PETRONIUS AND LUCAN *DE BELLO CIVILI*

THE precise nature of the relationship between Lucan's epic *De Bello Civili* and Petronius' essay on the same theme[1] has proved one of the most intractable and perplexing interpretative problems of the *Satyrica*. Some have regarded Petronius' version as a straightforward parody of Lucan's; others have adopted the almost contrary view that Petronius is offering a 'fair copy' designed to show how Lucan might have treated his material in a more appropriate (i.e. more Virgilian and traditional) manner. In recent years, although this latter position still has some advocates,[2] interpretations have tended to grow in subtlety. Heitland's 'thrown off half in rivalry, half in imitation of Lucan',[3] though itself little more than a compromise, was perhaps the forerunner of the more sophisticated and complex approaches: the most recent, and one of the most convincing, is that of Walsh, who believes that Petronius' poem is intended as a specimen of how an inferior poet, neither Petronius himself, nor Lucan, but a Eumolpus, would handle the subject; thus Petronius indulges in a technique of irony which enables him to criticize simultaneously both the excesses of Lucan's modernism, and the essential poverty of the reactionary backlash which it provoked.[4]

The development of such ingenious bivalent interpretations may be seen as a response to justifiable doubts about the quality of the poem. The *B.C.* is bad poetry, but the intensity of its badness is not as great as one would expect in pure parody. And although there are prima facie reasons for supposing that Petronius from time to time imitates Lucan, the supposed imitations are not continuous or coherent; nor do they seize on Lucan's worst or most notable lines; nor is there any apparent attempt on Petronius' part to travesty Lucan by setting his imitations in a context of diction or situation which will reveal some special absurdity in the original. In other words, Petronius seems to have used none of the devices which are the normal procedures of the parodist and whose use may fairly be said to constitute at least a part of the very definition of parody. On the other hand, the *B.C.* is scarcely good enough to rank as a serious challenge to the *Pharsalia*. One may properly have doubts about Petronius' genius as a poet; none the less, his sense of humour is not in question; nor is his penchant for ridiculing declamatory commonplaces and the excesses of scholasticism. Voltaire's observation that the *B.C.* is 'une déclamation pleine de pensées fausses' is just; and it would be contrary to the whole ethos of the *Satyrica* to take seriously such conceits as:

> dum vanos lapis invenit usus
> inferni Manes caelum sperare fatentur.[5]

This is indeed the quality of poetry which might be expectorated by Eumolpus' Muse; but Petronius himself surely has better taste.

Hence Walsh's view that the badness of the *B.C.* is the intentional product of the deployment of a bad poet as its putative author—a far more plausible theory than any hitherto expressed. The reader is not only pointed in this direction by the known character of Eumolpus and the reception given to his *Troiae Halosis*;[1] there is also the familiar technique of the narrator's comment at the conclusion of the episode.[2]

The recognition of this characteristic irony, which I believe to be crucial to the understanding of the *B.C.*, would imply that the 'fair copy' theory is misconceived, since it takes no account of the personality of Eumolpus either as human being or as a poet, nor of the narrative context in which the poem is set. However, the original difficulty recurs as soon as this view of Petronius' method is applied to the currently accepted view of his target. As long as the *B.C.* is seen as a critique of Lucan, and as a specific critique, in which the text of the *Pharsalia* provokes Petronius either to derisive imitation[3] or to the creation of a traditionalist analogue, we are still entitled to ask why the parody or comment on Lucan's vices is so diffuse as to be not merely ironical, but opaque. And if the *B.C.* remains unconvincing either as a straight challenge or as an ironical parody-cum-pastiche of Lucan, then it seems pertinent to challenge the common underlying assumption that there is some specific textual relationship between the two works.

The establishment or refutation of this hypothesis will require a re-examination of four main categories of evidence, viz:

1. The introductory chapter 118.
2. Alleged verbal parallels between the *Pharsalia* and the *B.C.*
3. Comparison of the structure of *B.C.* and *Pharsalia* I.
4. Comparison of techniques of versification.

The argument, both within and between these four categories, is essentially a cumulative one, the validity of which rests not upon the mass of raw material, but upon the accumulation of positive probabilities in favour of any given interpretation. It is vital to this kind of argument that the interpretation of each individual item should be assigned a positive probability, however small, without reference to any other item; and it is therefore relevant to discuss solely those items which have prima facie some intrinsic plausibility as references or allusions to Lucan. Other items, whose reference to Lucan, while perfectly possible, is not in isolation probable, can only be allowed to assume significance once a general thesis is well established. We may now consider the four categories in turn.

1. The Introductory Chapter 118

This preamble is clearly crucial evidence for the whole intention of the *B.C.* Presumably at least a part of its function is precisely to indicate to the reader the motivation of the poem; and it has long been held to have a peculiar and unique relevance to Lucan and the *Pharsalia*. Although many of the points made by Eumolpus are admittedly commonplaces of literary criticism which might be aired with or without special reference to Lucan,[4] there are three

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[1] *Sat.* 90. 1–6.
[2] *Sat.* 124. 2: 'cum haec Eumolpus ingenti volubilitate verborum effudisset, tandem Crotona intravimus.' Cf. similar comments at 90. 3; 93. 3; 110. 1.

