverse) Small bust of Tiberius (?) within laurel wreath on round shield. CLEMENTIAE; S C



Fig. 4:

Dupondius, AD 18-37, RIC 1, no. 31, p107

(obverse) Head of Tiberius, laureate, left. TI CAESAR DIVI AVG F AVGVST IMP VIII

(reverse) Small bust of Tiberius (?) within laurel wreath on round shield. MODERATIONI; S C



Fig. 5:

Plan of the Forum Romanum

http://www.tigtail.org/TIG/S_View/TVM/E/Ancient/Roman/architecture/roman_forum_map-1k.PNG

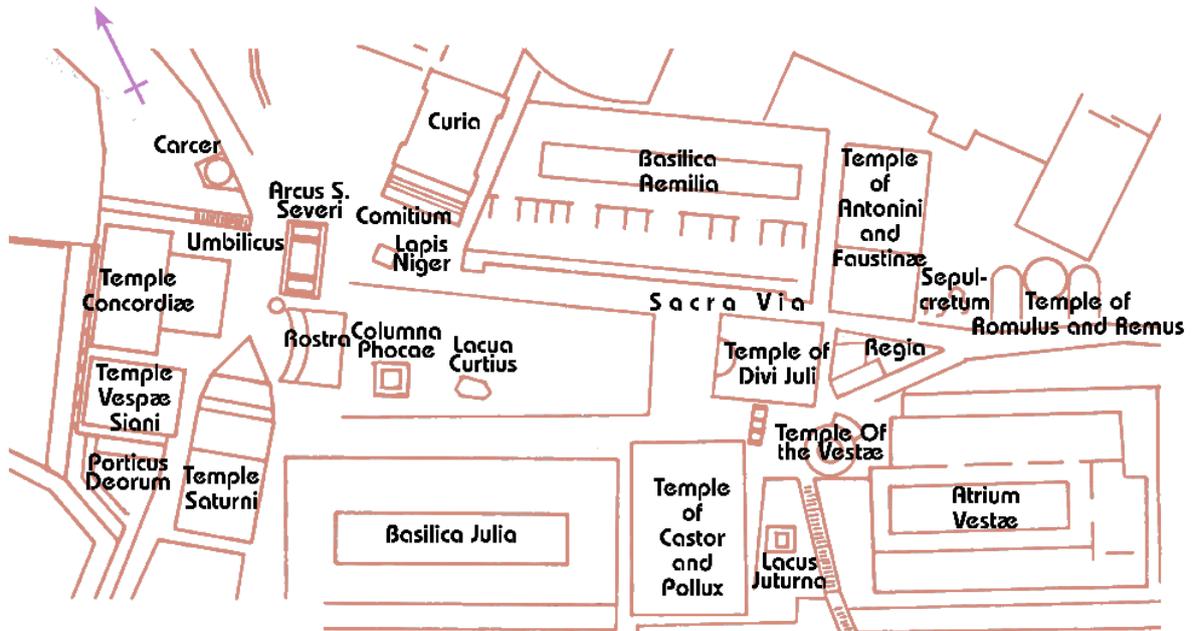


Fig. 6:

Denarius, AD 68, RIC 1, no. 25, p205

(obverse) Bust of Libertas, right. LIBERTAS P R

(reverse) Pileus between two vertical daggers. RESTITVTA



Fig. 7:

Denarius, 43-42 BC, RRC, 508 / 3

(obverse) Head of Brutus, right. BRVT IMP; L PLAET CEST

(reverse) Pileus between two vertical daggers. EID MAR



Fig. 8:

Denarius, AD 69, RIC 1, no. 10, p260

(obverse) Head of Otho, right. IMP OTHO CAESAR AVG TR P

(reverse) Securitas, holding a wreath in right hand and sceptre in left hand. SECURITAS P R



Fig. 9:

Plan of Rome's imperial fora (also showing the fora of Nerva and Trajan)

