APPARITIONS IN ROMAN IMPERIAL EPIC

by

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(Under the Direction of Charles Platter)

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the significance of ghosts in three Roman Imperial epics –

Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, Statius' *Thebaid,* and Silius Italicus' *Punica*. By examining apparitions

specific to one time period and genre, this project shows how these certain apparitions follow a

specific diction pattern and fulfill the role as prophet and, subsequently, how they acquire their

literary authority for prophecy. As a result, I will argue that apparitions in Imperial epic are

vehicles for socio-political commentary.

INDEX WORDS: Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus – literature/cultural studies; Epic –
                 literature/cultural studies; Apparitions – literature/cultural studies

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meis carissimis parentibus sororique

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANRW   *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*

CJ   *Classical Journal*

CP   *Classical Philology*

JRS   *Journal of Roman Studies*

OLD   *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (ed. P.G.W. Glare, Oxford, 1982)

TAPA   *Transactions of the American Philological Association*

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This study examines the role of apparitions in Roman Imperial epic. There are few projects devoted solely to understanding the role of ghosts in ancient literature, but those that do exist focus primarily on the need for categorization of the types of ghosts found in classical texts.[1] This necessity was seen even in antiquity. Apuleius drew the earliest distinction of Roman ghost-types and defined ghost-types according to their intentions. In *De deo Socratis* 15, Apuleius classifies three types of ghosts: the friendly Manes, the harmful Lemures, and the house-haunting Larvae. Apuleius' classification system provides not only an important look into ancient conceptions about different types of ghosts, but also a point of reference for the proceeding contemporary scholars who attempt to elaborate their own classification system.

One notable effort in modern scholarship comes from L. Collison-Morely in her 1912 *Greek and Roman Ghost Stories*. Her focus, however, is more on the way in which the apparitions appear, but, like Apuleius, also includes consideration for the ghosts' intention. Collison-Morely divides her ghost-types into stories of haunting, apparitions who have been summoned or 'struck' alive, apparitions of the dead, and warning apparitions. Collison-Morely's work focuses on simply recounting stories of ghosts using these designated types, but hardly mentions the unique characteristics or significance of the different categorizations. Because the author does not focus discussion on the specifics of different types of apparitions, she also does little to recognize the cultural influence on the literary characters.

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[1] Moreover, these discussions tend to be all inclusive. They do not limit included texts to one time period, genre, or even language.

Most recently, D. Felton in her *Haunted Greece and Rome* divides ghosts types into four major categories based on their intentions, but with a contemporary twist: Revenants, Crisis Apparitions and other Portentous Phantoms, Poltergeists, and Continual Apparitions.[2] Felton classifies ghosts, like Apuleius, by their 'mission' in the mortal realm. Felton expends most of her energy explaining the evolution of the haunted house story using the three most prominent stories of haunted houses found in Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Pliny's *Epistula* 7, and Lucian *Philopseudes* 30-31. Her brief address in the introductory chapter is where she proposes several categories for understanding the supernatural in ancient literature is really a brief address of terminological problems, not an actual attempt at understanding the purpose or function of these different types.

While both Collison-Morely and Felton have put forth two important efforts at classification, no one has attempted the final step of determining the purpose of apparitional appearances. Both Collision-Morely and Felton have done thorough jobs in designating different terms for ghost-types. This project, however, will narrow the range of these previous scholars and focus on understanding ghosts as they appear in Imperial epic. For the purposes of this project, the term Imperial epic will be limited to include Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and Silius Italicus' *Punica*. This study will refer to Valerius Flaccus when applicable, but the lack of apparitions makes it impossible to include his *Argonautica* as a primary text.[3] What is extant of Statius' *Achelleid* has also been omitted, as it features no substantial occurrences of apparitions.

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[2] Austin (1999) p. 29

[3] Bernstein (2000) pg. xii ff. 1 also discusses the difficulty of including Valerius Flaccus in this group. Perhaps one additional explanation for this omission is Valerius Flaccus' attempt to accurately imitate both the narrative and diction of his Greek model.

In this study, ghosts in the included texts will be the subjects of three different stages of treatment. After an examination of Roman beliefs in the afterlife and the existence of ghosts via Ovid's *Fasti*, I will first argue that Roman Imperial epics feature a specific type of apparitions, what I will call an "autonomous apparition." Autonomous apparitions are defined as ghosts who function in the text as legitimate characters, directly addressing another character. They are distinguished from other secondary ghost characters in their respective epics by specific diction choices and unique characteristics. Autonomous apparitions are most significant in their roles as agents of prophecy. The first chapter will discuss not only the author's choices in diction for these ghosts, but also discuss the content of their prophecies.

After a discussion of ghosts as agents of prophecies, I will then explore how apparitions become the designated vehicles for foretelling the future in Imperial epics. These texts also feature customary agents of prophecy who have the traditional ties to the ultimate source of authority – divinity. Consequently, I will argue that though the dead do not have a direct relationship with the gods, the epic authors construct them in the text to parallel or mimic the more traditional givers of prophecies. In some cases, like when ghosts visit characters in their sleep, the dead will act like the gods directly. In others, during necromantic ritual, for example, ghosts will need an outside agent with that link to the divine to facilitate their prophetic abilities.

Finally, I will then argue that the use of apparitions as prophetic agents in Imperial epic allows the author to invoke a connection to contemporary Roman society through a collapse of the past and present. Thus, he allows the apparition to function as a mouthpiece for political commentary. This understanding accounts for both the historical

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and portentous content of the apparitions' prophecies. The allusion to previous historical events functions as a reminder of the negative events of the past and a warning of what could happen in the future, which is the present for the reader. Because of the notoriously oppressive nature of Imperial Rome, its authors required subtlety in making any political reference.

CHAPTER TWO
DEFINING APPARITIONS IN IMPERIAL EPIC

Greek and Roman beliefs about the afterlife "ranged from the completely nihilistic denial of after-life, through a vague sense of souls' ghostly existence, to a concept of the soul's survival and of personal survival in recognizable form."[4] Certainly, the personal attitude of each Greek or Roman citizen towards death, the after-life, and the existence of ghosts is impossible to determine. Latin literature shows a clear indication that some Romans questioned the existence of an afterlife, especially the occurrence of ghosts. Evidence also exists, however, that the Roman culture as a whole acknowledged early on that an afterlife existed and that its inhabitants could manifest as apparitions.[5] This chapter will briefly explore skeptical attitudes towards ghosts and apparitions, but, subsequently, argue that they are not the typical views held by Roman society based on cultural practices and standards. Accordingly, this will allow a removal of skeptical bias in order to proceed with a successive discussion of ghosts as legitimate characters in Roman literature of the Imperial age and the diction employed by each author in ghost narratives.

Though the presence of ghostly characters frequents Roman literature, the ancients themselves questioned whether or not ghosts existed outside of the literary realm in reality. Pliny the Younger, in his letter 7.27 to Sura, writes some of the most famous ghost stories from antiquity - the story of the ghost woman who foretells to Curtius Rufus his future as governor of an African province,[6] a tale of a haunted house at Athens, and also how two of his servants had visions of apparitions who cut their hair off, only to awake with their own hair cut off, as had occurred in the dream. Pliny's treatment of each of these stories is meant to provide the letter's addressee evidence that he can use to respond to Pliny's reason for writing the letter. Letter 7.27 opens,

> Igitur perquam velim scire, esse phantasmata et habere propriam figuram numenque aliquod putes an inania et vana ex metu nostro imaginem accipere.

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[4] Hopkins (1983)

[5] Because this study focuses on Roman literature of the Imperial age, Greek cultural attitudes towards the after-life and ghosts will not be discussed except as necessary to illuminate Imperial cultural attitudes.

[6] This story is also told by Tacitus in *Annales* 11.21, signifying, to some extent, a circulation throughout society.

Therefore, I would very much like to know whether you think ghosts exist and
Have their own form and some sort of divinity or are the false impressions
of our terrified imagination.[7]

<div align="right">(7.27.1)</div>

Because Pliny asks his friend, Sura, to make certain determinations about ghosts, one can infer that Pliny is unable to come to this conclusion on his own. His personal opinion about the existence of ghosts is not entirely solidified, or, at the very least, rests upon some uncertain foundation.[8] The end of letter 7.27 confirms this argument for Pliny's skepticism,

> licet etiam utramque in partem (ut soles) disputes, ex altera tamen fortius,
> ne me suspensum incertumque dimittas, cum mihi consulendi causa fuerit,
> ut dubitare desinerem.
>
> Let it be permitted that you argue each side (as you are accustomed to do),
> however, chose more forcefully one side over the other so that you won't leave
> me in suspense and uncertainty, since the reason for me asking your opinion
> was because I wished you to end my doubts.

<div align="right">(7.27.16)</div>

Here, Pliny asks Sura to come down with more conviction (*fortius*) on one side over another so that he is not left suspenseful (*suspensum*) and, more revealingly, uncertain (*incertum*). Pliny concludes this letter, the majority of which he devotes to a painstakingly detailed retelling of three individual ghost stories, by briefly revealing his ultimate goal in seeking Sura's opinion, to end his doubts about the very existence of ghosts (*ut dubitare desinerem*). The author has elected to dedicate a good deal of the body of the letter to providing explicit details for each story, evidence needed to solve what he considers a straightforward problem which one can answer with a logical and scientific approach. Though Pliny, particularly in his third story, seems persuaded by his own personal ghostly experiences, he clearly seeks a second opinion.

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[7] All Latin texts are from the Loeb and English translations are my own.
[8] Sherwin-White (1969) characterizes Pliny's ghost stories as 'scientific…clear and sober.' Pliny's logical approach to the ghost phenomena is the same taken with other natural phenomena featured in his letters. This reinforces the idea that Pliny, due to skepticism, considers the question of whether or not ghosts exists one with an obtainable answer which he himself does not know, but feels that Sura can answer. For more, see p. 139-140.

Other ancient authors also reveal their own uncertainty concerning apparitions.[9] These attitudes, however, are not indicative of the typical convictions held by Roman citizens. Belief in apparitions was inextricably tied to a belief in an afterlife and, for the Romans, a belief in the afterlife was likewise associated with religion. Religious festivals and holidays most clearly demonstrate the tie between Roman belief in apparitions, as well as the afterlife and religion. Because they were state sanctioned and thus all citizens celebrated them indiscriminately, religious festivals honoring the dead and appeasing those who have passed demonstrate the common belief in the afterlife and the ability of those in the afterlife to manifest as apparitions. A closer look at these festivals will reveal the extent to which the Romans accepted that there was not only an afterlife, but also how they considered apparitions in cultural context.

Festivals for the Dead

Festivals for the dead provide abundant evidence for Roman beliefs about the afterlife. The majority of what is known about these festivals comes mostly from Ovid's *Fasti*.[10] The two main festivals for the dead were Parentalia and Lemuria. Each of these festivals exposes a certain body of beliefs about the afterlife held by the Romans. These tenets demonstrate a strong belief in the necessity for proper burials and the execution of burial rites.[11] Moreover, they most importantly exhibit a fundamental belief in a life after death which becomes important for the later consideration of ghosts as literary characters.