[3] Cf. Walsh, *C.P.* lxiii (1968), 210: 'passing derisive judgment by parodying the vices of [Lucan's] verses'.
[4] See Stubbe, *Philol.* Suppl. xxv. 2, pp. 52 ff.

passages which have been widely regarded as strong indications of a specific target. They are:

(*a*) multos iuvenes carmen decepit[1] (sect. 1)
(*b*) ecce belli civilis ingens opus (sect. 6)
(*c*) non enim res gestae versibus comprehendendae sunt, quod longe melius historici faciunt, sed per ambages deorumque ministeria et fabulosum sententiarum tormentum praecipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat quam religiosae orationis sub testibus fides. (ibid.)

(*a*) is particularly significant because of its position. The singling out of *young* men is regarded as a clear pointer to Lucan, especially since, as Sullivan rightly observes,[2] Petronius could not have mentioned Lucan by name without disrupting the dramatic illusion of the novel. There is, however, a strong objection: the text given above, which is that relied upon by Stubbe, Sullivan, and Rose, is not in fact that of the manuscript tradition. The paradosis is somewhat complex, but there are clearly only two versions which may claim any antiquity: that of the L-group[3]

> multos o iuvenes carmen decepit

and that of the O-group

> multos inquit Eumolpus o iuvenes carmen decepit.

It is indeed most plausible that the words *inquit Eumolpus* are interpolated;[4] but there is no justification in the manuscript tradition for rejecting the *o* as well.[5] On the contrary, there are good reasons for retaining it: it performs the useful function of indicating to the reader that Eumolpus is about to pontificate, and the vocative underlines the outrageous plagiarism of Horace, *A.P.* 24 f.[6] Thus the tone is set, and the reader is reminded that Eumolpus' critical attitudes are as derivative as his practical efforts.

(*b*) Although the coincidence of subject-matter of the *B.C.* and the *Pharsalia* has received a good deal of attention from modern commentators,[7] the coincidence of title or designation has not. Lucan's work is the only known epic entitled or referred to as *Bellum Civile*; but it would be unwise to insist on the significance of these two words in Petronius when, apart from Nero's *Troica*, neither the title nor any indication of the content of a single epic poem from the forty years preceding the *Pharsalia* has survived.[8] It is perhaps worth remarking that of the late Augustan poets, the most celebrated, Pedo, Severus, and Rabirius, were all writers of historical epic; and although the testimonia relate only to the period after the formation of the 'Second Triumvirate', it may be presumed that Severus at least covered the same material as Lucan in his

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[1] For the text, see below.
[2] *T.A.P.A.* xcix (1968), 460.
[3] I use Mueller's sigla.
[4] For similar interpolations identifying the speaker after a lacuna, cf. 85. 1; 94. 1; 96. 7; 99. 1; 107. 1; 113. 11; 126. 1; 128. 1; 128. 7; 129. 1; 132. 1; 134. 1; 134. 8.
[5] *O* is omitted in δs, all of which derive from a fifteenth-century apograph of an O-

group manuscript made under the direction of Poggio: cf. Mueller[1], introd. pp. ix f.
[6] Maxima pars vatum, pater et iuvenes patre digni / decipimur specie recti . . .
[7] See below, p. 130.
[8] There is another possible exception in the Herculaneum fragment; cf. Bardon, *L.L.I.* ii. 136 ff.

comprehensive *Res Romanae*. Nero had contemplated a rival to Severus' mammoth poem before he embarked on the *Troica*,[1] and it is not unreasonable to suppose that others in the intervening period had been led by the evident popularity of Severus and Rabirius to follow suit. The republication of the work of Cremutius under Caligula and the historiography of Aufidius Bassus and Bruttedius Niger testify to continuing interest in the subject-matter in post-Augustan literature.[2]

(*c*) The principal attraction of interpreting this passage as a direct attack on Lucan is Lucan's well-known departure from Virgilian precedent in rejecting divine machinery, and the strictures which this approach earned him from later critics.[3] But although it must be admitted that Eumolpus' remarks in this instance fit Lucan well enough, there is no evidence that Lucan was alone in adopting a non-mythological technique, and it is clear that the problem of the appropriateness of divine machinery to historical epic was by no means new in the reign of Nero. Both the sentiments and the diction of Eumolpus' critique owe much to Cicero,[4] and an independent elaboration of the *topos* may be found in Lucian.[5] Indeed, the comparison between poetry as fiction and historiography as fact and the suggestion that metre is an inadequate criterion for distinguishing the genres are at least as old as Aristotle,[6] and doubtless familiar to Petronius and his readers.

There is thus not merely no need to insist on topical and personal reference in the introductory chapter:[7] there is a positive advantage to be gained from regarding the whole discourse as a humorous pastiche of trite critical attitudes. If this view is correct, then the obvious banality of the opening will provide the clue to a coherently ironic stance, which is maintained throughout ch. 118, and persists into the *Bellum Civile* itself.

2. *Alleged Verbal Parallels*

Rose cites 152 instances in which it has been claimed that a passage of the *B.C.* relies upon one or more passages of the *Pharsalia*.[8] Some of these supposed imitations must be treated with caution: many may be dismissed outright.[9] A

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[1] Cf. Bardon, op. cit., p. 137.

[2] Bardon, op. cit., pp. 160 ff.

[3] In particular that of Servius, *ad Aen*. 1. 382: 'Lucanus ideo in numero poetarum esse non meruit, quia videtur historiam composuisse, non poema.' Cf. also: Schol. *ad Lucanum* 1. 1; Isid. *Orig*. 8. 7. 10; Sullivan, *Petronius*, p. 168.

[4] *De legg*. 1. 1. 4 f.: 'sed tamen nonnulli isti, Tite, faciunt imperite, qui in isto periculo non ut a poeta, sed ut a teste veritatem exigant . . . intellego te, frater, alias in historia leges observandas putare, alias in poemate.'