<http://intranet.arc.miami.edu/rjohn/ARC267-05/imperialfora.jpg>

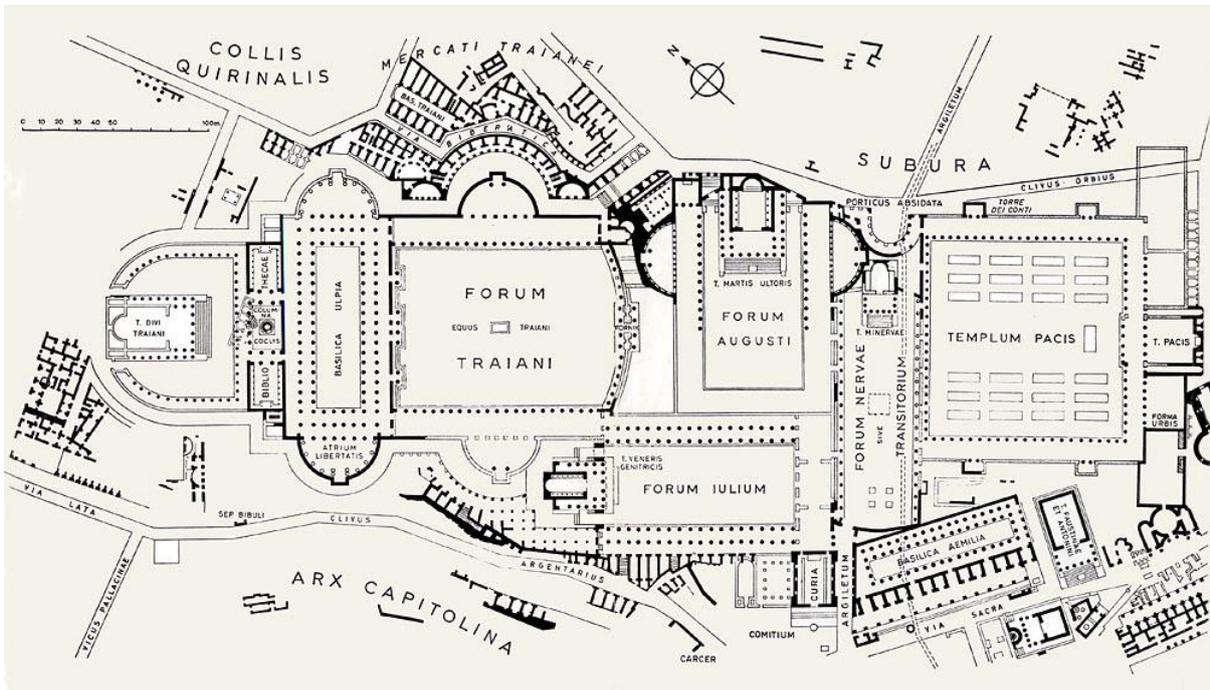


Fig. 10:

Denarius, AD 69, RIC 2.1, no. 2, p58

(obverse) Head of Vespasian, laureate, right. IMP CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG

(reverse) Judaeen captive seated beside a trophy of captured arms. IVDAEA



Fig. 11:

Denarius, 46-45 BC, RRC 468 / 1

(obverse) Head of Venus, wearing diadem, right.

(reverse) Two seated captives, trophy of captured arms. CAESAR



Fig. 12:

Head from an over-life-sized marble statue of Vespasian, found in North Africa, dating to c. AD 70-80. Registration number (British Museum) 1850, 0304.35.

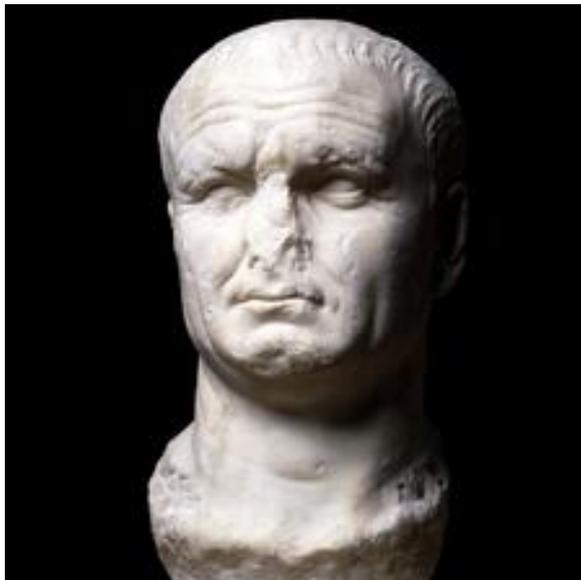


Fig. 13:

Aureus, AD 69-70, RIC 2.1, no. 1360, p157

(obverse) Head of Vespasian, laureate, right. IMP CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG

(reverse) Vespasian raising Roma from her knees. ROMA RESVRGENS



Fig. 14:

Aes, AD 69-79, from the mint of Ilium, RPC 2, no. 894

(obverse) Head of Vespasian, right.

(reverse) Heads of Titus and Domitian facing the Palladium.



Fig. 15:

Sestertius, AD 95-96, RIC 2.1, no. 797, p324

(obverse) Head of Domitian, laureate, right. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM COS XVII CENS
PER P P

(reverse) Equestrian statue of Domitian. S C



Fig. 16:

The sightline from the Forum Transitorium. The Column of Phocas (indicated by the arrow) is the suggested location of Domitian's equestrian statue.

Image by Michael Thomas (2004).

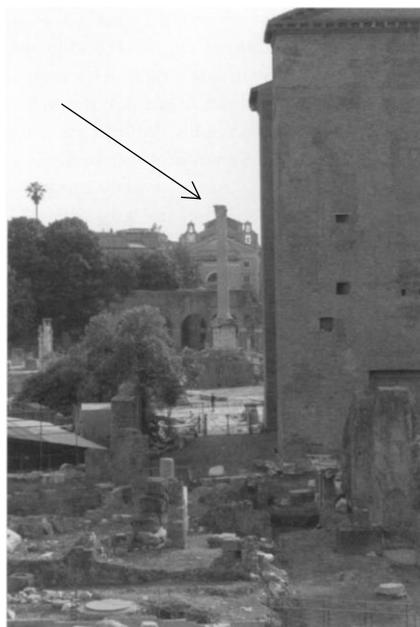


Fig. 17:

The sightline from the Forum Transitorium. The Column of Phocas (marked 1 on the plan) is the suggested location of Domitian's equestrian statue.