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[9] See Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* 2.146 -148, especially. Greek authors Theophrastus, Aristotle, et al. also held similar beliefs

[10] A few modern scholars have composed notable sourcebooks and commentaries on Roman festivals, mostly derived from Ovid's *Fasti*. Though the oldest chronologically, Fowler (1908) is still the most useful. More recently, Scullard (1981) is also helpful and considers more recent scholarship on Roman festivals and religion.

[11] The execution of proper burial and burial rites becomes increasingly significant later in this study when the literary ghosts of Lucan, particularly Erictho's necromancy in Book 6, and Statius are considered.

Literary ghosts, unlike the folkloric ghosts of Pliny the Younger[12] and some historians,[13] are a curious blend of cultural beliefs and literary necessity. That is, literary ghosts, unlike the accounts found in the aforementioned authors and others, fulfill some other function in the narrative besides just being a featured story. Letter 7.27 of Pliny, for example, discusses three unique instances of apparitions, but these ghosts do not function as literary characters. Pliny recounts these stories for their own sake, as interesting anecdotes for the letter's recipient to consider and as evidence on the basis of which Sura can make a decision. The ghosts of Pliny are better examples of Roman belief about ghosts, their appearance, and mannerisms than other ghosts who function as distinct characters in literature. The latter characters must also answer to their literary obligation.

The Parentalia and Lemuria exemplify the cultural belief in the afterlife, and in ghosts themselves, which forms the necessary foundation for literary and folkloric ghost alike. These festivals share some features in common, but also have distinct differences. Most basically, each festival commemorated dead ancestors and citizens had to perform certain ritualistic acts to appease the deceased. In addition to these private rites, some parts of these festivals were also public celebrations, holidays observed by Roman society as a whole. On these days, some but not all of which were *nefasti* or unlucky days, the temples were shut, magistrates did not wear the *toga praetexta*, no fires were burned, and no marriages were contracted. The celebrations and ceremonial dedications to the dead took placed not only in the private life of the Roman, but also in the public proceedings of the state.[14] Because the ceremony took place in the public sector and

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[12] Particularly those just discussed from letter 7.27

[13] Some of the more notable ghost stories are found in Livy 1, 5, 21, and 24; Suetonius *Nero* 34, *Otho* 7 and Tactitus *Annales* 11.21, among others.

[14] In 304 BCE, Gnaeus Flavius, a pontifical secretary, introduced the custom of publishing in the Forum tables containing information besides brief references to victories, triumphs, prodigies, etc. This list was the origin of the public Roman calendar, in which the days were divided into weeks of eight days each, and indicated by the letters A-H. Each day was marked by a certain letter to show its nature. During the Parentalia, Lemuralia, and other festivals commemorating the dead, the days are marked to show that they are considered to be various degrees of *dies fasti* and *nefasti* by the letters F., N., N.P., F.P., Q. Rex C.F., C., EN. These letters stood for *fastus, nefastus, nefastus priore* ("unlawful before noon"), *fastus priore* ("lawful before noon"), *quando rex* (sacrorum) *comitiavit fastus* ("lawful after the rex sacrorum has appeared in the assembly"), *comitialis* ("assembly day") and *intercisus* ("divided" --- having an unlawful time sometime within that day). The *dies intercisi* were partly *fasti* and partly *nefasti*. The cessations described above occurred on those days considered to any degree to be *nefasti*. These actions are all associated with business and government activities and a hiatus from them demonstrates how the Romans

widely observed by all Roman citizens, a general acceptance of afterlife and ghosts is a more likely norm than the skeptical attitudes exhibited in the literature of some ancients.

Parentalia, Feralia, and Caristia

The Parentalia festival began on February 13 and typically lasted until February 21. The last of these days was called the Feralia. This last day of the festival was not only the main commemorative celebration for the dead, but also the day of the public ceremony. The majority of Parentalia consisted of privately-celebrated rituals, and on the concluding day, the Feralia, there was a ritualistic feast. Family members would leave small votive offerings – garlands, a sprinkling of corn or salt, bread soaked in wine, or a small bouquet of violets. Larger offerings were not discouraged, at least according to Ovid, but for the ancestral ghosts, small offerings as a demonstration of dedication and piety were most important. Ovid is careful to point out that the private rituals and offerings were important not for material reasons, but because they acted as a physical representation for the pious respect each individual ought to have for his family.[15] Ovid also enumerates the reason for the necessity of public observance of these ritualistic days,

> di quoque templorum foribus celentur opertis,
>   ture vacant arae stentque sine igne foci.
> nunc animae tenues et corpora functa sepulcris
>   errant, nunc posito pascitur umbra cibo.
>
> let the gods also be concealed by closing the doors of the temples
>   let the altars be free from incense and let them the hearths stand without fire.
> now the light souls and bodies charged with tombs
>   wander around, now the shade feeds on the food placed for him.
>   (*Fasti* 2.563-566)

All of the actions described here, the closing of the temples, the cessation of the burning incense, and the extinguishing of the fires, took place publicly as matters of the state on behalf of the Roman community, not only in private households for the individual. These

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considered these days to be unfavorable in the eyes of the gods. For more on calendars demarcation of festivals, see Fowler (1908).

[15]*Fasti* 2.537-540

actions were also the duties of government officials and were a physical manifestation of ghost belief in the public sector. As Ovid has explained, the ghosts do not ask for much by the way of material things, but prefer an outward display of respect (*parva petunt manes, pietas pro divite grata est munere* 535-536*)*. This charge fell not only on the individual, but Roman society as an institution and whole upheld these beliefs.[16]

Ovid also gives evidence that these beliefs existed some time before his time,

> hunc morem Aeneas, pietatis idoneus auctor,
>   attulit in terras, iuste Latine, tuas;
> ille patris Genio sollemnia dona ferebat:
>   hinc populi ritus edidicere pios.

> Aeneas, the fitting founder of piety
>   brought this custom into your lands, just Latinus;
> that man was bearing ceremonial gifts for the spirit of his father:
>   from this man the people learnt proper rites.
>   (*Fasti* 2.543-546)

While the validity of the Aeneas myth and many of the explanations found in Ovid's *Fasti* are open to question, others note that because those found in Ovid are less absolute and less reliable than, for example, explanations found in Lucretius, they were consequently less disruptive of traditional religious observance.[17] If this is, in fact, the case, Ovid gives good evidence that belief in the necessity of funeral rites largely existed throughout history and indicates by extension a cultural belief in the ability of the deceased to manifest as apparitions in the afterlife.

The last day of the Parentalia celebration was the Feralia which, according also to Ovid, derives its name from the traditional carrying (from the verb f*erre*) of the rites and sacrifices to the dead.[18] Fowler combines the opinions of both Latin scholars and contemporary authors to make the claim that the Feralia was the oldest and best known of all the days of Parentalia.[19] During this last day of celebration, Roman citizens performed their duties and rites under supervision of the State and Pontifices. Where the

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[16] For more on how public displays of religious belief functions on both a broad and individual symbolic level, see King (2003), especially p. 283.
[17] See Schiesaro's essay "Ovid and the Professional Discourses of Scholarship, Religion and Rhetoric" in the *Cambridge Companion to Ovid (*2002) where he points also to Feeney (1991). For the hermeneutic risks of reconstructing Roman religion based entirely off literary sources, see Feeney (1998).
[18] *Fasti* 2.569; Varro *Linguae Latinae* 6.13
[19] (1908), 307

Parentalia consisted of private proceedings, the Feralia was a publicly sanctioned ceremony. For both celebrations, however, as long as the ancestral ghosts had been duly propitiated, there was nothing for the citizens to fear. The ghosts did not show themselves as particularly hostile or spiteful and did not interfere with the living because a *ius sacrum* regulated all relationships between the ghosts and their familial counterparts.[20]

The accounts of the Parentalia and the Feralia found in Ovid demonstrate two important points about cultural beliefs concerning the dead. First, the Ovidian account of the Parentalia festival as a whole supports the argument that a belief in the afterlife was a cultural norm, privileged over the skeptical attitudes of authors like Pliny. The Parentalia was publicly celebrated in a ceremony sponsored by the state. The festival was not a private matter, left open to optional participation. State recognition and enforcement required a city-wide participation in the ceremony; hypothetically, even if the family did not participate by observing the private rituals, they were still subject to the ramifications of the state's participation because law dictated that even private business must be interrupted on these days. Additionally, Ovid's description of the Parentalia includes distinct reference to the idea that the dead transcended the line between the dead and the living by entering the mortal realm. Twice, Ovid refers to the physical manifestations of the dead in the mortal realm.[21] The latter of these two points show that the Romans clearly held the belief that the dead could rise up and participate in the mortal realm, not as just a figment of one's imagination or an abstract memory, but as a tangible, physical being.

Ovid further provides evidence for the argument that the dead can materialize in his introduction to the Caristia, the day immediately following the day of Feralia. The Caristia was a feast of the family that took place on the 22nd of the month and was not a part of the Parentalia festival. It is relevant to the immediate discussion, however, because Ovid's explanation of the underlying reason for the feast demonstrates how the Romans culturally viewed the ancestral dead as sharing fundamental characteristics with

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[20] Ibid. especially ff. 3 and 4

[21] First at *Fasti* 2.551-554, the ghosts of the living wander around the city, angered because they have not received their rites, and again at 2.565-566. Here Ovid has listed the steps which must be taking to shut up the city because the ghosts are wandering about to receive their offerings.

the living and that they peacefully join the living during this time period.[22] The dead were not simply memories, but still active family members, even after they had passed away. The Carisitia refocused attention to the living family and worship of the familial gods away from the ancestral dead. Ovid demonstrates the occurrence of this shift in attention,

> scilicet a tumulis et, qui periere, propinquis
>   protinus ad vivos ora referre iuvat
> postque tot amissos, quicquid de sanguine restat,
>   aspicere et generis dinumerare gradus.
>
> certainly it is pleasing to return straightaway our visages
>   to the living from the tombs and the relatives who have died
> afterwards to look upon so many who have died and each one who
>   remains from our blood and count the steps of our kin.

<div align="right">(Fasti 2.619-622)</div>

The passage focuses on the immediate need (*protinus*) to return attention to those who are now present (*ad vivos…quicquid restat*). The adverb "*protinus*" sets a temporal boundary for this and all proceeding actions to take place within. Words of motion distinctly highlight the passage, drawing attention to the ability of both the living and the dead to possess this physical capability. Ovid has adopted himself into the narrative by using the present tense and, with this as a focal point, there is a strong sense of directionality for those living in the present and the dead.

Those still in the physical present with Ovid must turn back (*referre*) their attention from the dead to the immediate time and the phrase "*quicquid ...restat*" also demonstrates an emphasis on directional movement back and towards the present. If the living have remained behind, the dead must have left the present and indeed they have (*periere*). Where the living and those present must move away from the dead and back towards the living (*referre, restat*), the dead have literally passed through. They have departed and are no longer tangible in the mortal realm outside of honored memories;

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[22] Fowler explains how ghosts were not typically feared during the Parentalia. As for the occasional instance in which they stereotypically joined the living to "haunt" them, Ovid tells in *Fasti* 2.547- 556 how once the souls rose up, howling, and wandered the streets once when they had not been duly honored because the city was at war. Consequently, rites were paid and the ghouls disappeared and went back to a peaceful co-existence.

those present are literally those who have "stayed behind."[23] Ovid draws a directional

distinction between the dead and the living, but both possess this characteristic of

movement. By recognizing the ability of the dead to move between the realm of the

afterlife and that of the living the dead, the dead can be more readily considered as

legitimate characters in literature when texts feature ghosts that appear in the mortal

realm,[24] rather than dismissing them as figments of the imagination.