[5] *Hist. conscr.* 8: ἔτι ἀγνοεῖν ἐοίκασιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, ὡς ποιητικῆς μὲν καὶ ποιημάτων ἄλλαι ὑποσχέσεις καὶ κανόνες ἴδιοι, ἱστορίας δὲ ἄλλοι. ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ ἀκρατὴς ἡ ἐλευθερία, καὶ νόμος εἷς, τὸ δόξαν τῷ ποιητῇ. ἔνθεος γὰρ καὶ κάτοχος ἐκ Μουσῶν, κἂν ἵππων ὑποπτέρων ζεύξασθαι θέλῃ, κἂν ἐφ' ὕδατος ἄλλους ἢ ἐπ' ἀνθερίκων ἄκρων θευσομένους ἀναβιβάσηται,

φθόνος οὐδείς. Cf. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsscreibung*, pp. 16 f. for further refs. and discussion.

[6] *Poetics* 9.

[7] Some of the criticisms are in any case misdirected if aimed at Lucan, in particular the warning against *vilitas verborum* (sect. 4), and the accusation of unfamiliarity with previous literature (sects. 3, 6), which is given great emphasis.

[8] *Mnemosyne*, Suppl. xvi, pp. 88 ff. Rose is rightly sceptical of some of the wilder claims.

[9] This is not to say that some of the parallels would not gain credibility if it were already proved that the *B.C.* were written in A.D. 65/6 when Petronius might have had full access to a text of Lucan. However, the chronology cannot be maintained without circularity, since the only plausible parallel outside the *B.C.* (between Sat. 108. 14, v. 1, and Phars. 1. 8) is both

sample of three consecutive items taken at random from Rose's list will suffice:

(*a*) P. 274: stabant aerati scabra rubigine dentes
     L. 6. 224 f.:   stetit imbre cruento
                 informis facies.
(*b*) P. 276: atque inter torto laceratam pectore vestem
     L. 2. 38: nunc, ait, o miserae, contundite pectora matres
(*c*) P. 286: non puer aut aevo iam desolata senectus
     L. 4. 699 ff.:   sed postquam languida segni
                cernit cuncta metu nocturnaque munia valli
                desolata fuga . . .

Petronius, in addition to his other attainments, is evidently a master of disguise.

There are, however, more substantial 'echoes' which demand discussion. I have selected 24 passages as being the most significant, and set them out below together with brief comments.[1]

(*a*) P. 1 ff.: orbem iam totum victor Romanus habebat
             qua mare, qua terrae, qua sidus currit utrumque
             nec satiatus erat.
     L. 1. 109 ff.: dividitur ferro regnum, populique potentis
             quae mare, quae terras, quae totum continet orbem
             non cepit fortuna duos.

The credibility of this single parallel is vital: the opening lines of the poem might be expected to give the reader the clearest indication of the kind of use to which Petronius intends to put his sources and models.

It may first be remarked that the *locus* itself is neither original nor recherché;[2] so no necessary connection between Lucan and Petronius may be deduced on the score of content. Secondly, it would seem that Petronius' version (but not Lucan's) owes much, both in sense and diction to Virgil, *Aen.* 7. 100 f.[3] Petronius' variation, *qua mare, qua terrae* might easily enough have been suggested by Virgil's *pedibus . . . Oceanum*; if not, then there is another precedent in *Catalepton* 9. 4.[4]

Since the opening of the *Bellum Civile* is closer verbally to Virgil than to Lucan; since Petronius' audience, regardless of the date at which he was writing, would be more familiar with the *Aeneid* than with the *Pharsalia*; and since the supposed allusion is not, as one might have hoped, to the opening of the *Pharsalia*, the reader's attention is surely directed away from Lucan, and towards Virgil. Indeed, there is little in this passage to suggest, let alone demonstrate, that Petronius had so much as read Lucan's epic.

Virgilian (*Aen.* 5. 670) and rather commonplace (cf., e.g., Ovid, *Met.* 3. 531, 641; 6. 170).

[1] Lest I be accused of selectivity, the passages comprise all of those cited by Stubbe, Sullivan, Rose, and Walsh as particularly impressive, with the exception of five items which appear only in Rose, and where the Petronian passage is five or more lines long: the similarities in these longer passages are in any case somewhat more diffuse and less immediately convincing.

[2] Cf. Sallust, *Ep. Mithridatis*, and other passages cited by Stubbe ad loc.

[3] omnia sub pedibus, qua sol utrumque
     recurrens
  aspicit Oceanum vertique regique
     videbunt.

[4] victor adest magni magnum decus ecce triumphi / victor qua terrae, quaque patent maria; cf. *Aen.* 1. 236: qui mare, qui terras omnis dicione tenerent.

