

uses at *Ben.* 6.15.7 *agentem ex imo rimas insulam*.³ But *agitāt* is now a puzzle. An indicative is certainly necessary; but this one has to be fished up from the depths of the stemma. Clearly the archetype had *agitet*. Secondly, although *rimas agitare* might be a legitimate variation on *rimas agere* (it does not in fact seem to occur elsewhere), why should Seneca have preferred it? It cannot be a dislike for *rimas agere* (see above); and a frequentative verb does not seem to improve the sense. As to rhythm, writing *agitāt* here costs him the double cretic clausula *ipse rimas agit*. Perhaps we should give Z even more credit: *si orbis ipse rimas agit, et hoc . . .*

Munich

NIGEL HOLMES

nigel.holmes@thesaurus.badw.de

³ The *insula* in this case is a block of flats; but the phrase occurs several times of cracks in the earth, Ov. *Met.* 2.211 *tellus fissā . . . agit rimas* (from heat, as at Priap. 63.2 *agente terra per caniculam rimas*) and Lucan 6.725–9 *Erichtho . . . per . . . cavas terras, quas egit carmine, rimas manibus illatrat*. The subject of *egit* in the last example is not certain; but it seems more likely that it is the earth (see e.g. Oudendorp and Housman *ad loc.*), than that it is Erichtho (so *TLL* I.1376, 67–8, the only example of a person causing cracks in something else that it has to offer).

THE STAR SIGNS AT BRUNDISIUM: ASTRAL SYMBOLISM IN LUCAN 2.691–2¹

The narrator of the *Bellum Civile* sets the season of Pompey's escape from Brundisium by the rising of two zodiacal signs:

Iam coeperat ultima Virgo
Phoebum laturas ortu praecedere Chelas,
cum tacitas solvere rates. (2.691–3)

The position of the sun in Chelae (now known as Libra) marks the date as the beginning of autumn: the sun enters the sign on September 19. Some of Lucan's commentators are suspicious of this chronology, knowing as they do from other sources the *true* historical date of the event: 17 March 49 B.C. in the pre-Julian calendar. On that day the sun would have been in Pisces, a few days away from the spring equinox. The pre-Julian calendar in 49 B.C., however, was almost two months out of step with the solar year. But the conversion of the date to the astronomical calendar does not resolve the inconsistency: 17 March 49 B.C. is equivalent to 26 January. The sun is then in Aquarius, the season mid-winter. These dates clearly do not match the season as indicated by the signs that rise in the poem.² The commentators have duly identified this chronological inconsistency as a mistake on the part of the poet.

¹ I would like to thank Katharina Volk, Gareth Williams, and the anonymous reader for their commentaries and suggestions that have much improved this article.

² P. Grimal ('L'heure et le jour où Pompée s'embarqua', *De Virgile à Jacob Balde: Hommage à Mme Andrée Thill* [Mulhouse, 1987], 125–7) offers an alternative interpretation of the episode's astronomical data in an attempt to bring them in line with the historical date and with Caesar's own account that the departure occurred *sub noctem* (*BCiv.* 1.28, 3). Grimal, observing—correctly, in my opinion—that Lucan 'ne s'est pas soucié de transposer les dates pré-juliennes en dates réelles' (125), notes that Virgo rises at dusk and Libra sets at sunrise on 17 March. He interprets *Phoebum laturas* as meaning that Libra is setting "'élève" (*effert*) le soleil dans l'Orient' (127). However, two passages in the *Bellum Civile* run counter to his interpretation: in 4.56–7 (*Titana recepit l . . . portitor Helles*) and 4.526–7 (*Sol Ledaëa tenebat l sidera*), the sun directly occupies or passes into the sign to mark the season.