Lemuralia

Additionally, the Lemuralia festival which Ovid also describes in the *Fasti*

features the same idea that ghosts can enter and exit the mortal realm and were not

considered to be static entities. Lemuralia took place over three days in May, the 9th, 11th,

and 13th and, like the Parentalia, featured offerings to appease the dead. The generally

accepted differences, however, are that Lemuralia took place in the home instead of at the

tomb and that the spirits subject of the Lemuralia were malicious whereas those

celebrated in the Parentalia were not.[25]

Ovid is the sole source for the proceedings of the Lemuralia festival and his

description features the same idea that ghosts can voluntarily enter and exit the mortal

realm as found in the description of the Caristia. In the *Fasti*, Ovid describes the rites

which the head of the household performed in the home; he would make the sign of the

evil eye with his hand, thrown down black beans behind him, and ask the ghosts for

redemption. The ghosts were thought to collect the beans and follow behind him

unseen.[26] Following this procedure, the one performing the rites concludes the ceremony

and issues a ritual declamation,

> rursus aquam tangit Temesaeaque concrepat aera
>   et rogat, ut tectis exeat umbra suis.
> cum dixit novies "Manes exite paterni,"
>   respicit et pure sacra peracta putat.
>
> again he touches the water and crashes the Temesan bronze,
> and asks that the shade exit his home.

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[23] The verb "*restat*" also interestingly precedes the tendencies of Lucan, et al., who often use forms of the verb *stare* to describe the physical presence of apparitions in their introduction to the narrative.
[24] As opposed to the underworld
[25] Felton (1999). Fowler (1908) believes due to the notations found on ancient calendars that at one time the Lemuria must have been a public festival much like the Feralia.
[26] *Fasti* 5.435-443

When he has said nine times, "Spirits of my fathers, leave,"
he looks back and believes the sacred rites have been duly performed.
(*Fasti* 5.441-444)

The spirit is asked to leave the house (*rogat ut…exeat umbra*), implying that the ghost can come and go at its own volition. The shade must be satisfactorily appeased before it will depart; all parts of the ritual must be executed. The phrase "*Manes exite paterni*" in line 443 also echoes this sentiment. The *manes paterni* will only exit the household after the ritual and after the phrase is uttered exactly nine times. The ghost is the subject of both *exeat* and *exite* and these verbs both demonstrate the apparition's ability to not only exit the immediate mortal environment, the house (*exeat*), but also to leave the mortal realm (*exite*).

These examples from Ovid show a clear widely spread, cultural belief not only in the afterlife, but also in the ability of ghosts in the afterlife to manifest in the mortal realm. Primarily, the city-wide festivals which were celebrated both publicly and at home show that citizens observed the rites of the dead in both the civic and private sectors. These texts demonstrate a strong belief that the dead could cross the line into the mortal realm to receive sacrifices and ritual offerings. Moreover, Ovid's particular use of verbs of motion supports the idea that the dead could enter and exit the world of the living. In Ovid, both amiable and malignant spirits are seen coming and going, remaining and departing, from the earth. Accordingly, not only does the text demonstrate a fundamental belief in an afterlife, but also an important belief that ghosts can materialize and enter the world of the living.

Describing Ghosts

Ovid's description of the Lemuralia also highlights another important issue which one must consider when examining cultural beliefs in apparitions, diction. Firstly, Ovid's use of *Manes* at 5.443 is certainly curious if one accepts the argument that the Lemuralia was to appease malignant ghosts whereas the Parentalia was in honor of ghosts who were not threatening. In modern scholarship, a study of the word *manes* has lead many to conclude that this word is reserved primarily for the use of goodly, familial ghosts and distinguished from its evil counter part, *lemur*.[27] Secondly, then, the phrase "*manes exite*

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[27] In addition to Fowler, see modern scholarship by Rose (1930), Dumezil (1970), and Knight (1970).

paterni" is then quite the oddity when addressing an evil spirit supposedly haunting the house. Opinions on why Ovid uses *manes* vary.   Certain scholars believe that Ovid either uses *manes* at 443 loosely;[28] others believe it to be a metrical convention,[29] or even a mistake entirely.[30]

Above all, the confusion demonstrated by Ovid's use of "manes" at *Fasti* 5.443 demonstrates the necessity for a classification system for ghost terms which will acknowledge the context in which the words are found. For example, philologists do not always define the word *fero* as "bring." Context dictates how it must be translated and understood and the same ought to be true for ghost diction. It seems that scholarship, both ancient and modern, cannot come to a broad consensus on the meaning of *lemures*, *manes*, or really any other ghost term.[31] A tidy categorization has been the goal, like the one that exists for most trees (e.g. "ilex" is specifically and always an holm-oak tree and "myrtus" is always a myrtle tree etc.). Perhaps the problem, then, lies not within the words themselves, but within the scope of interpretation. Unlike most trees, ghosts are subject to the influence of cultural beliefs of the time and even the authors' own personal feelings about them. Unlike many tree, food, or flower terms, apparitional diction is mutable from author to author, text to text. Felton's assertion, for example, is then only partially correct. It is true that there is no blanket definition applicable, but less likely that the terms in no way have any specific denotations.[32]

Evidence from ancient texts does little to solve this problem and, if anything, may actually compound it. Many modern scholars have investigated potential definitions for the different words used to describe the dead, but the curiosity did not start in contemporary scholarship. Apuleius in *De Deo Socratis* 15 makes the first attempt at a clear system of categorization between the *larvae*, *lemures*, and *manes*,

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[28] Fowler (1908).
[29] Dumezil (1970), 367.
[30] Latte (1960), 100 as quoted by Dumezil (1970), 364.
[31] Daremburg (1877), Rose (1930), Thaniel (1973), Winker (1980), Wissowa (1925)
[32] Felton (1999) 23. I believe the discrepancy between Felton's opinion on this subject and the varying viewpoint expressed in the remainder of this chapter can be explained in two ways. First, Felton's work has a different aim. Where this work takes a more philological approach to explore literary texts as just that, texts, Felton uses the works as examples of Greek and Roman folklore. Moreover, Felton decides to group together Greek and Roman texts when she comes up with her characteristic categories – revenants, crisis apparitions et al. This work found a concentration on one language and genre, especially when considering the diction and philological choices of each other, more fruitful than such a broad scope.

Est et secundo significatus species daemonum animus humanus emeritis stipendiis vitae corpore suo abiurans. Hunc vetere Latina lingua reperio Lemurem dictitatum. Ex hisce ergo Lemuribus qui posterorum suorum curam sortitus placato et quieto numine domum possidet, Lar dicitur familiaris; qui vero ob adversa vitae merita nullis (bonis) sedibus incerta vagatione ceu quodam exilio punitur, inane terriculamentum bonis hominibus, ceterum malis noxium, id genus plerique Larvas perhibent. Cum vero incertum est, quae cuique eorum sortitio evenerit, utrum Lar sit an Larva, nomine Manem deum nuncupant: scilicet et honoris gratia dei vocabulum additum est; quippe tantum eos deos appellant, qui ex eodem numero iuste ac prudenter curriculo vitae gubernato pro numine postea ab hominibus praediti fanis et caerimoniis vulgo advertuntur

There is another type of demon which consists of the human soul which abandons its body when it has finished its services in life. I note that in the old Latin language these used to be termed *lemurs*. Now, to some of the *lemurs* was allotted the care of their descendants. These occupy houses with a propitious and peaceful attitude, and they are called the *Lares* of the family. But others, because of their misdeeds in life, are punished with a kind of exile, namely, with the denial of a home and with undirected wanderings. They can only be harmless terrors to good men, but they are dangerous to bad men. People usually call these *larvae*. When it is unclear what category of ghost one is dealing with, whether it is one of the *Lares* or *larvae*, one uses the term *Di Manes*. Without a doubt, the addition of the term "di" here is honorific, because it is only applied to those among the demons who have conducted their life with justice and wisdom, who have subsequently been awarded temples and rites by men as being divine powers, and who are in receipt of observances from the people.

Because he believes Apuelius should not be considered a scholarly or philosophical source, Fowler designates this passage as "worthless"[33] and privileges the definitions given by the later grammarians Porphyrio and Nonius. Other grammarians also defined Immediate purposes do not require a value judgment and, therefore, like with Apuleius, discussion of the definitions of ancient grammarians will be limited strictly to a presentation of how these subsequent authors distinguish between different terms.

Porphyrio in Horatian scolia defines *lemurs* as "umbras vagantes hominum ante diem mortuorum atque ideo metuendas" (the shades of dead men wandering before daybreak and therefore must be feared).[34] The grammarian Acro also comments on this same epistle and comes up with his own definition. Acro defines the lemurs as "umbras terribiles biothanatorum" (terrible ghosts who suffered a violent death). Nonius, in his dictionary, also weighs in with the following, "lemures larvae nocturnae et terrificationes imaginum et bestiarum" (lemurs are nocturnal larvae those which have terrified both men

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[33] p. 108 ff 5
[34] Porphyrio writes this in the scolia on Horace *Epistle* 2.2.209.

and beasts).[35] Each grammarian defines lemures with a slightly different, though not entirely unique, variation. Both Porphyrio and Acro use the word *umbras*; Acro and Nonius describe the *lemures* as terrible (*terribiles, terrificationes*); and both Porphyrio and Nonius mention that the *lemures* were those ghosts which came out during the nighttime. While an indisputable consensus about ever characteristic is not reached, the overlaps and similarities show that some conclusions can be drawn about diction choices.

Epic Specific Diction Choices

There are some consistencies throughout authors and texts, but on the other hand, strong regularities that are author and text specific. The following will not be a comprehensive study of every time a word occurs, but will focus on apparitions that manifest in the mortal realm and significantly operate within the narrative framework. In Latin literature, authors most commonly use *animus, anima*, *effigies*, *imago*, *larvae*, *lemures*, *manes*, *phantasma, simulacrum,* and *tenebra* as the word for ghost.[36] The pervasive opinion in contemporary scholarship is that authors chose between these words arbitrarily, or to fit meter, and that these words do not have specific meanings.[37]   The studies which draw this conclusion, however, are broad reaching, including both Latin and Greek literature of all genres. When one considers such a wide-range of texts, often with little in common to one another, this conclusion is not unreasonable. This study, however, focuses on a smaller group of texts of the same language and genre, and composed during roughly the same time period.