(*b*) P. 6 ff.:   fatisque in tristia bella paratis
                quaerebantur opes: non vulgo nota placebant
                gaudia
    L. 2. 350 ff.:   et tempora quamquam
                sunt aliena toris, iam fato in bella vocante,
                foedera sola tamen, vanaque carentia pompa
                iura placent

No immediate relationship need be posited between *fatis paratis* and *fato vocante*: the latter might be a reminiscence of Virgil, *G.* 4. 496, but if so, it is probably unconscious—the notion is not a particularly striking one in this context. The sentiment embodied in *non nota* and *aliena* is a commonplace ingredient of the *locus de luxuria*,[1] and the connection made between *avaritia*, *luxuria*, and civil war is equally familiar.[2]

(*c*) P. 14 ff.: quaeritur in silvis auro fera, et ultimus Hammon
                Afrorum excutitur, ne desit belua dente
                ad mortes pretiosa: fames premit advena classes
    L. 1. 41 ff.: his Caesar, Perusina fames Mutinaeque labores
                accedant fatis et quas premit aspera classes
                Leucas et ardenti servilia bella sub Aetna

The parallel is tenuous in the extreme: the subject-matter of the two passages is quite different, the only points of similarity being the word *fames* (used, however, in two different senses) and the phrase *premit classes*, which in Petronius is simply a straightforward (and Virgilian) expression for overloading the ships.[3]

(*d*) P. 36 f.: ut renovent per damna famem: iam Phasidos unda
                orbata est avibus
    L. 2. 585: hinc me victorem gelidas ad Phasidos undas
    L. 2. 715: ut Pegasaea ratis, peteret cum Phasidos undas

And why not Ovid, *Met.* 7. 7, or *Tristia* 2. 439?[4]

(*e*) P. 49 f.:   quare tam perdita Roma
                ipsa sui merces erat et sine vindice praeda
    L. 2. 655 f.: ipsa, caput mundi, bellorum maxima merces,
                Roma capi facilis
    L. 2. 227 f.: exulibus Mariis bellorum maxima merces
                Roma recepta fuit

There is an undeniable similarity between the three conceits, but again, they are not original.[5] When the thought is trite, the essence of the *sententia* lies in the precise manner of its expression; and in this case, Petronius is both different from, and more striking than, Lucan. It is impossible to say whether Petronius' version is his own invention, but it is worth noting that the same form recurs

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[1] A good example by Fabianus ap. Sen. *Contr.* 2. 1. 13; cf. ibid. 21.

[2] Cf. Stubbe ad loc. The best example is possibly Sallust, *Cat.* 10 ff.

[3] *Georgics* 1. 303.

[4] contigerant rapidas limosi Phasidos undas:

is quoque, Phasiacas Argo qui duxit in undas.

[5] Cf. Val. Max. 7. 6. 4 (also about Marius) . . . quo tempore non rei p. victoria quaerebatur, sed praemium victoriae res erat publica.

in Florus, an author who is not otherwise known to have been familiar with the *Satyrica*.[1]

> (*f*) P. 51 f.: praeterea gemino deprensam gurgite plebem
>   faenoris illuvies ususque exederat aeris
>   L. 1. 181: hinc usura vorax, avidumque in tempora faenus

The two passages have in common the image of usury as a voracious monster, though again, Petronius' version is the more sophisticated. For Lucan's rather bald presentation, one need look no further for a precedent than Horace, *C*. 3. 16. 17 f.[2] The colourful imagery of Petronius, which recalls in part Cicero's description of Piso and Gabinius,[3] is more likely to distract the reader from the Lucan passage than to suggest it.

> (*g*) P. 54 f.: sed veluti tabes tacitis concepta medullis
>   intra membra furens curis latrantibus errat
>   L. 9. 741 f.: ecce subit virus tacitum, carpitque medullas
>   ignis edax, calidaque incandit viscera tabe.

Apart from the fact that Lucan is describing the effects of snakebite, whereas Petronius is still speaking of *avaritia* (which in itself would be enough to deceive all but the most attentive listener), it is clear that Petronius has in mind Virgil's famous lines on the pathology of love:

> est mollis flamma medullas
> interea, et tacitum vivit sub pectore vulnus.
> uritur infelix Dido, totaque vagatur
> urbe furens.[4]

Lucan is doubtless using the Virgil passage as well. *Curis latrantibus*, which is both the most immediately arresting phrase in Petronius' version, and the point in which he departs most radically from his model, is possibly Ennian in inspiration, but certainly not Lucanesque.[5] One can only say again, that if imitation of Lucan is intended, it is contrived in a singularly misleading way.

> (*h*) P. 65 f.: et quasi non posset tellus tot ferre sepulchra,
>   divisit cineres
>   L. 6. 816 f.: Europam, miseri, Libyamque Asiamque timete:
>   distribuit tumulos vestris fortuna triumphis.

The *sententia* is well paralleled by Stubbe ad loc. It is a pity that the most significant of the parallels, the *Epitaphia Pompeiorum* attributed to Seneca, are of dubious authorship and date: however, the germ of both versions is already present in Velleius Paterculus: *ut cui modo ad victoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sepulturam*.[6] And it is interesting to note that the silliest part of Petronius' conceit (*quasi ... sepulchra*) features in Velleius' version, but is absent altogether from Lucan's.[7]

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[1] Florus 2. 13. 5: misera res publica in exitium sui merces erat.

[2] crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam / maiorumque fames.

[3] *Pis.* 41: vos geminae voragines scopulique rei publicae.

[4] *Aen.* 4. 66 ff.

[5] *Ann.* 584: ultimately from *Od.* 20. 13, and possibly via a more recent intermediary, since Statius, *Theb.* 2. 388 is very close in diction.

[6] Vell. Pat. 2. 53. 3.

[7] Compare also Seneca, *Oedipus* 68.

(*i*) P. 96 ff.: iam pridem nullo perfundimus ora cruore
                       nec mea Tisiphone sitientes perluit artus,
                       ex quo Sullanus bibit ensis . . .
      L. 1. 330 ff.: sic et Sullanum solito tibi lambere ferrum
                       durat, Magne, sitis. nullus semel ore receptus
                       pollutas patitur sanguis mansuescere fauces.

