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Lucan and Claudian: *En iterum belli civilis imago!*

Reminiscences of Lucan in Claudian have long since been documented by scholars like Birt (189 2) and Bruere (CP 1964, 223-256) and are noted in contemporary commentaries (H. Levy, *Claudian's In Rufinum*, 1971, passim). Demonstration of the extent of Lucan's influence is usually limited to the citation of verbal echo meant to lend "coloration"--as Bruere calls it-- to Claudian's *In Rufinum*. The argument can be made, however, that Claudian's use of Lucan's *De bello civili* goes well beyond verbal borrowing for rhetorical effect and is, in fact, a conscious modeling of structure, theme, and language--a modeling which the poet occasionally pursues at the cost of fact and logic.

The poet's debt to Lucan is evident from the outset. Claudian's opening speculation on providence and chance certainly recalls Lucan, who both through his characters and in propria persona, remonstrates with heaven. So at B.C. 1. 642 ff. Figulus says, "aut hic errat... nulla cum lege per aevum/mundus et incerto discurrunt sidera motu,/aut, si fata movent, urbi generique paratur/humano matura lues....." and at 7.454 "mortalia nulli/sunt curata deo...," and, of course, there is Lucan's great apostrophe to the *Rector Olympi* which opens Book 2. Significantly, in passages like these Lucan sacrifices philosophical consistency for rhetorical effect. Furthermore, it is interesting that Lucan displaces the traditional ministeria deorum with the inferi, who unleash the evil that is Caesar. Claudian too, while framing his Allecto and Megaera in Vergilian and Ovidian terms, follows Lucan in attributing the evil that is Rufinus to the infernal powers.

In its construction Claudian's "epic" shows the influence of the B.C. throughout. The dynamic of Lucan's opening books describing Caesar's advance upon Rome gives a palpable sense of violent movement and rush to destruction. In similar fashion Book 1 of IR also captures much of the same dynamic and through means very similar to Lucan's. Thus, Claudian's catalog of barbarian troops serves exactly the same structural and thematic purpose as the one in B.C., and we can discern Lucanian influence on the rhetoric and shaping of speeches, as indicated by a comparison of Laelius's speech with that of the army to Stilicho at IR 2.228-246. Another favorite technique of Lucan, the collective anonymous lament, such as we see in Books 2 and 3, has a parallel in Claudian's lament of the inhabitants of Constantinople (2.86-99).

In sum, Claudian, while stylistically harking back to the mythologized epics of Vergil and Ovid, borrows generously from Lucan's epic technique in the use of apostrophe, catalog, and rhetorical structure, and while Claudian is no Lucan Redivivus, the lessons he learned from reading the *De bello civili* make him, to cite Quintilian, as "ardens et concitatus" as his predecessor from Neronian Rome. *En iterum belli civilis imago*, indeed!