The following discussion organizes ghost narratives by author and epic and demonstrates that, in fact, authors writing in this time period and genre tend to favor certain words over others for ghosts. All of the epics to be discussed contain many appearances of ghostly figures, but the following will concentrate on two instances of ghosts' entrance into the narrative. This study will examine first ghosts that occur as autonomous characters who operate within the narrative in the same way their living

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[35] p.135

[36] There is no complete study or compilation of all words used for ghost. This list consists of the words for ghost which are found in the texts which this thesis uses, as well as any other instances I could find in both primary and secondary sources. I do not claim it to be entirely complete, but an exhaustive list would be nearly impossible.

[37] See particularly Felton (1999) Chapter 2 "Problems with Terminology and Classification"

counterparts do.[38]   Upon their entrance, the narrative focalization shifts to them; they most often appear alone and will directly address a main character, typically with a premonitory speech. Some scholars believe that these apparitions in texts, especially those which appear in dreams, are nothing but a dialogue between different parts of the characters personality or a physical materialization of the characters subconscious.[39] Such an understanding, however, dismisses the intrinsic value of the apparitional character by reducing an actual agent in the text to the function of another character.

This study will also more briefly observe ghosts, whose entrances rather than their actual words to the character, foreshadows the impending, negative events that are about to transpire. Unlike the former group of apparitions, they are not generally independent or named characters, and the author mentions them in passing rather than shifting the narrative's focus entirely to them. If these ghosts speak, and they often do not, their speech is not a part of the text. Their appearances are often fleeting, but significant nonetheless. Both of these groups of ghosts demonstrate that authors did tend towards preferential diction and that diction across the works was also fairly regular.[40]

Lucan

Of the three authors discussed, Lucan is by far the writer with the most consistency and the most standard diction choices when he introduces apparitional figures. The *Bellum Civile* features three main instances of autonomous ghost characters: the personification of Roma, Julia, and the necromantic soldier. The first introduction of such an apparition occurs when Caesar sees a vision of his country as he approaches the Rubicon,

> …Ut ventum est parvi Rubiconis ad undas,
> ingens visa duci patriae trepidantis imago
> clara per obscuram vultu maestissima noctem,
> turrigero canos effundens vertice crines,
> Caesarie lacera nudisque adstare lacertis
> Et gemitu permixta loqui:…

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[38] There are also what I call ghost "entourages" or groups which appear in every text. These ghosts often add to the narrative atmosphere e.g. – descriptions such as "there were shades everywhere" etc., but have little to no impact on the narrative and, while their diction is interesting and frequently predictable, a study which also includes all of these instances would be outside of the immediate scope of this project, turning the task at hand into more of a sourcebook for apparitional appearances rather than a focused study.

[39] Heinze (1993) 247; Vessey (1973) 235.

[40] See the Introduction, note 3 for the explanation of the omission of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* et al.

> …When he had approached the waves of the little Rubicon,
> a huge ghost of his distressed country with a most unhappy countenance
> was seen clearly by the general through the dark night,
> white hair streaming from her turreted-crowned head,
> she stood by him with mangled hair and bare arms,
> and spoke having mixed her speech with sobs:
>
> <div align="right">(Bellum Civile 1.184 – 190)</div>

The initial entrance of the personification of Rome is dictionally paradigmatic for those occurrences which follow in Lucan's epic and the perfect starting point for a close reading of the language Lucan generally uses to describe apparitions. The word "imago" will become very significant to the reader of Lucan in the course of the text. In the above passage, the term introduces Lucan will introduce his autonomous ghost characters with this term. A form of the verb "videre" *(visa* 185) or emphasis on the physical action of recognition is also commonplace. Moreover, subsequent appearances of apparitions will be characterized by forms of the words "maestus" (*maestissima* 187) and "stare" (*adstare* 189). Finally, descriptions of these apparitions, like Rome's, will also include a focus on the head of the ghost (*vertice, crines* 187; *caesarie* 189). Once the description ends, the ghost will speak directly to the recipient of the warning prophecy.[41]

Julia is the second apparition of this type to intrude into the narrative of the epic. At the beginning of *Bellum Civile* 3, Julia visits Pompey in his sleep and prophesies to him his impending defeat. She warns him that his fortune changed with his betrothal to Cornelia, her rival and his new wife. Therefore, the civil war will claim him and bring him back to Julia through death (20-34). Before she issues her warning, however, a typical description introduces her ghost,

> …diri tum plena horroris imago
> visa caput maestum per hiantes Iulia terras
> tollere et accenso furialis stare sepulcro.

> …then a ghost, Julia, seen full of awful
> dread, lifts her sad head over the gaping earth
> and frenzied stands over her illuminated grave.[42]

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[41] In addition to the Lucan specific diction, Felton (1999) argues that all female apparitions are described as large and here, *ingens* (185) supports this assertion. The proceeding example of Julia, however, is not described as large in any way. This may be a simple exception, but more textual evidence would help support her argument instead of pointing to what Hinds (1998) calls an "accidental confluence" of diction.

[42] *accenso sepulchro*: i.e., her funeral pyre.

The summary of Julia's appearance before her speech echoes that of the apparitional personification of Rome from Book 1. The ghost is termed *imago* (9), signaling to the reader what type of ghost to expect. Inclusion of *visa*, *caput*, and *maestum* (10) also follow the pattern set up by the earlier paradigm.

A most basic comparison of the two apparitions will also note the variance in the respective emotional descriptions. The ghost of personified Rome is portrayed as one rife with sadness above all other things. She is called *trepidantis* (1.186); the superlative form of "maestus" is used (*maestissima* 1.1870); and sobs break up her speech to Casear (*gemitu permixta loqui* 1.190). Julia, on the other hand, is characterized as thoroughly terrifying (*diri…plena horroris* 3.9) and even raging, Fury-like (*furialis* 3.11). The difference in the descriptions can be explained by the apparition's relationship to the subject of their appearance. Rome appears to Caesar as he prepares to march on his own country. The personified phantom of Rome expresses sadness at this intention and begs him not to proceed. Pompey has already betrayed his wife Julia when she visits him, where Caesar has not yet invaded his homeland at the time of Rome's appearance. They are linked, however, by the idea of betrayal, although each reacts differently to it. The prospect of betrayal saddens Rome; the act of betrayal angers Julia. Fundamentally, the descriptions between the two apparitions vary where the emotional responses of the apparitions to the actions of the speech's recipient are also different.[43]

The final ghost featured in Lucan's *Bellum Civile* is by far the most well-known. Book 7 features Erictho's necromantic evocation of a ghost using a dead solider she chooses from a field of the fallen.[44] An impatient Sextus begs to know the future and so,

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[43] To explain why the apparitions have different emotional responses and why an emotion is respective to the particular apparition would require a psychoanalytical investigation far outside the scope of this thesis. This type of examination would also require the investigator to discuss the legitimacy of apparitional emotions. These passages alone are clear evidence that emotional responses can manifest in ghosts, but an explanation to why should also consider whether emotions in ghosts come about in the same way as they do for the living.

[44] I argue that the characters in all epics that are reanimated by necromantic ritual ought to be considered among the other apparitional instances because, they still meet the criteria for the basic definition of ghost. They are deceased and have come back following death. The difference between other apparitions and necromantic manifestations is that there is no unknown surrounding how they came back from the dead. Other ghosts, like ghosts that appear in dreams for example, have reentered the mortal realm by unexplained means. Ghosts conjured by necromancy are still ghosts, but the ritual is the clear source for their ability to return from death.

in accordance with epic tradition, the narrative is set for necromancy.[45] The Erictho scene is lengthy[46] and there is a significant amount of lineage dedicated to different descriptions of the corpse before it is reanimated, during its prophecy, and after it falls once more.[47] Of these several descriptions, the lines dedicated to its description post reanimation are the most relevant. Before the ritual begins, "corpus" describes the unanimated soldier (6.637), but the words evolve with the different stages of necromancy. As Erictho begins the process, the soldier becomes "cadaver" (6.639) and later, after the witch injects him with poison and gives him the power to speak the future, he then becomes "umbram" (6.720).

Following the first use of "umbram," "cadaver" also refers to the reanimated corpse, but is used interchangeably with "umbram." The best example occurs at line 775, after Erictho enables the ghost to speak and begins to issue a warning to Sextus,

> addidit et carmen, quo, quidquid consulit, umbram
> scire dedit. Maestum fletu manante cadaver
> ...dixit
>
> and she added a spell, by which she granted the ghost
> to know whatever she asked. The sad dead man
> said with flowing tears…
>
> (*Bellum Civile* 6.775-777)

These lines show some of the characteristics demonstrated in the preceding two examples, but with one significant variation. Rome and Julia are both deemed "imago" while the necromanced soldier is an "umbram." The difference does not seem odd, however, given the exceptional nature of the necromancy. The two earlier ghosts manifest by an unexplained means as apparitional likenesses of the original where the ghost featured in the necromancy episode is a reanimation of the original. The latter is not as far removed as the former examples.

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[45] The occurrence of necromancy in epic texts goes back as far as Homer *Odyssey* 11, see particularly de Jong (2001). The texts of Ennius and Naevius are too fragmentary to determine whether or not their epics featured necromancies like those found here, but Vergil For more on Greek and Roman necromancy see Ogden (2004).

[46] 6.569-830

[47] 6.636-641, 666-671, 719–729, 750–762, 775-776, 820-825

Other diction choices are more consistent with the previous examples. The passage at 6.719, when considered with that of 6.775, designates all of the necessary characteristics to the ghost,

> Haec ubi fata caput spumantiaque ora levavit,
> aspicit, astantem proiecti corporis umbram,
> examines artus invisaque claustra timentem
> carceris antiqui.

> When she had said theses things she raised her head
> and foaming mouth, and she saw standing beside her
> the ghost of the the body that had been abandoned,
> fearing the lifeless limbs and hateful barriers
> of its old prison.
>   (*Bellum Civile* 6.719-722)

The first passage, beginning at 6.775, describes the ghost as *maestum* (776) and the *fletu…dixit* of 6.776-777 reminds the reader of the *gemitu…loqui* found in the description of Rome at 1.190. The second description features more of the standard language found in the other two characterizations. *aspicit* (720) fulfills the requirement for a verb of seeing. The verb of seeing inforces that the apparition is real; it has legitimately manifested before the recipient's eyes in the mortal realm. Additionally, *astantem* (720), fulfills the requirement for a compound of *stare*.[48] Not only can the apparition be seen, but it also has certain features of its human counterparts. The ghosts do not float or remain invisible, they stand right before the very eyes of the one they are about to address. The language is not quite as uniform as it is between the other two examples, but there are still distinct echoes which properly alert the reader. The next epic considered, Statius' *Thebaid*, returns to the use of *imago* to designate the appearance of apparitions who will issue warning prophecies.

Statius

The descriptions of autonomous ghosts in the *Thebaid* do not, as in the *Bellum Civile*, follow a strict pattern of diction. The images of ghosts in the *Thebaid* follow a more general set of descriptions based on subject matter rather than identical diction.

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[48] i*nvisa* at 721 is interesting because although not a compound of *video,* its hononymity the similarity arguably conjures up the allusion to the forms of *video* found in the earlier descriptions.

Two of the three major appearances of ghosts are those of Laius.[49] The other is that of the seer Amphiarus who, having been swallowed up by the underworld appears to his replacement Thiodamas. Apparitional descriptions in the *Thebaid* have two major features. They occur in the middle of the night and they focus on the fact that the apparitions appear exactly as they were at the time of death.