These are two versions of the hackneyed rhetorical motif of *civilis sanguinis sitis*.[1] The striking image in Lucan's version is that of Pompey, Dracula-like, licking the blood from his sword. Petronius does not give us this picture. Conversely, Petronius' *Sullanus bibit ensis* recalls not so much the Lucan passage, as the Virgilian metaphor of the weapon sucking the victim's blood.[2] The temptation to see an immediate relationship perhaps lies in the equation: *Sullanum ferrum = Sullanus ensis*; but this again is a commonplace.[3]

(*j*) P. 111: cerno equidem gemina iam stratos morte Philippos
      L. 1. 669 f.:   video Pangaea nivosis
                 cana iugis latosque Haemi sub rupe Philippos
      L. 1. 694: vidi iam, Phoebe, Philippos

It is sufficient here to cite Virgil, *G*. 1. 489 ff.:

> ergo inter sese paribus concurrere telis
> Romanas acies iterum videre Philippi;
> nec fuit indignum superis, bis sanguine nostro
> Emathiam et latos Haemi pinguescere campos.

The second Lucan passage is hardly of consequence. Both of the others derive from Virgil, but in different ways: Petronius' emphasis is on the notion of *gemina mors*, whereas Lucan has simply borrowed the phrase *latos Haemi*. Both, it is true, share the visual presentation made explicit in *cerno* and *video*; but both are closer to Virgil in thought and diction than to each other.

(*k*) P. 112: iam fragor armorum trepidantes personat aures
      L. 1. 569 f.: tum fragor armorum, magnaeque per avia voces
                   auditae

P. 112 has been deleted by Mueller, and is clearly either an outright interpolation, or at least misplaced. Even if it is Petronian, the mere coincidence of the phrase *fragor armorum* should cause little excitement.

(*l*) P. 117 ff.:   vix navita Porthmeus
             sufficiet simulacra virum traducere cumba:
             classe opus est.
      L. 3. 16 f.: praeparat innumeras puppes Acherontis adusti
                portitor.

The inspiration of this truly diabolical witticism may perhaps be found in *Aeneid* 6. 413;[4] Lucan and Petronius have a more direct precedent for their crime in *Consolatio ad Liviam* 375 f.:

> omnes expectat avarus
> portitor, et turbae vix satis una ratis.

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[1] Cf. for example Latro ap. Sen. *Suas*. 6. 3.   acta cruorem.
[2] *Aen*. 2. 600: inimicus et hauserit ensis;   [3] Cf. Otto, *Sprichwörter*, s.v. *Sullanus*.
11. 804: (hasta) virgineumque alte bibit   [4] gemuit sub pondere cumba.

which has the additional demerit of an unpleasant jingle at the end. Petronius follows the *Consolatio* closely: Lucan is bolder, but no more forgivable.

(*m*) P. 126 f.: continuo clades hominum venturaque damna
               auspiciis patuere deum:
    L. 2. 1 ff.: iamque irae patuere deum, manifestaque belli
               signa dedit mundus, legesque et foedera rerum
               praescia monstrifero vertit natura tumultu,
               indixitque nefas:

The content is commonplace, and the only similarity of any conceivable significance is the recurrent phrase *patuere deum*. But it is hardly credible that Petronius, whether engaged in parody, imitation, or mere allusion, should have seized on this colourless expression as a signpost when, e.g., *monstrifero tumultu* would have evoked Lucan much more readily and effectively.

(*n*) P. 128 f.:   ore cruento
             deformis Titan vultum caligine texit
    L. 1. 540 f.: ipse caput medio Titan cum ferret Olympo
               condidit ardentis atra caligine currus.

The source, both of content and diction, would appear to be the list of portents ominous of war in Virgil, *G.* 1. 463 ff.[1] Petronius' *ore cruento | deformis*, which corresponds to nothing in Lucan, is very reminiscent of Virgil's *horridus ore cruento*.[2]

(*o*) P. 141 f.:   exuit omnes
            quippe moras Caesar
    L. 1. 204 f.: inde moras solvit belli, tumidumque per amnem
               signa tulit propera

Since Caesar was noted for his speed of movement, there is nothing significant which is common to the two passages. It is worth noting that the phrase *belli mora* enjoyed a certain notoriety, thanks to Latro's *sententia*: *erimus certe belli mora*,[3] which was much imitated.[4]

(*p*) P. 152 ff.: haec ubi calcavit Caesar iuga milite laeto
               optavitque locum, summo de vertice montis
               Hesperiae campos late prospexit
    L. 3. 88: excelsa de rupe procul iam conspicit urbem.

The picture of generals viewing the terrain from a vantage point is conventional in historiography and epic, and doubtless too in real life. If one is to insist on literary antecedents, the two most plausible candidates would seem to be *Aen.* 11. 904 ff. (for Petronius) and *Aen.* 1. 419 f. (for Lucan). The line-ending *vertice montis* is likewise Virgilian.[5]

(*q*) P. 160:   dum Rhenum sanguine tingo
    L. 7. 473: primaque Thessaliam Romano sanguine tinxit.

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[1] Cf. especially l. 467: cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine texit. *Titan* is an almost mechanical variant of *Sol* (much favoured by Ovid) just as *vultum* is of *caput*. Again Petronius seems closer to Virgil than to Lucan.

[2] *Aen.* 1. 296 (of Furor).

[3] Sen. *Suas.* 2. 19.

[4] By Arbronius Silo, ap. Sen. ibid.; by Seneca, *Phoen.* 458; and again by Lucan, 1. 100. The Elder Seneca's comments might have prompted some reaction from Petronius if he had the Lucan before him.

[5] *Aen.* 5. 35; cf. *Ciris* 307.