The sun rises once again in Libra when Pompey arrives in Egypt (8.467–9), but there the position of the sun closely matches the pre-Julian date of the event: 28 September. The narrator specifies that the time is the autumn equinox. The Brundisium episode, by contrast, is strikingly divergent.³ The poet is not unaware of the historical dates of the events he relates, nor is he confused as to which signs of the zodiac represent which season. In the other instances where he refers to the zodiacal position of the sun in order to establish the season of certain events in the poem, he makes no mistakes: during the episode of Vulteius' raft, the sun in Gemini and its proximity to Cancer (4.525–8) announce the short nights of the summer solstice; and in the beginning of the Ilerdan flood, the sun in Aries (4.56–61) correctly marks the spring equinox. Libra is also unmistakably linked to the autumn equinox in the latter episode as well as in another: in book 10, the priest Acoreus reveals to Caesar that the flood of the Nile does not recede before the equinox that takes place *Libra sub iudice* (226–7), or rather, as he goes on to explain, *donec in autumnum declinet Phoebus* (235–6).⁴ The poet therefore knows perfectly well that Libra marks the beginning of autumn. Indeed, as Hübner reminds us, the connection between Libra and the autumn equinox was a well-established trope in the literature of the time.⁵

The narrative of the poem provides further evidence to suggest a deliberate chronological alteration on Lucan's part in the Brundisium episode. Housman noted that the season as marked by the rising star signs at Brundisium contradicts the temporal sequence of the previous events in the story.⁶ Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon, the episode that begins the poem's civil war, occurs when the river is swollen because *tum vires praebebat hiemps* (1.217); the reference to the melting of the Alpine snows by the blasts of the Eurus in the next line (*atque auxerat undas / . . . / madidis Euri resolutae flatibus Alpes*: 1.217–19) even hints that it was late winter, since a change of winds to the Eurus signals the arrival of spring later in the poem (4.56–61). In the next book, Pompey asks his son to travel to the East to gather forces *dum paci dat tempus hiemps* (2.648). A few lines later, the early autumnal constellations appear in the sky on the day of his escape. Even if we take Pompey's words to refer to the coming winter *after* Caesar's late winter crossing and a late summer siege of Brundisium (a somewhat strained solution), we have to postulate a large stretch in the narrative timetable of events that historically occurred only two months apart (between 10 January, the date of the crossing, and 17 March, that of the escape, in the pre-Julian calendar). But why this alteration, and why, of all signs, do Virgo and Libra rise on the day of the escape?

Lucan sometimes employs such traditional temporal markers in epic as constellations and seasons for rhetorical effect. In the episode of Vulteius' raft, for example, the narrator describes in detail the star signs and short nights of the summer solstice; the temporal markers contribute to the pathos of the soldiers' fear and resolve in facing their imminent day of doom (4.521–8). The role the markers play in this episode had been specified earlier in Vulteius' exhortation to his men: *Libera non ultra parva quam nocte iuventus, / consulite extremis angusto in tempore rebus* (4.476–7). In the Rubicon episode, by shifting the crossing to late winter and describing the heavy rains and seasonal thaw, the narrator hyperbolizes the river into a formidable physical

³ J. Beaujeu, 'L'astronomie de Lucain', *L'astronomie dans l'antiquité classique* (Paris, 1979), 216–17.

⁴ The autumn equinox is also mentioned in tandem with the spring equinox at the beginning of the Ilerdan flood, 4.56–61.

⁵ W. Hübner, 'Das Sternbild der Waage bei den römischen Dichtern', *A&A* 23 (1977), 50–63.

⁶ A. E. Housman, *M. Annaei Lucani: Belli Civilis Libri Decem* (Oxford, 1926), ad loc.

barrier for Caesar to overcome (1.217–19). Lucan makes clear the significance of the above-mentioned temporal markers to the action being narrated; but when he distorts the signs that preside over Pompey's departure, he does not make apparent the significance of these markers. Faced with the poet's clear and deliberate departure from the historical sources and from the chronology of the poem, we suspect an intended effect; but what is it?

Let us turn at this point to another stellar 'slip' in the poem, one that has drawn the attention of philologists and astronomers alike. In book 1, Figulus bases his prophecies about the coming civil war on his interpretation of the positions of the signs and planets. The vast energy expended in trying to make sense of this episode's data—and indeed, in ultimately testing Lucan's validity as a historian, scientist, and astrologer—is best illustrated in the correspondence between Kepler and Herwart von Hohenburg, who stubbornly sought to determine the exact date of such an event. Housman also poured over the astronomical data concerning the planets' positions at the supposed time Figulus cast his horoscope. He eventually concludes that the poet gets them all wrong.⁷ Kepler, having done his own calculations, had already realized that the pursuit was useless; for Figulus' horoscope does not coincide with any historical date and does not even amount to a factual description of the night sky, but rather to a poetic and at times idiosyncratic piece of astrological manipulation.⁸ In his interpretation, *interdum subit animum, ludere poetam ceu personam aliquam in scena decenti vestitu, sic hoc belli principium rationabilibus astris instruere voluisse*. He adds: *Nec reprehendo: poetam agit. Ipse ego in epithalamio quodam olim eiusmodi constellationem tribui nuptiali diei, quae neque fuit neque erit, neque esse potest: tantum ut illa faustis meis ominationibus serviret*.⁹ From his own forays into poetry, Kepler, who was also an accomplished astrologer, understood that Lucan's use of astrology responds first and foremost to the creative needs of the poet.