The two appearances of Laius both include descriptions of the shade that share similar characteristics in very different ways. After Laius is briefly introduced at line 7, Book 2 quickly finds Laius preparing to visit his grandson Eteocles to provoke the civil war between him and his brother, Polynices,

> tunc senior quae iussus agit; neu falsa videri
> noctis imago queat, longaevi vatis opacos
> Tiresiae vultus vocemque et vellera nota
> induitur. mansere comae propexaque mento
> canities pallorque suus, sed falsa cucurrit
> infula per crines,…
>
> then the rather old man does what he is ordered, so that
> he would not seem a false image of the night, he dresses
> himself with the dark features and the voice and familiar
> fleeces of the seer Tiresias. His hair remained and his white
> beard combed from the chin, and his own paleness, but
> a false headband ran through his hair…
>
> (*Thebaid* 2.94-99)

The first description of uses"imago," a word familiar to the reader of Lucan, (94). Like the apparitions designated "imago" in Lucan, Laius also delivers a prophetic speech to his grandson, Eteocles, spurring him to action against Polynices, and a battle which will end in the violent death of both men and many others (2.101-1190).[50]

. This passage also exemplifies the specific typifying characteristics of Statian apparitions. Before Laius enters, the scene has been set. It is night (*nox* 2.89) and after a large feast Eteocles is sprawled and sleeping on a pile of drapes and mattresses (2.89-93). Because he appears in the middle of the night, Laius masquerades as Tiresias so he will not to be confused as a ***falsa*** *imago* (94) and Eteocles will consider his prophecy

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[49] The second of these two is the necromancy of Laius.
[50] During the necromancy scene, Laius, just prior to his second monitory speech, is again described with diction echoing Lucan, "stabat inops Cocyti in litore maesto Laius" (6.604-605).

legitimately.[51] Through his disguise, however, Laius still maintains some of his

identifying characteristics. The description also includes an account of Laius' hair (2.96-

99). Though Laius assumes many aspects of the appearance of Tiresias, his hair and his

paleness remain his own (*mansere comae propexaque mento canities pallorque suus*

2.97-98). Both these things demonstrate that Laius has maintained identifying

characteristics that are the same as when he died. The picture of Laius as he reveals his

true identity to his grandson reinforces this,

> …confessus avum, dirique nepotis
> incubit stratis; iugulum mox caede patentem
> nudat et undanti perfundit vulnere somnum.
>
> …he reveals himself as the grandfather,
> and he brooded over his terrible grandson's couch
> next he bares his throat laying open from the wound
> and covers the one sleeping with gushing gore.
> (*Thebaid* 2.122-124)

Laius' Tiresias disguise has a limit; ultimately, he reveals who he really is

Laius, having been murdered by Oedipus, still has the wound from his murder even in his

apparitional state. The focus on blood and gore is a typical characteristic of Imperial epic

and Statius in particular, and adds an additional ghoulish dimension to the description of

Laius.[52] The necromancy of Laius also features some of the same characteristics that

have been noted in the previous descriptions of the ghost. Manto announces Laius'

arrival and notes that he is "exsanginue" (cf *pallorque suus* at 2.98). His paleness is also

mentioned by extension as he is described during his reanimation at 4.624-625 (*tingitque

genas*).[53] These focuses on the wounds and paleness of the Laius support the idea that

Statian apparitions maintain the appearance they had at their time of death. The final

appearance of the seer Amphiarius states this most clearly,

> …modo me sub nocte silenti
> ipse, ipse assurgens iterum tellure soluta,

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[51] The term "falsa" here is weighty. If one reads it to mean that all "imago" that appear in the middle of the
night are "falsa," this undermines the legitimacy of all prophecies issued by these ghosts types. Because
this and all other prophecies of "imago" come true, however, we can understand the "falsa" to mean that
Laius, as an "imago" wants to establish his own individual authenticity.

[52] See especially Dewar (1991) with his discussion on the description of the horrific woundings featured in
Thebaid 9.

[53] Presumably, Laius' flush comes from drinking the sacrificial blood as was customary for ghosts to do
during a necromancy in order to be able to speak the future. cf. Ogden (2004)

> quails erat (solos infecerat umbra iugales),
> Amphiaraus adit: non vanae monstra quietis
> nec somno comperta loquor.

>   …just now in the silent night
> he, he himself rising again freed from the earth
> just as he was (the shade had colored only the team),
> Amphiaraus approached: I do not speak of portents
> of the empty night nor things conceived in sleep.
>   (*Thebaid* 10.202-206)

Just like Laius, Amphiaraus visits to make his prophecy in the middle of the night (*sub nocte silenti* 10.202). His visit must be validated, and it is made clear that he, like Laius, is not a figment, but an authoritative and legitimate apparition. Moreover, the reduplicative "ipse, ipse" at 203 and the phrase "qualis erat" of 204 reinforce that Amphiaraus appears exactly the same as the last moment he was seen on Earth by the Argives before being swallowed up. Thiodamas describes an utter absence of change in his appearance from that moment to the current time.[54] Laius and Amphiaraus' features freeze to recall the moment of death and the text is explicit to point this out in each instance.

Silius Italicus

      In Amphiaraus' appearance to Thiodamas, the seer urges his predecessor to proceed with a night raid and provides the narrative motivation for the suicidal attempt the warriors make at removing the bodies of Tydeus and Parthenopaeus. The ghosts of Silius Italicus also address their familial predecessor, Scipio, who has invoked them from the underworld.[55] The autonomous apparitions in Silius Italicus' *Punica* all occur in this episode of Book 13. After the recovery of Capua, Scipio learns that his father and uncle have both fallen in Spain. To assuage his grief, Scipio proceeds to Cumae, where the Sibyl Autonoe instructs him in necromantic ritual so that he can call up the spirits of the dead. In this scene, Scipio speaks with both his father and Hannibal's father, Hamilcar.

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[54] The phrase "quails erat" also appears in the *Aeneid* to describe Aeneas' memory of Hector's triumph at 2.274.

[55] I accept the argument of Bassett (1963) that this is a invocation rather than a descent, as some scholars seem to interpret this scene. Cf. Feeney (1991).

He sees many other apparitions of famous men and women, including Homer, Brutus, and Tullia, but these two apparitions are the only two who give him a monitory address.[56] Unlike the ghosts found in Lucan and Statius, the apparitions featured in Book 13 of the *Punica* are not given lengthy descriptions, if their appearance is even mentioned at all. A ghost term does introduce the prophecizing ghosts and, not unexpectedly, they are called "imago" (Scipio's father at 13.662: Hamilcar at 73 and 751). Besides this term, the other individual and groups of shades in this scene are most commonly referred to by a form of "umbra" or occasionally "manes." There is one instance of "effigiem," a word not used to designate ghosts in Lucan or Statius, which Silius Italicus uses for the unnamed ghost of Homer at 13.779.

Outside of the extended scene of Book 13, the Punica only features on other brief appearance of a monitory ghost. Much like Julia in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, Scipio's father appears to him in a dream in Book 15 and exhorts him to take New Carthage, predicting the glory a triumph will bring to his son. After his exhortation, the ghost moves closer to warn his son, but Scipio awakens,

> talia monstrabat genitor propriusque monebat
> cum iuvenem sopor et dilapsa reliquit imago.

> His father was advising such things and coming closer
> was warning him when sleep left the youth and the ghost faded.
> (*Punica* 15.200-201)

The final apparitional appearance closely mimics all of its predecessors. The "imago" appears in the middle of the night, visits the recipient of its monitory warning in his sleep, and departs once sleep is broken.

The majority of autonomous apparitions, with the exception of Amphiaraus in Statius' *Thebaid* 10, all share common characteristics of diction and description with one another.[57] Each apparition who offers advice or a warning is termed "imago" and subsequently, a number of text specific characteristics accompany this term. Also typical is that these apparitions appear in the night and whatever predictive discourse they issue during this appearance always comes true for the recipient.

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[56] *Punica* 13.650-849

[57] One can argue that Amphairaus may be exempt from this dictional pattern, especially the term "imago," because we are unsure whether or not he is actually deceased. The text tells us he is swallowed up by the underworld, but there is no indication of whether or not this action necessitates his physical death.

Entourage Ghosts

Not only individual apparitions foreshadow impending events, but also groups or "entourages" of ghosts who do not speak appear right before disastrous events occur. Each epic features a handful of these ghosts who are always designated by a form of the word "umbra."[58] The first of these groups appear in the very beginning of Lucan's epic, just prior to Caesar marching on Rome. The appearance of Marius and Sulla, along with other soldiers, foreshadows all of the violent events of the *Bellum Civile*, particularly the outcome of the civil war between Pompey and Caesar at the very beginning of the text (1.580-583). The ghosts kick off a series of portents of disaster and negative prophecies by seers to introduce the impending war (1.584-695). Moreover, another group foreshadows the defeat of Pompey's army at Pharsalus in book 7. Just before the armies clash, ghosts appear to watch the battle (7.177-180). "Entourage" ghosts in the *Bellum Civile* accompany war and disaster and the impending occurrence of both in the text.

Two sets of these ghosts occur also in Statius' *Thebaid*. Before the war for Thebes begins, groups of ghosts appear, haunting citizens all over Greece (7.7414-417). While the war as the subject of the epic is imminent, the ghosts herald the initial blow of battle. Once the ghosts begin to appear, the reader becomes aware that the battle that had previously been delayed has finally arrived. The second group of ghosts is the crowd of Theban ancestors who rise from the underworld to witness the final duel between the two brothers (11.420-423). The ghost groups of the *Thebaid* signal the two most significant battles and the major focuses of narrative action in the epic.

Silius Italicus' *Punica* features only one of these ghost groups, but the group still announces one of the major battles of the epic. At 17.164-165, a group of shades haunt Africa, foreshadowing Hannibal's defeat at the Battle of Zama. The battle begins at 385 and concludes the last extant book of the epic. Much like the other entourage groups, these shades signal to the reader the disaster and defeat that will be the outcome of the looming clash.

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[58] There is one exception to this at *Thebaid* 11.420-423 where the term "manes" is used. This is not surprising if the traditional meaning of the term is applied because these are the ghosts of Theban ancestors who have come up from the Underworld to watch the final battle between Eteocles and Polynices. The familial connotation is significant insofar as the two are brothers.

Both autonomous ghosts and entourage ghosts in the epics of Lucan, Statius, and Silius Italicus foreshadow significant, negative events in the text. With respect to the autonomous ghosts, the prophecies they issue either foreshadow or provoke the recipient to actions which will bring about their own demise. The entourage ghosts also enter the texts as harbingers of disaster. With their appearance, a battle will come straightaway. Essentially, the appearance of both ghost types to a character in the text ensures a series of events with a negative outcome. Now that Chapter One has defined these two ghost types and explored the diction used to describe them, Chapter Two will explore the specific content of these predictive and monitory messages. Additionally, because ghosts are often the only designated characters to be privy to this ominous material, even in spite of the presence of seers, oracles and Sibyls, the foundation for this authority will be explored. Chapter Two will concentrate primary on the authority of ghost prophets and the nature of the content of their prophecies.