The expression *sanguine tingere* is not itself original,[1] and its position in the line is one which would immediately commend itself to any tiro in the art of versification. Ovid's line:

<div align="center">decolor ipse suo sanguine Rhenus erit[2]</div>

is at least as close a parallel as the line of Lucan cited. Furthermore, this particular line of Lucan is supposed by commentators to have provoked two separate imitations or parodies from Petronius in the *B.C.*[3] It is hard to see why.

> (*r*) P. 174 f.: iudice fortuna cadat alea: sumite bellum
>   et temptate manus. certe mea causa peracta est.
>   L. 1. 226 f.: te, Fortuna, sequor: procul hinc iam foedera sunto.
>   credidimus satis his: utendum est iudice bello.

There is little encouragement in this instance to seek either a direct relationship, or even a common source. Both passages are compounded of conventional phrases about war and fortune, for which it should be enough to refer the reader to the *Thesaurus*.[4]

> (*s*) P. 215 f.:   incendia totaque bella
>   ante oculos volitant.
>   L. 7. 179 f.: defunctosque patres et cunctas sanguinis umbras
>   ante oculos volitare suos

This parallel has gained undeserved acclaim as definitive evidence:[5] such a status should imply that the phrase *ante oculos volitare* is either characteristic of, or unique to Lucan. It is neither characteristic, since it occurs only in this passage; nor is it unique, since it is used by Cicero in precisely the same sense.[6]

> (*t*) P. 224 f.:   debellatique Quirites
>   rumoris sonitu maerentia tecta relinquunt
>   L. 5. 30 f.:   maerentia tecta
>   Caesar habet.

This seems to me to be the most plausible of all the supposed imitations and allusions. The phrase *maerentia tecta* appears to be otherwise unattested, and it is sufficiently arresting to draw attention to the Lucan passage. We may thus accept an intrinsic likelihood of some relationship between the two passages; but this relationship should not be allowed to bear an inordinate weight, since the weak form of the metaphor: *maesta* (*domus, tecta, urbs*, etc.) is common enough,[7] and a similar, though admittedly more easily transferrable use of *maerens* occurs in the *Consolatio ad Liviam*.[8]

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[1] Virgil, *G*. 3. 492; Cic. *N.D.* 3. 70; and cf. the frequent use in Greek of βάπτειν in contexts of slaughter.

[2] *Tristia*, 4. 2. 42.

[3] See below, on *B.C.* 290 ff.

[4] *arbitrium belli, ius belli, alea belli, bellum sumere, fortuna belli, fortunam sequi, fortunae ius, fortunae arbitrium, fortunae iudicium* are all frequent, mainly in historiography.

[5] Cited as such by Stubbe, Rose, and Walsh.

[6] *De Lege Agraria*, 2. 59; and cf. Ennius ap. Cic. *Tusc.* 1. 34; Virgil, *G*. 3. 9.

[7] e.g. Cic. *Sest.* 131; Virg. *Aen.* 11. 147; Ovid, *Fasti*, 3. 641; *Cons. ad Liviam* 179.

[8] *Cons.* 177: consul init fractis maerentem fascibus urbem.

(*u*) P. 262 f.:   atque flagranti
          stipite dextra minax terris incendia portat.
    L. 1. 572 ff.:   ingens urbem cingebat Erinys,
          excutiens pronam flagranti vertice pinum
          stridentisque comas.

Both passages are clearly Virgilian in inspiration, and their source is adequate
to explain their similarities: the details derive wholly from the description of
Allecto in *Aen.* 7. 324 ff.[1]

(*v*) P. 264 f.: sentit terra deos mutataque sidera pondus
          quaesivere suum;
    L. 1. 45 f.:   te, cum statione peracta
          astra petes serus, praeclari regia caeli
          excipiet gaudente polo.

The Petronian passage is modelled closely on Virgil, *Ecl.* 4. 48 ff.;[2] it is hardly
surprising that Lucan should echo the same passage of Virgil (albeit more
distantly) in referring to the Neronian mythology of the Golden Age.

(*w*) P. 277: sanguineam tremula quatiebat lampada dextra
    L. 7. 568: sanguineum veluti quatiens Bellona flagellum
    L. 3. 14 f.:   vidi ipsa tenentis
          Eumenidas quaterent quas vestris lampadas armis.

Lucan 7. 568 imitates *Aeneid* 8. 703. The more striking collocation *sanguineam
lampada* in Petronius may be a reminiscence of Ovid's description of Tisiphone
in *Met.* 4. 480 f.:
          Tisiphone madefactam sanguine sumit
      importuna facem.

The appearance of *quatio* in all three passages is scarcely remarkable.

(*x*) P. 290 ff.: non frangis portas, non muris oppida solvis
          thesaurosque rapis? nescis tu, Magne, tueri
          Romanas arces? Epidamni moenia quaere
          Thessalicosque sinus humano sanguine tinge.
    L. 10. 545 f.: ad campos, Epidamne, tuos, ubi solus apertis
          obsedit muris calcantem moenia Magnum
    L. 7. 473: primaque Thessaliam Romano sanguine tinxit.