Image by Michael Thomas (2004).

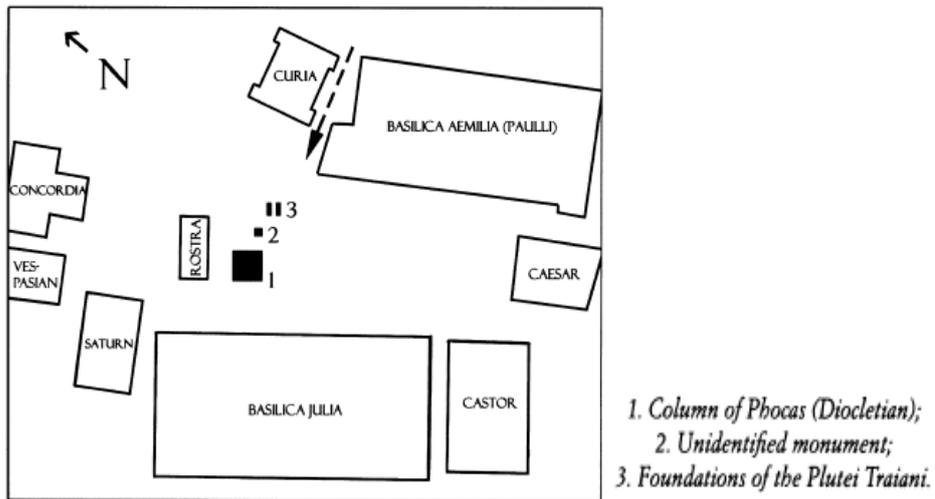


Fig. 18:

Denarius, AD 96-98, Registration number (British Museum) 1976, 0413.1.

(obverse) Head of Divus Augustus, right. DIVVS AVGVSTVS

(reverse) Bull butting. IMP NERVA CAES AVG REST



Fig. 19:

Denarius, 15-13 BC, RIC 1, no. 167a, p52
(obverse) Head of Augustus, right. AVGVSTVS DIVI F
(reverse) Bull butting. IMP X



Fig. 20:

Aureus, AD 98-99, RIC 2, no. 15, p246
(obverse) Head of Trajan, laureate, right. IMP CAES NERVA TRAIAN AVG GERM
(reverse) Germania, seated on oblong shields, holding branch. PONT MAX TR POT COS II



Fig. 21:

Aureus, AD 85, RIC 2.1, no. 325, p287

(obverse) Head of Domitian, laureate, right. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P IIII

(reverse) Germania, seated on shield. IMP VIII COS XI CENSORIA POTESTAT P P



Fig. 22:

Denarius, AD 112-114, RIC 2, no. 801, p309

(obverse) Head of Venus, right, wearing diadem.

(reverse) Aeneas carrying palladium in right hand and Anchises on left shoulder. [IMP CAES TRAIAN AV]G GER DAC P P REST; CAESAR



Fig. 23:

Denarius, 47-46 BC, RRC 458 / 1

(obverse) Head of Venus, right, wearing diadem.

(reverse) Aeneas carrying palladium in right hand and Anchises on left shoulder. CAESAR



Fig. 24:

Aureus, AD 108-117, RIC 2, no. 806, p309

(obverse) Head of Julius Caesar, right. C IULIVS CAES IMP COS III

(reverse) Venus holding a helmet and spear; a shield at her feet. IMP CAES TRAIAN AVG GER DAC P P REST.



Fig. 25:

Aureus, AD 108-117, RIC 2, no. 816, p311

(obverse) Head of Divus Iulius, bare, right. DIVVS IVLIVS

(reverse) Nemesis, winged, holding caduceus; a snake at her feet. IMP CAES TRAIAN AVG
GER DAC P P REST



Fig. 26:

Aureus, AD 108-117, RIC 2, no. 815, p311

(obverse) Head of Divus Iulius, laureate, right. DIVVS IVLIVS

(reverse) Nemesis, winged, holding caduceus; a snake at her feet. IMP CAES TRAIAN AVG
GER DAC P P REST



Fig. 27:

Aureus, AD 116, RIC 2, no. 324, p267

(obverse) Head of Trajan, laureate, draped and cuirassed bust, right. IMP CAES NER TRAIAN OPTIM AVG GER DAC PARTHICO

(reverse) P M TR P COS VI P P S P Q R, Parthia seated right, head facing, in attitude of mourning, and Parthian seated left in attitude of mourning below trophy, PARTHIA CAPTA



Fig. 28:

Denarius, AD 96, RIC 2, no. 31, p. 225

(obverse) Head of Nerva, laureate, right. IMP NERVA CAES AVG P M TR P II COS III P P

(reverse) Libertas, draped, standing left, holding pileus in right hand and sceptre in left hand. LIBERTAS PVBLICA



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