CHAPTER THREE
APPARITIONAL AUTHORITY

In ancient epic, Gods, oracles, augurs, omens, and even the author himself[59] issue

prophecies to characters, in addition to the dead. Apparitions who predict the future are

curious because, unlike their counterparts, apparitional prophets do not have the

traditional ties with divinity.[60] This chapter will briefly explore ancient beliefs on

divination and how apparitional monitions fall outside of the standard requirements for

prophecy. Then, I will argue that, in fact, while the dead themselves may not have a

direct line to the gods, they are constructed in the text to either act like the divine or have

an outside agent, connected to the gods, who facilitates the dead's prophecies.

Agents of Prophecies in Roman Imperial Epic

Traditional types of divination are found frequently in Roman epics from all ages.

In Imperial epic, an exhaustive list of all prophecies includes those issued by augurs,

haurspices, many different types of oracles and omens, the Gods and, of course the

dead.[61] All agents of prophecy with the exception of the dead have a direct link to the

divine. The most obvious, the gods themselves, will appear to characters both awake and

asleep. Oracles like Dodona were thought to express the will of the gods through signs in

nature. The prophet at the oracle would utter puzzling riddles for the recipient to discern

for himself. Augurs and haruspices also interpreted signs in nature sent by the gods. The

most basic explanation for the necessity of a direct link to the gods can be offered by a

brief discussion of the ancient belief about divination and etymology of the word itself.

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[59] According to Dick (1963), this is a feature specific to Lucan's *Bellum Civile.* The scholar argues that Lucan discards his narrative persona and delivers prophecies of his own. The author's own interjections about the futility of prodigies and prophecies follows. E.g. Bellum Civile 2.1-15
[60] Luck (1985) 286.
[61] Moore (1921) helpfully lists every prophecy in ancient epic, beginning with Homer. He, however, offers little in the way of interpretation.

The Romans designated an act of foretelling the future or interpreting the past with the term *divinatio*. The noun derives from the verb *divinare* 'to predict' and, in turn, becomes etymologically linked with *divinus* 'divine' in the sense of "pertaining to a god or the gods." The adjective *divinus* and so the verb *divinare* are forms derived from the noun *deus* (god).[62] Because both the act of divination (*divinare*) and prophetic transmissions (*divinum*) have god (*deus*) at their roots, this linguistic evidence convincingly argues that the ability to predict the future was something that came from the gods.[63] Ancient philosophy also supports this assertion. Cicero's interlocutor Marcus, following Aristotle and the Stoics, argues in *De Divinatione* that 'ut et, si divinatio sit, di sint et, si di sint, sit divination' (*If there is divination, there are gods, and if there are gods, there is divination*).[64] For the ancients it seems, the gods must play a direct role in the prediction of the future. Because the gods determined the future, one must communicate with them in order to learn it.

In Roman society, divination also had marked religious significance and played an important role in affairs of the state. Divinatory practices were involved in public and private ritual and often including as a part of political procedure. Individuals and groups would also seek advice from divinatory practitioners. Particularly for the typical citizen, divination provided a way for one to receive and understand guidance from the gods who inhabited their everyday life.[65] Therefore, not only was divination a prominent feature for typical Romans, but also for the state.

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[62] Valpy (1838) 128.
[63] Luck (1985) 285-286. Luck offers interesting examples from mythology as evidence for this claim. He also makes an interesting connection between the word prophet and the Greek *prophetes*, 'a person who speaks for someone else,' that someone else typically being a god.
[64] *De Divinatione* 1.10. Marcus also later refutes and then reaccepts this tenet. For more on why, see Wardle (2006) especially p. 123.
[65] Wardle (2006) 1-7.

Lucan, Valerius Flaccus, Statius, and Silius Italicus all feature a variety of

prophetic agents, if only in accordance with the epic tradition. Each epic also features

apparitions as characters who give the same predictions as their traditional counterparts.

Many scholars focus on the necessity of prophecies and their literary function, but hardly

ever focus on the content of the prophecies themselves.[66] The content of the prophecies

found in these authors spans a wide-range and predict almost every major high point and

crisis of the text.[67] Because this project focuses on the dead, patterns or even if patterns

exist among prophecies issued by traditional means will not be considered. Instead, it

will focus on those which can be found by examining the prophecies of the so-called

autonomous apparitions discussed in Chapter One.[68]

The prophetic utterances of the eight autonomous apparitions mentioned in

Chapter One all share one characteristic – they foretell or foreshadow a critical event in

the text, almost exclusively often a battle which will end disastrously, or a character's

inevitable death.[69] Other prophecies include a variety of different material and

epiphanies can be both positive and negative. Beginning with Lucan, Julia explicitly

foretells Pompey's death,

> coniunge me laetos duxisti, Magne, triumphos:
> fortuna est mutata toris, semperque potentes
> detrahere in cladem fator damnata maritos
> innupsit tepido paelex Cornelia busto.
>
> When you married me, Magnus, you celebrated triumphs:

> Your fortune has been changed by your bride, my rival,
> Cornelia, condemned by Fate to always drag down her
> powerful husbands into ruin, replaced me while my
> pyre was still warm.
>
> (*Bellum Civile* 3.20-23)

Julia ends her speech, revealing Pompey's fate at 3.34, "te faciet civile meum" (*civil war will make you mine*). Julia's apparition shares important features with other epic ghosts who also issue prophecies. First, like Julia, the ghost is a (previous) family member who has come back to her ex-husband to issue a warning directly about his future. The appearance of a familial ghost will continue in other epics.[70] The exceptions to this, the cadaver in *Bellum Civile* 6 and Amphiaraus in *Thebaid* 10, foretell events which are not directly related to the character with whom they are speaking. The cadaver tells Sextus Pompey about the fate of his father and alludes to Caesar's assassination, while Amphiarius' speech in his appearance to Thiodamas foreshadows the slaughter of the Theban camp by his predecessor and other men, but not the fate of Thiodamas himself.[71]

Secondly, the prophecy itself given by Julia contains two typical elements which will also occur, though sometimes separately, in subsequent warnings. At 3.21-22, Julia states that Cornelia has been condemned "semperque potentes detrahere in cladem…maritos" (*always to drag her powerful husbands into ruin*). Thus, Pompey too will suffer for Cornelia's fate. As the reader already knows, he will ultimately lose the Civil War with Caesar and all his power previously held before his defeat.[72] Other apparitions will also prophesy significant battles in the narrative.[73] The cadaver in

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[70] Cf Laius in *Thebaid*, Scipio's father and Hamilcar in *Punica*. The father figure ghost is unmistakably reminiscent of Anchises in *Aeneid* 6.

[71] It should be noted, however, that Amphiaraus is the father of Thiodamas.

[72] Julia's words do correspond to historical fact. Of course Pompey was defeated by Caesar and eventually fell in Egypt, but, moreover, with her death in 54 BCE, Caesar and Pompey became increasingly estranged from one another. Cf. Seneca *Dialogus* 6 (*Ad Marcus* 14.3)

[73] Laius at *Thebaid* 2.101-119 and Scipio's father at *Punica* 15.182-199

Bellum Civile 6 will also issue a similar prophecy, again foreshadowing the battle of Pharsalus which will subsequently occur in Book 7.

Julia's prophecy, however, goes one step further, prophesying both the battle and Pompey's impending death. Not only will he lose his power, but he will lose his life. In other epics, the content of this one prophecy would be distributed among more than one monitory occurrence. Because Lucan wrote a historical epic with *Bellum Civile*, the reader already knows about the eventual outcome of the civil war and Pompey's impending death. The appearance of Julia here does a double duty by warning Pompey not only of his defeat at Pharsalus, but also of his death in Book 8.[74]

Ultimately, the content of the prophecies issued by apparitions is limited to these two types: defeat in battle and impending death. The question becomes, then, why the dead are privy to this type of information and not any other. Some scholars group all types of premonitory material together and argue that the purpose of predictions and prodigies from all sources is primarily to act as a narrative motivator and provide a vehicle with which to propel the storyline. The ability to predict battles and death foreshadows the major crisis of the text and holds the reader's attention to the narrative progression.[75] This project, however, examines an alternative reading. I will later argue that while the arguments for apparitions as internal motivators are convincing ones, apparitions can also be used as a vehicle for socio-political commentary. In order to provide a foundation for this argument, this chapter will first set up the foundation of authority for apparitions to be legitimate agents of prophecy.

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[74] For a clear example of how prophecies are typically "split," cf Laius' predictions in *Thebaid* 2 and 4. In Book 2, Laius only portends the battle with his brother to Eteocles and does not tell of the battle's outcome until his necromancy at 4.635.
[75] Berstein (2001) and Dick (1963)

As briefly mentioned above, the majority of apparitions to appear and give this information are typically family members.[76] The deceased family members are ghosts from the past who come to the present to presage the future. The initial appearance of Laius in *Thebaid* 2 especially exemplifies this problem with temporality. Laius appears to his grandson Eteocles who was born after his murder.[77] As an authority figure, Laius has an unsteady foundation in the world of Eteocles and Polynices. He has not lived during their lifetime to gain even the slightest information about their status quo, yet still accurately predicts their future battle.

Though it has become a *topos* even into modern literature,[78] a ghost from a character's past who is able to warn it about the future is a curious phenomenon. While the problem with temporality may never be sufficiently solved, a brief suggestion here will be more thoroughly addressed in Chapter Three. The ghosts of the past under consideration are characters related to the addressee. Though, like Laius, the character they address may not have interacted with them directly, they will to some extent recognize their family member when they identify themselves. These apparitional figures remind both the reader and the character to whom they appear that they cannot change the past. The ghosts who appear have all met untimely fates. Julia, Laius, Scipio's father, et al. have experienced in some way the fate which awaits their living counterpart. Moreover, the epiphanies of Julia and Laius, for example, reveal destruction of the very houses which lead to their own demise. The fate of their addresses will in some way

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[76] Bernstein (2001) extensively treats the relationship between ghosts and the characters that they appeared to in Imperial epic. The majority of ghosts who manifest themselves in the text are in someway what he calls the "honored dead" and the honored dead perform specific literary functions within the narrative.
[77] Ahl (1986) believes that the Tiresias disguise is in part necessary because Eteocles would not even recognize his grandfather.
[78] Cf. most notably the ghost of Christmas Past from Dickens *A Christmas Carol*.

exact vengeance for themselves. Their memories of their own fate allow the ghost to

relate their epiphanies to their previous living existence. This is particularly significant

for the readers of historical epic who can make the same connection to their own day.

The immediate future of the character in historical epic is already set in stone, but a clear

monition to the reader nonetheless. The narrative of the deceased has not closed and can

be reopened into the narratological present. The same can be said for the narrative

history, a past which could potentially be reopened in the reader's modern day.

Because apparitions as socio-political commentators is significant enough to

warrant a more thorough investigation in the concluding chapter, we can now return to

our investigation of apparitional prophets and their atypical relationship with divinity.

The movement between the planes of the divine and mortals is standard when

considering the occurrences of divination in epic. All the traditional methods of

foretelling the future feature this movement, except for the appearance of apparitions.