Figulus states that Mars occupies Scorpio and prepares to exert its bellicose influence on the world: *tu, qui flagrante minacem / Scorpion incendis cauda chelasque peruris, / quid tantum, Gradive, paras?* (1.658–60).¹⁰ His interpretation is that a long-lasting and destructive war is imminent. The symbolism of Scorpio as a sign of conflict follows Manilius' description of the sign as being under the tutelage of the planet Mars (*pugnax Mavortii Scorpions haeret*: 2.443), and of its influence on the character of those born under it (4.217–29). Not surprisingly, all other planets and signs are portrayed as being powerless at the time (*caelum Mars solus habet*: 1.660–3). By visualizing the sky as dominated by a war sign and planet, Figulus' divination effectively introduces on a cosmic scale the theme of the poem: civil war. This effect is enhanced by the allusion to Orion's sword-bearing flank shining forth among the dimmer constellations (*cur signa . . . / . . . mundo . . . obscura feruntur, / ensiferi nimium fulget latus Orionis*: 1.663–5), a phenomenon that has perplexed commentators who are determined to find here a description of a true atmospheric phenomenon, and not a constellation employed for symbolic purposes. The poet will recall this universal foreboding at the start of book 2: *iam . . . manifesta . . . belli / signa dedit mundus*

⁷ Ibid. 325–7.

⁸ J. Kepler, *Gesammelte Werke* (Munich, 1945), 15.295.

⁹ Ibid. 13.397.

¹⁰ The anonymous reader brought to my attention a possible allusion to these lines and their symbolism in Petrarch's *Africa*: on the eve of the Battle of Zama, the personifications of Rome and Carthage enter the heavens *qua . . . rubens Martis metuendi luminis astrum / Scorpio chelarum amplexu caudaque tegebat* (7.518–19) in order to voice their complaints to the gods.

(2.1–2). From the perspective of a poem about civil war, there are no mistakes at all in Figulus' horoscope.

Faced with this *ad hoc* use of astral imagery, are there any indications in the Brundisium episode that would allow a similar interpretation? Commentators have wondered why the poet describes the sign of Virgo as *ultima*. Arnulfus¹¹ and Fantham¹² give the straightforward interpretation: it is the last sign of the zodiac to rise before dawn at the time of the autumn equinox. Yet Arnulfus and Tarrant¹³ also detect in the epithet an allusion to the myth behind the sign: Virgo is Justice, the last divinity to leave the earth for heaven after man descended into Iron Age corruption. To support their interpretation, both Arnulfus and Tarrant note the Ovidian parallel: *virgo . . . / ultima caelestium terras Astraea reliquit* (*Met.* 1.149–50).¹⁴ The perversion of justice is a major theme of the *Bellum Civile*; and the myth is later used as the model for the departure of *Libertas* from Roman lands at 7.432–6. And so the first clue that we find is surely this identification of the constellation Virgo with the figure of departed Justice.

Lucan's decision to call the following sign Chelae instead of Libra is not without significance. The two names were concurrent at the time; each represents a different visualization of the sign. As Chelae, it is imagined as the claws of the adjacent sign, Scorpio. As Libra, it is a balance. Manilius, Germanicus, and Avienus are keenly aware of the images distinguished by each name. They usually employ each name and image independently, fleshing out the figures by means of epithets such as *fabricata* for Libra (Manilius 2.442) and *falcatae* for Chelae (Avienus 1128). Since Chelae is defined by name as an appendage of the following sign, Scorpio, it comes as no surprise that the poets sometimes combined the two signs to create a single hybrid, as in Germanicus: *Scorpios hinc duplex quam cetera possidet orbis / sidera, per Chelas geminato lumine fulgens* (548–9). The combination of signs is also apparent in Ovid: *est locus, in geminos ubi brachia concavat arcus / Scorpius et cauda flexisque utrimque lacertis / porrigit in spatium signorum membra duorum* (*Met.* 2.195–7). Lucan himself is aware of this greater Scorpio and even refers to it as *maiolem Scorpion* (6.394).