This double parallel has been treated in detail by Rose,[3] who points to a num-
ber of similarities: the names *Magnus, Thessalia, Epidamnus*; the nouns *muri* and
moenia; and the line ending *-ano sanguine tinxit* (*tinge*). He also notes that Lucan
10. 546 is the final line of the *Pharsalia* as we have it, and that the Petronian
passage is the ending of the *B.C.*, providing that *B.C.* 294 is either ignored or
deleted. It is thoroughly regrettable that Petronius should have spoiled a good
argument by adding at least one line (*B.C.* 293) which seemingly alludes not to
Lucan's finale, but back to book seven. Of the other coincidences, *sanguine*
with a part of *tingo* occurs some seventeen times in Ovid, and four times in final

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  [1] Cf. in particular l. 397; also 9. 72;   nutantem pondere mundum.
Culex 216 ff.   [3] *C.Q.* xii (1962), 168.
  [2] Especially l. 50: adspice convexo

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position; and the use of the same proper names may reasonably be attributed to the exigencies of the subject-matter. *Epidamnus* is simply the poetic version of the rather intractable *Dyrrachium*, to which Pompeius, whose cognomen was *Magnus*, did retreat at the outset of the war. And the final mention of Thessaly is natural enough, since the battle of Pharsalus is the obvious climax of any epic on this theme. It must also be said that acceptance of deliberate parallelism in the endings of the two poems restricts the possible time of writing to within a few months;[1] and this, apart from being almost too good to be true, would imply a very rapid access to and assimilation of the *Pharsalia* by Petronius' circle.[2]

   The outcome of the above discussion would seem to be that in only two of the twenty-four passages[3] is the parallel in Lucan the closest available. These two correspondences are clearly insufficient evidence upon which to construct an argument of any cogency whatever. Any attempt to explain away these two is admittedly speculative, but it would hardly be surprising if both Petronius and Lucan had borrowed a little from the quantities of post-Virgilian historical epic which are no longer extant.[4] What is certainly significant is that in no less than one third of the passages examined, among them the most striking, a Virgilian source can be found which is in all cases closer to Petronius' version than Petronius' is to Lucan's. This can hardly be accidental; and it means either that Petronius' method of alluding to Lucan is too devious by half, or that he is not intending in these passages to evoke Lucan at all. Furthermore, it cannot be claimed that the *Pharsalia* is more economical as a source than the Virgilian *corpus*, since, in accordance with the precepts of *Sat.* 118, Virgil is pressed into service both in details of diction, and in general treatment far more than Lucan, even on the more optimistic assessments.

3. *The Structure of the B.C. as compared with Pharsalia Book I*

The comparative structure of the two poems is clearly set out by Rose,[5] and there is no need to reproduce his schema here. If a structural relationship is to be seen as significant, then the similarities and discrepancies should be shown to be systematic,[6] and not merely the accidental outcome of some general similarity or difference of approach. Moreover, structure must be treated not merely as a matter of content, but also, and more importantly, of the way in which that content is proportioned, ordered, and given emphasis. However, as Rose's analysis itself shows, the elements of proportion and emphasis, and to an even greater degree that of order, appear in the *B.C.* to be quite random with respect to *Pharsalia* 1, in the sense that they are not in any way predetermined by their counterparts in that work. Thus in some cases, similar material is

[1] Cf. Rose, ibid.

[2] The difficulty becomes more crucial in view of the unfinished and unpublished state of the later books; and if the *Satyrica* was originally in 24 books, the *B.C.* appearing in Book 16 or 17, then Petronius must have worked at a speed which is belied by his attention to detail.

[3] (*h*) and (*t*); (*c*), (*d*), (*o*), (*r*), (*s*), and (*x*) merely reproduce diction or idiom which is well attested in a variety of previous authors;

(*b*), (*e*), (*f*), and (*m*) are reworkings of commonplace sentiments of the period; (*k*) is of dubious authenticity; and (*q*) is as close to Ovid as to Lucan; the Virgilian passages are (*a*), (*g*), (*i*), (*j*), (*n*), (*p*), (*u*), (*v*), (*w*).

[4] For which see Bardon, *L.L.I.* ii. 61 ff.; 135 ff.

[5] *Mnemos.* Suppl. xvi, app. B, p. 87.

[6] Rose, ibid. (comments on Moessler).

treated at approximately the same length by Petronius and Lucan;[1] in others, the length, and the consequent emphasis, is radically different.[2] Again, in some instances material appears in the same order in Petronius and Lucan;[3] in others (the majority) the ordering is different, but not systematically so.[4]

Rose's view is that the structure of the *B.C.* does indeed exhibit a systematic though not strict, relationship to *Pharsalia* 1, in that Petronius adheres to Lucan's structure except where this method would conflict with his own canons as expressed in ch. 118. But this hypothesis is both question-begging, and unnecessarily complex. It is sufficient to observe that the structure of the *B.C.* is indeed determined by the theory of ch. 118, by the character of Eumolpus, and perhaps by Petronius' interest in the anatomy of civil war and its connection with moral degeneracy.[5] The points at which the structure of the two poems converges are points at which both poets are constrained by shared conventions of epic (portents and prodigies; Caesar's speech; the description of panic at Rome) and by the hard core of historical fact, which even Eumolpus is not free to pervert beyond certain limits. The points of divergence are quite adequately explained as a response to Eumolpus' general literary theory: the exaggerated use of supernatural machinery; the refusal to retail slavishly and soberly the historical facts.[6] The comparison between the structure of the two poems may remain interesting, even illuminating: but the hypothesis that the *B.C.* is structurally based on *Pharsalia* 1 is as redundant as the Creator was to Laplace.

4. *Techniques of Versification*

It has been thoroughly demonstrated by Stubbe[7] that in general Petronius' versification is far more closely akin to that of Virgil than to that of Lucan. One point alone requires discussion, viz. the use of a strong syntactic break at the strong caesura in the third or fourth foot of the hexameter. This is the sole aspect of Petronius' technique in which he appears more Lucanesque than Virgilian.