While Augustan epic does includes apparitions prophesying, Imperial epic sees a much

higher concentration of ghost-figures who foretell the future and these characters tend to

be much more developed.[79] The movement through the planes of the underworld and the

living disrupts the cosmos established by the standard movement back and forth between

mortals and the divine. Given the traditionally accepted characteristics of Imperial epic,

this inversion supports the typical difference in atmosphere between Augustan and

Imperial epic.[80]

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[79] An analysis of the extensive list in Moore (1921) shows this concentration.
[80] For a more thorough study on inversion of the norm , particularly of *pietas*, see Ganiban (2006) who
focuses his efforts on the differences between the *Thebaid* and the *Aeneid*, two very good paradigms of epic
typical of each period.

The God-like Dead

If one accepts the earlier assertion that the gods were the ultimate source of authority on

the future, the movement between the planes of the divine and mortals easily explains the

connection between the prognostication of gods and oracles alike. Both have a direct line

to this realm of knowledge about the future. The dead, on the other hand, do not have

this same direct association. As literary characters, however, they share in the

characteristics of divinatory practitioners who do have that direct connection with the

gods. Apparitions who foretell the future either appear to the recipient in dream sequence

or as a result of a necromantic ritual. Apparitions in dreams share certain characteristics

of the gods and goddess as they are represented in the epic. They act independently and

have no intermediary agent to administer their prophecy. Such an understanding is only

part of the story, however. Ghosts summoned by necromantic ritual necessarily have an

outside agent who performs the ritual and endows the ghost with knowledge. In this way,

necromantic ghosts act much more like oracles, but also share some characteristics with

divinities. The allusion to the traditional types of divinity lends a literary authority to

ghost prophets as legitimate sources for knowledge about the future.

The Dead in Dreams

Apparitions who appear in dreams occur four times, at least once in each major

epic. The ghost of Julia appears to Pompey in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*; Laius visits his

grandson Eteocles as he sleeps and Amphiaraus manifests to Thiodamas in the *Thebaid*;

and Scipio's father comes to Scipio in Silius Italicus' *Punica*. Of these four occurrences,

only three will be discussed here. The figure Amphiaraus follows the same pattern as

other apparitions in the Thebaid, but it is still impossible to determine whether or not he

is actually dead and therefore a legitimate apparitional character. Apparitions who

appear in dreams often act like the gods in epic and the very allusion to the divine lends a

legitimacy to the prophecies issued by these characters which would otherwise be absent.

Julia makes her appearance at the beginning of *Bellum Civile* 3. She appears to

Pompey and discloses to him not only his future in battle against Caesar, but also his

impending death.[81] In Lucan, there is no divine machinery, and therefore prophecies can

be delivered only by the professional seer, the shade, or the poet himself.[82] Julia's

appearance in disguise, however, connects her with Laiu's appearance to Eteocles; she

appears in disguise,

> ...diri tum plena horrois imago
> visa caput maestum per hiantes Iulia terras
> tollere et accenso furialis stare sepulchro.

> …then a ghost, Julia, seen full of awful
> dread, lifts her sad head over the gaping earth
> and like a Fury stands on her burning grave.
> (*Bellum Civile* 3.9-11)

A shade who foretells the future appearing in disguise is a trend which Laius continues at

Thebaid 2.94-97. Gods and goddesses appearing to give warnings are also frequently

seen in ancient epic, beginning with Homer. In both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, goddesses

visit characters under a guise other than that of their own.[83] The *Aeneid* upholds this

tradition; Venus appears to her son disguised as a huntress at 1.526-624. The assumed

identities of the goddess in the Homeric epics and Venus in the *Aeneid* are all those of

everyday citizens. The divinities do not assume pretentious characters, but rather

accessible ones. Julia's acquisition of a Fury-like persona inverts the traditional

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[81] For more on the content of this prophecy refer back to pages 27-28. *Bellum Civile* 3.12-34
[82] Dick (1963) 37.
[83] Most notably Aphrodite to Helen as an old woman at *Iliad* 3.395-412; Athena to Odysseus as a shepherd boy at *Odyssey* 13.219-328

procedure of the preceding goddesses. The similarities between Julia and the goddesses, however, are not lost upon the reader. Julia's assumption of the persona of the Fury, also a supernatural character, highlights the fundamentally inverted world in which Lucan's characters live. Julia, in acting like a god, becomes a Fury, and thus she demonstrates that are not only the divine entirely absent, but have been replaced by entities from the underworld.[84]

Like Julia, the ghost of Laius appears to Eteocles in disguise. Laius assumes the appearance of the famous seer Tiresias,

> …neu falsa videri
> noctis imago queat, longaevi vatis opacos
> Tiresiae vultus vocemque et vellera nota
> induitur.

> …and so as not to
> seem like a false image of the night, he assumed
> the shadowy features and voice and well-known
> woolen circlets of long-lived Tiresias.
> (*Thebaid* 2.94-97)

Initially, the dream sequence follows the same pattern of Julia's appearance to Pompey. The character assumes another's visage and then delivers a prophecy. Laius' appearance is different, however, because he eventually reveals his true identity before spilling blood all over the sleeping Eteocles.[85]

Because Laius atypically abandons this disguise and reveals himself in the dream, this masquerade has additional implications. On the one hand, the disguise could, in part, be due to the fact that Eteocles was born after Laius' murder. Therefore, Eteocles would

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[84] For additional readings about the reasons for Julia's appearance, see Bruère (1951) 222 who conjectures that the vision is suggested by the apparition of Morpheus in the form of Ceyx to Alcyon at Ovid *Met.* 11.650. Pichon (1912) 226 seems an imitation of the appearance of the shade of Creusa to Aeneas. Currie (1958) 50 identifies just another indication of Lucan's interest in the macabre.
[85] *Thebaid* 2.120-124

be unable to recognize his grandfather and the legitimacy of his prophecy would be questionable.[86] The Tiresias disguise, however, may also establish legitimacy in another way. The prophet is a traditional monitory figure in epic and tragedy.[87] His appearance would be expected for this type of warning dream. Moreover, Tiresias is considered the leading prophet of Thebes and a close intimate of the gods; therefore, his words have intrinsic authority.[88] In spite of the reason Laius assumes the role of Tiresias, his appearance in disguise still alludes to the traditional appearances of divinities acting as someone else.

In the scene where Laius reveals himself to his grandson, Statius explicitly paints a picture of Laius throwing off his Tiresias disguise and spilling blood from his wound all over the sleeping Eteocles,

> …ramos ac vellera fronti
> deripuit, confessus avum, dirique nepotis
> incubuit stratis; iugulum mox caede patentem
> nudat et undanti perfundit vulnere somnum.

> …he tore the branches and
> fillets from his head, having revealed himself
> as the grandfather, he sat upon the couch of his
> dire grandson; next he bares the throat lying open
> with the wound and drenches the one sleeping with
> the flowing wound.
> (*Thebaid* 2.121-124)

While this scene breaks with the pattern establish by Julia in *Bellum Civile*, it alludes to earlier precedent established by Vergil. When Venus visits Aeneas and directs Aeneas to return to his family, she, too, reveals herself to her son. Aeneas recounts this occurrence to Dido,

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[86] Ahl (1986) 2841.
[87] Cf. Brisson (1976) for more on Tiresias' role in Greek and Roman literature
[88] Berstein (2001) 138.

cum mihi se, non ante oculis tam clara, videndam
obtulit et pura per noctem in luce refulsit
alma parens, confessa deam qualisque videri
caelicolis et quanta solet…

when my nourishing mother came to me, never before
so brilliant in my eyes, she in pure radiance gleamed
through the night, having revealed herself a goddess
just like she is seen by the gods and by those
who are accustomed…

(*Aeneid* 2.589-592)

The phrase, "confessus avum," as it is found in the *Thebaid*, echoes the "confessa dea" of the *Aeneid*. Much like Laius, too, Venus is an introductory figure who generates the cause of subsequent action. In the narrative, Laius and Venus are constructed parallel to one another and echo of Aeneas' story of Venus in the culmination of Laius' reveal directly invokes an allusion to the deity. This reference associates the appearance of Laius with the appearance of Venus. By invoking the manifestation of a diety, Statius has lent his own apparition legitimacy and allowed the apparitional prophecy to be received as the one from Venus was.d

In this account of Laius, Statius clearly alludes to Vergil's Venus through his choice of diction, but the selection of the apparition of Laius to deliver the monition is still troublesome. Initially, Laius' appearance seems arbitrary. Mercury, the typical messenger, has summoned him, and could have delivered the message to Eteocles himself without the requirement of summoning an intermediary. Because Mercury is the same god who is responsible for delivering the message that sends Aeneas from Carthage,[89] he would have still participated in the Vergilian tradition.[90] Statius, however,

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[89] *Aeneid* 4.625-276
[90] Bernstein (2001) 144

crafts the scene to not only echo his predecessor Vergil, but also to follow the pattern set

forth by Lucan, creating a richer intertextual scene.[91]

The primary autonomous apparition in Silius' *Punica* also participates in the

intertextual tradition of previous epics, but only to a small extent. The appearance of

Scipio's father in *Punica* 15 shares only the most basic characteristic of a physical

manifestation of a prophetic apparition with its parallels in *Bellum Civile* 3 and *Thebaid*

2. Scipio's father does not appear in disguise and beseech Scipio to attack Carthage.[92]

He, on the other hand, appears to Scipio and predicts his success in battle. The allusion

to the defeat of Hannibal, an external enemy, drew attention back to the Roman ability to

face adversity and cope with it. The appearance of Scipio's father and his prophecy

demonstrates the difference in themes between Silius' poem and those of Lucan and

Statius. Silius' apparition supports the continued theme of *fides* and *pietas*, two concepts

which have been the focus of the Punic and which can be achieved by the kind of success

will Scipio will experience in battle with Carthage. The battle which Scipio's father

predicts, in contrast with the battles predicted by the apparitions in other Imperial epics,

return to themes more appropriate for a national epic.[93]

As Cicero explains in the *De Divinatione*, dreams were a place where the human

soul had the ability to communicate with the divine. Mortals are able either to converse

with the gods directly, or with an immortal soul or *daimon,* who shares knowledge about

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[91] Berstein (2001) 142-145 argues that the "falsa imago" of *Thebaid* 2.95 echoes Venus mocking Aeneas with "falsis imaginibus" in *Aeneid* 1.407-408. I believe, however, the word *imago* alludes more clearly the *imago* of Lucan. In choosing to diverge from the *Aeneid* and echo Lucan, Statius has built upon the foundation of a new tradition, weaving his typical tendencies toward Vergil with those also toward Lucan. In doing so, Statius manages not only to keep in accordance with Vergil, but also establish his own innovations.

[92] 15.183-199

[93] For more on the distinction in theme between the Punica and its predecessors, see Pomeroy (1991) 122-123.

the future with humans when they are not burdened by their bodies. Dreams bridge a gap between the existent and the non-existent and allow mortals to receive supernatural prophecies. During dreams becomes the perfect place for apparitions to visit the sleeping and foretell their future to them. Dream sequence itself is not only a traditionally accepted arena for mortals to communicate with the divine, but when the apparitions who visit them also imitate the divine, they increase in their legitimacy and build upon a foundation of authority.