Libra as balance, however, naturally plays the fundamental role in the astrological interpretation of the sign as one of equilibrium and justice, as confirmed by Manilius' description of its influence as a natal sign (4.203–16) and of its positive degrees (4.547–52). The name Chelae is therefore often co-opted into the figure and function of Libra. In lines such as *aequatae librato pondere Chelae* (Germanicus 27) and *librantes noctem Chelae* (Manilius 4.203), the participles *librato* and *librantes* facilitate the integration of one name into the figure and function of the other. Nevertheless, the opposite assimilation is found—at least at the level of visualization—in Manilius' *Scorpios in Libra consumit brachia* (2.258), where the reader is reminded of the alternative figure (and name) behind the sign called Libra.

Certain passages in Lucan and Virgil appear to exploit the symbolic potential behind these alternative names. In one of the two occurrences in his works, Virgil calls the sign Libra and connects the image evoked by the name with its function as the equinoctial sign: *Libra die somnique pares ubi fecerit horas / et medium luci atque umbris iam dividit orbem* (*G.* 1.208–9). Lucan follows suit when drawing on Libra in four passages, but he is more explicit than Virgil in spelling out its equinoctial function as a

¹¹ B. M. Marti, *Arnulfi Aurelianensis glosule super Lucanum* (Rome, 1958), ad loc.

¹² E. Fantham, *Lucan: De Bello Civili Book II* (Cambridge, 1992), ad loc.

¹³ Tarrant's suggestion is included in Fantham (n. 12), ad loc.

¹⁴ Lucan later identifies the sign as Astraea in 9.535.

sign imparting justice (*aequatis ad pondera iustae Librae / temporibus*: 4.58–9; *libra sub iudice*: 10.227) as well as just retribution (*tempus erat quo Libra pares examinat horas, / non uno plus aequa die, noctique rependit / lux minor hibernae verni solacia damni*: 8.467–9).

The name *Chelae*, on the other hand, occurs in Virgil's lines on the anticipated apotheosis of Octavian:

anne novum tardis sidus te mensibus addas,
qua locus Erigonen inter Chelasque sequentis
panditur (ipse tibi iam brachia contrahit ardens
Scorpius et caeli iusta plus parte reliquit) (G. 1.32–5)

The figure behind *Chelae* and its connection to *Scorpio* are clearly signalled by the mention of *brachia*. Both signs are here depicted as part of the same celestial figure, the greater creature that spans *caeli iusta plus parte*. This *Scorpio maior*, by contracting its *brachia* (*Chelae*), takes back a part that belongs to itself and recoils into the area of one sign in order to create the zodiacal space that will be inscribed by a new sign with a distinct name and meaning: the *sidus Caesaris*. *Ardens* as an epithet of *Scorpio* is not otiose here: the meaning refers not only to the natural ferocity of the figure, evoked by the epithets *pugnax* and *acer* in Manilius, but also to its bellicose astrological influence, as the episode of Figulus reveals.¹⁵ Manilius uses the same adjective to describe the warmongering personalities of those born under *Scorpio*: *in bellum ardentis animos et Martia castra / efficit* (4.220–1). We may thus conclude that the sign of *Chelae*, through the associations of its name and by its retraction, is made to share the characteristics of the bellicose sign *Scorpio*. Any associations with conflict therefore vanish from the future site of the catasterism.

Lucan, for his part, uses *Chelae* only twice: in the passage presently under discussion and in the Figulus episode discussed earlier. In the latter instance, however, it is not clear whether Figulus alludes with *chelae* to the sign *per se* or to the *brachia* of the greater celestial figure. Housman objects to taking *chelae* as the sign, since the planet Mars cannot be said to occupy two signs at the same time;¹⁶ yet the syntax oddly coordinates *chelas* with *flagrante minacem / Scorpion . . . cauda* (1.658–9) and thus distinguishes correctly the two signs of the zodiac that compose the greater celestial figure: *Scorpio* proper, comprising the body and tail, plus *Chelae*, its claws. Be that as it may, the symbolic meaning of *chelae* in this particular context is clear. Figulus the astrologer views them as part of a celestial sign interpreted in astrology as one of conflict: Virgil's *ardens Scorpis* is Lucan's more elaborate *flagrante minacem / Scorpion cauda*, further inflamed by the fiery influence of the planet Mars (1.658–60). The *chelae*—whether understood as the zodiacal sign or as the *brachia* of the sign *Scorpio*—are involved in the same conflagration and also signal the impending civil war.