It must be said at one that this vice is by no means as pervasive in Petronius as it is in Lucan: there is only one short passage of the *B.C.* in which this rhythmic pattern is so over-used as to be potentially offensive.[8] And even though the versification of this passage may seem to us reminiscent of Lucan, there is little reason to suppose that the evocation is deliberate. The passage is special in another important way: it is a highly emotive speech. Content and metre cannot be divorced and treated in isolation, and it is clear that this particular device was thought specially suited to episodes of high emotion, and above all to speeches. Naturally enough, since it gives a realistic impression of the broken rhythms induced by passion in ordinary language, as opposed to the

[1] e.g. the Sullan War (P. 96–9; L. 330–2); the Panic (P. 209–44; L. 466–522).

[2] e.g. the crossing of the Alps (P. 177–208; L. 183); the Triumvirate (P. 61–6; L. 98–157).

[3] e.g. the crossing of the Alps precedes Caesar's speech, which in turn precedes the panic at Rome.

[4] In P., the *locus de luxuria* precedes the portents, which are divided and separated by 185 lines; and the prophecy of war precedes the crossing of the Alps.

[5] Hence the structural importance of the opening invective against luxury, and the assault on sexual *mores* in ll. 20 ff.

[6] P. avoids all mention of the Rubicon, and makes Caesar cast the die before crossing the Alps.

[7] Op. cit., pp. 85 ff.

[8] For Lucan's practice, cf. Heitland, op. cit., pp. xciv f. The Petronian passage is *B.C.* 164–75.

smoother and lower-keyed flow of the narrative.[1] Secondly, the abuse of the device is not confined to Lucan: Statius is an even worse offender, and there is an obvious connection between this metrical shortcoming and the exigencies of expressing, within the hexameter framework, the concise declamatory *sententiae* which the audience would expect. Statius and Lucan are unlikely to be the only culprits, and it may be doubted on both counts whether the finger is pointed as unerringly at Lucan as has been suggested.[2]

The above discussion is primarily intended to support a negative thesis: that the *Bellum Civile* is not directly dependent upon any part of Lucan's epic in style, diction, structure, or content. I hope to have shown that the common basic assumption that Petronius is attempting through the mouth of Eumolpus to make some specific criticisms of the *Pharsalia* is ill founded as an interpretation both of ch. 118, and of the text of the *B.C.* itself. It remains possible that Petronius was aware in a general way of some of the characteristics of Lucan's work, but this hypothesis becomes far less attractive once the specific parallels have been seen to break down under closer scrutiny. And not only is the hypothesis less attractive: it is also less illuminating. At the most, it would explain the choice of subject, and Petronius' penchant for theology; but it is not needed to explain these features, and it is quite irrelevant to the detailed working out of the *B.C.* It is therefore at least reasonable to proceed on the assumption that the *Pharsalia* is not simply largely irrelevant to the composition of the *Bellum Civile*, but entirely so, and to ask, without the presupposition of a direct relationship and its concomitant chronological implications, what the purpose of the *B.C.* might be.

Once the specific relationship with Lucan is set aside, the major interpretative problem of the *B.C.* simply evaporates. The question of how Petronius contrives to mediate a critique of Lucan through a poor and non-Lucanesque poem put into the mouth of a disreputable poetaster is no longer pertinent; and provided that the poem itself and its mouthpiece are both taken account of, the way is open to interpreting the work very much more at face value. It is what it appears to be, and what the reader has been led to expect from Eumolpus' character, competence, and critical attitudes. It is a largely Virgilian pastiche on a theme which had exercised a number of post-Virgilian epic poets. Without larger samples of their writing, it is impossible to say whether the pastiche also involves parody of individual writers, or is merely directed at the genre as a whole.[3] In either case, the procedure is one which is typical of Petronius' technique of ironical humour: there is the characteristic tension between the character of the mouthpiece, and the apparent solemnity of his utterances. It is perhaps instructive to compare Eumolpus in this respect with the other literary critic, Agamemnon. Both are professed admirers of the *bona mens*;[4] both undertake the edification of Encolpius; both offer pastiche among their accomplishments; both are extremely conservative in their attitudes;

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[1] Ovid, *Met.* 7. 14 ff. is possibly the *locus classicus*; cf. also *Met.* 1. 653 ff.; *Culex* 224 ff.

[2] e.g. by Walsh, *The Roman Novel*, p. 49.

[3] Collignon's objection that a whole genre is too wide a target for effective parody is refuted by numerous successful essays from Lucian's *Vera Historia* to the *Dunciad*, *Gulliver's Travels*, or *Cold Comfort Farm*. A similar problem arises in the case of the *Troiae Halosis*: the parody is clearly of tragic rhesis, but the faults of style, even to the details of versification, are common to the *Octavia* and *Herc. Oet.*, as well as Seneca.

[4] *Sat.* 3. 1; 84. 4.

both are incompetent hypocrites, who fail to practise what they preach so badly. One does not expect from them a serious critique of literature or education, any more than one would expect a profound religious experience at the hands of Quartilla, or a true model of the high Roman fashion in Trimalchio's *triclinium*. Eumolpus functions as a purveyor of literary taste in much the same manner as Trimalchio supplies the aesthetic canons of the *bon viveur*.[1] Both are portraits of pretentiousness in their respective vocations, and the reader can be equally delighted (or disgusted) with the grotesqueries which issue from the desire of the buffoon to imitate the *maestro*, be he a Lucullus or a Virgil.[2]

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