After the description of the dangerous effects of *Scorpio* and its *chelae* at the end of the first book, *Chelae* reappears for the last time in the poem as the sign that comes after *Virgo* (already identified by her epithet *ultima* as the figure of departed Justice). In this reappearance, the sign is identified by name as part of the greater celestial scorpion, and thus by analogy as part of *Scorpio*, a sign of conflict. The departure of

¹⁵ The epithets are found several times in Manilius. For *ardens*, cf. especially P. Domenicucci, *Astra Caesarum: Astronomia, astrologia e catasterismo da Cesare a Domiziano* (Pisa, 1996), 105, n. 20.

¹⁶ Housman (n. 6), ad loc.

Justice precedes the arrival of war; in this respect, it is not just the myth of Astraea but also that of the belligerent Iron Age of man that is implicated in this configuration of signs. On the day Pompey abandoned Italy for Greece and Pharsalus, the poet projects the theme of civil war onto a cosmic level by means of astronomical and astrological symbolism, just as he did earlier in the Figulus episode.

A further interpretative layer can be detected in the rising signs at Brundisium via an allusion to the catasterism of Octavian in the *Georgics*, a connection already noted by Haskins.¹⁷ The passage may be responding to the Virgilian catasterism by engaging in a redefinition—or more precisely, a resetting—of its symbolic meaning. The name of Libra, with its astrological connotation of justice and equilibrium, is conspicuously absent from both passages. In Virgil, the *sidus Caesaris* is expected to fill the space left behind by the retracting Chelae, while in Lucan Chelae appears in its original position after Virgo. In the *Georgics* Virgil announces the retracing of this portion of the sky into the name and figure of a constellation which causes the signs of conflict to retreat. At the end of *Bellum Civile* 2, Chelae, related by name and figure to a creature that symbolizes war in astrology, remains fixed in its name and position. From the temporal perspective of Lucan's narrative about the civil war, the site of the Virgilian catasterism is reset as the *locus* from which the signs of conflict have not yet been banished.

Columbia University

FRANCISCO BARRENECHEA
f676@columbia.edu

¹⁷ C. E. Haskins, *M. Annaeus Lucanus. Pharsalia* (London, 1887), ad loc.

PEREGRINUS IN ARMENIA

The unsavoury doings of Peregrinus, according to Lucian, began at once upon his coming of age (Lucian, *De mort. Peregr.* 9):

τὸ γὰρ τῆς φύσεως τοῦτο πλάσμα καὶ δημιούργημα, ὃ τοῦ Πολυκλείτου κανὼν, ἐπεὶ εἰς ἄνδρας τελεῖν ἤρξατο, ἐν Ἀρμενίᾳ μοιχεύων ἄλους μάλα πολλὰς πληγὰς ἔλαβεν καὶ τέλος κατὰ τοῦ τέλους ἀλόμενος διέφυγε, βαφτανίδι τὴν πυγὴν βεβυσμένος.

For this creation and artwork of Nature, this canon of Polyclitus, when he began to be reckoned among men, was caught in adultery in Armenia and received a great many blows, and finally escaped by jumping down from the roof, rump stuffed with a radish.

The detail about Armenia is surprising, both as fact and as narrative. We do not expect, and have not been led to expect, that a teenager growing up in Parium in Bithynia might enter upon an affair with a matron in Armenia. In the telling, this sudden shift in geography is unprepared for and unexplained, in an account of colourful detail. And in the next sentence, Peregrinus molests a boy and can only be saved by bribing the governor—of Asia. He then proceeds to murder his own father, in Parium. The reference to Armenia seems on its face unintelligible.

There is more. As a result of the murder, Peregrinus is obliged to leave Parium. He wanders eventually to Palestine, and then returns home to face his enemies. After this, he leaves Parium for a second time (τὸ δεύτερον, 16), but then comes home again to claim his father's property. Finally, he goes on a third trip abroad (τρίτη ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀποδημία, 17), to Egypt. These voyages, detailed and numbered, exclude any previous