Necromancy

Necromancy is the art of predicting the future by communicating with the dead. As a technique, necromancy tends to fall in the realm of magic, as its rituals are most often times performed by a witch (e.g. Erictho). Because the aim is most times the revelation of the future, however, it is certainly a form of divination as well.[94] Much like apparitions who appear in dream sequence, ghosts who are raised from the dead by necromantic ritual are also an additional step removed from the divine. Thus, the legitimacy of their prophecies can seem questionable at first.

In all necromantic rituals, an intermediary agent raises the dead from the underworld and then endows it with the power to speak. The endowment with prophetic power must come from the one performing the ceremony among sundry other ritual preparations. The scene in Lucan's *Bellum Civile* 6 is one of the most frequently discussed, and accordingly, it includes mention that the conductor of the ritual, the witch Erictho, grants the cadaver knowledge before it is able to speak,

> Addiddit et carmen, quo, quidquid consulit, umbram
> Scire dedit.

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[94] Luck (1985) 210-211

And she added a spell, with which she granted the shade
to know whatever she asked it.
<div align="center">(Bellum Civile 6.775-776)</div>

In order for the cadaver to give his premonitory speech, Eritcho must use a spell to give the corpse to be able to predict the future. He is not already endowed with the power of foresight. In this case, Eritcho acts as an intermediary. She is a supernatural being with an already established ability to know about the future. The actual dead man is not the immediate source of the prophecy, but his counterpart. The agent of the ritual and source of the information lends increased legitimacy to the prophecy the dead gives.

Laius' necromancy, foreshadowed, at Thebaid 2.18-21 finally occurs after some delay in book 4. During the necromancy, Laius also reveals that he, too, has been endowed with his prophetic powers by another source,

> quod si adeo placui deflenda in tempora vates,
> dicam equidem, quo me Lachesis, quo torva Megaera
> usque sinunt:…

> but if I am welcomed as a prophet in tearful times
> indeed I will speak that which Lachesis and fierce
> Megaera permit…
<div align="center">(Thebaid 4.635-637)</div>

The Furies, Lachesis and Megaera, are the ones who give Laius the ability to prophecies about the outcome of the battle between his grandsons and their impending fates. Both Laius and the cadaver raised by Erictho do not innately possess prophetic ability; it must be granted to them by an outside agent. In both cases, that intermediary is a supernatural form which embodies the dark elements so characteristic of the epics themselves. The worlds of Lucan and Statius are not ruled by the gods. Traditional divination is derived from the gods and their knowledge. In the inverted worlds of these epics, however, it

<div align="center">43</div>

comes from witches and Furies. In these cases, Erictho and Furies demonstrate how the gods have been replaced by dark powers. Like an oracle would receive its prophecy from the gods, the apparitions receive their prophecies from a higher power, but these superior beings are malevolent, as are the futures they hand down.

The sacrificial blood which the ghosts drank as part of a necromantic ritual also seems to be a source of knowledge for the apparitions. Once they drink the blood, they are able to speak their prophecy. Laius' necromancy exemplifies this phenomenon. Tiresias must compel Laius to drink the blood and give his warning to his grandson.[95]

> …confer vultum et satiare litanti
> sanguine venturasque vices et funera belli
> pande, vel infensus vel res miserate tuorum.

> …come face to face and satiate yourself
> with sacrificial blood and lay out the coming
> successions and ruins of war, whether because of
> anger or pity for your family's fate.
> (*Thebaid* 4.619-621)

The order of Laius' assent and prophecy is standard.[96] He is compelled forth by the necromancer, drinks the blood, and then will deliver his prophecy. The sacrificial blood is also present in the necromancies of *Bellum Civile* 6 and in Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.[97] In the Punica, the consumption of blood is quite pronounced because of all the ghosts which speak to Scipio. All of the ghosts who visit Scipio must drink the blood before they are able to issue a prophecy to him. This idea is laid out at the beginning of the

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[95] *Thebaid* 4.618-21
[96] For Imperial Epic, the necromantic scenes in *Bellum Civile*, *Thebaid*, and *Punica* all include a sacrifice and the apparition's consumption of that sacrificial blood. Because this project does not intend to catalogue every necromancy and its associated necromantic rituals, Laius is used only as an example which the others conform to.
[97] 13.417-434

necromantic scene, when Scipio speaks with the ghost of Appius Claudius before the

necromantic ceremony begins,

> interea cerne ut gressus inhumata citatos
> fert umbra et properat tecum coniungere dicta;
> cui datur ante atros absumpti corporis ignes,
> sanguine non tacto, solitas effundere voces.

> Meanwhile, look at the unburied ghost who swiftly
> approaches and wants to speak with you;
> until his body is given to the dark fires, he is able to
> speak as he is accustomed without tasting the blood.
> <div align="right">(Punica 13.445-448)</div>

Because Appius has not been placed on his funeral pyre, he can still speak to Scipio

without the consumption of blood. Assumedly, because he was not properly buried, he

still maintains some sort of human characteristics which allow him to speak with Scipio

without the ritualistic blood. The other apparitions who Scipio meets during the

necromancy, on the other hand, are not exempt from this requirement and must drink the

blood before they issue their prophecy or even speak with Scipio.

In all of the necromancy scenes, , sacrifices must be made to the dead as if they

were the gods to be propitiated. The apparitions are not even able to give their

prophecies until they have consumed this blood. The ritualistic sacrifice, like the

disguise of apparitions in dream sequence, alludes to the gods and the divine. The textual

allusion to divinity allows the reader to equate the apparitional prophet with the

traditional means of divinity. The fact that the apparitions derive their prophetic powers

from malevolent sources instead of the gods, however, demonstrates the inverted world

which these epics represent.

While this chapter has investigated the sources of apparitional authority, the next

chapter will expound upon some ideas discussed here in context with their socio-political

significance. The foundation of authority is important when these implications are explored, particularly with respect to historical epics, because the majority of the predictions given by the apparitions not only come true, but are also predicting the outcome of a major battle.[98] Why the authors chose to use the dead instead of traditional divinities has already been touched upon to a brief extent, but Chapter Three will discuss in what ways the author can make a statement about contemporary politics through his use of apparitional characters in his epic.

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[98] The battle of Eteocles and Polynices, while based on myth, will also be a key element of discussion. Analogy to Rome and the current political atmosphere under Domitian has always been widely debated and is more difficult to argue one way or another, but will still be addressed nonetheless.

CHAPTER FOUR
APPARITIONAL PROPHECY AS COMMENTARY

Evidence of a Latin author using an apparition as a device to promote his own purpose can be found as far back as Ennius in his *Annales*.[99] An unknown scholiast who comments on this part of the *Annales* tells the story of the missing fragments in which Homer visits Ennius and possesses his body,

> Sic Ennius ait in Annalium suorum principio, ubi dicit se vidisse in somnis Homerum dicentem fuisse quondam pavonem et ex eo translatam in se animam esse secundum Pythagorae philosophi definitionem.

> So Ennius said in the beginning of his Annales, where he states that in his sleep he saw Homer who told him that he was once a peacock and from it, according to a rule set out by the philosopher Pythagoras, his soul transplanted into him [Ennius].[100]

According to the scholia on Ennius frag. 14, a ghost of Homer appears to Ennius in a dream and tells him that Ennius is Homer reincarnate.[101] In so doing, Ennius makes himself the new Homer at the beginning of his epic and becomes the physical embodiment of the greatest poet of the day. His "reincarnation" establishes that he is entirely worthy to sing the praises of his patrons, M Fulvius Nobilior and M. Porcius Cato. This status, in turn, legitimizes his elevation of the two over their political opponents.[102]

Ennius uses the appearance of Homer's ghost and his dream as propaganda to support his own goal of writing the epic to advance his patrons. Authors of Imperial epic will follow suit in using apparitions as vehicles for their own ulterior motives. This

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[99] Earlier extant Latin texts are too fragmentary and without the scholia to support this idea. A thorough investigation of apparitions in Homer may likely reveal that Homeric ghosts can also function in this way, but the texts are too extensive and irrelevant to be considered within the scope of this project.

[100] Skutsch 164-165

[101] See especially Hardie (1913) and Aicher (1989)

[102] Dufallo (2007) 10-11, who sees Ennius as the precedent for Cicero's Appius in the *Pro Caelio*.

chapter will argue that the autonomous apparitions which appear in the texts of Lucan, Statius, and Silius Italicus serve as mouthpieces for the authors' own political commentaries. These scenes are strikingly similar. The warnings which every apparition issues are similar in the sense that, absent of their historical significance, they all broadly warn of the negative consequences of autocratic rules and demonstrate the negative consequences and corrupting nature of despotic power when considered divorced from their literary context.[103]

Furthermore, this chapter will also address the choice of apparitions as the agents of delivering these types of messages. Political implications are prevalent in many scenes and characters featured in the epics. A ghost adds an extra dimension to a character who delivers a politically-themed warning because apparitions represent the collapse between the past and the present. The ghosts who appear to give premonitions are typically characters who have participated in the recipient's past. The apparitions are a reminder of the past life which the recipient has experienced, and often times abandoned.[104] In many cases, the ghost of the past represents the negativity of that former life and the monitions given by the apparitions are the negative consequences of those previous actions taken in that life.

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[103] This suggestion allows for the obvious political implications of Imperial epic to be accounted for, but avoids drawing conclusions about each author's political stance. Contemporary scholarship, especially that written on *Bellum Civile* and *Thebaid*, has focused on reading the author's political opinions into the text. For Lucan, see especially Bartsch (1997) and Masters (1994) for opposing opinions. For Statius, I consider Pollmann (2001) indispensable. Many of these arguments are convincing, but I believe that for the purposes of this project a broad interpretation will prove more fruitful in understanding the function of apparitions.
[104] For example, Julia was a major part of Pompey's previous life and political relationship with Caesar which he has now abandoned by entering into civil war with his former ally. Laius' necromantic appearance to Polynices also represents his departure from his former life and break from his brother by his decision to breach their former agreement to share rule.

Therefore, apparitions do not only bridge the divide between past and present, but also between past and future. The apparitions deliver monitions, always warnings about an imminent future. For the reader, this future is already historical past; so, why even bother foretelling the event at all?[105] Prophecies given by apparitions can not only function as an open-ended caveat against the corrupting nature of power, but also as a warning to contemporary and future readers alike of the dangers of civil war and unchecked Imperial war which their generate should heed in order to avoid fulfilling such a legacy in their own time.

For example, scholars often cite the events of Lucan's life and political involvement as evidence which supports arguments that the *Bellum Civile* is in some way a commentary either in direct support of Republicanism and Pompey or in opposition to the rule of Nero.[106] Whether a Republican, anti-Nero, or satiric propaganda text, the *Bellum Civile* is unmistakably an epic about power and corruption. The same can be said of the *Thebaid* and *Punica*, as well. All of these epics are often read as direct commentaries on the oppressive rule of their imperial rulers. While these interpretations are interesting and fruitful in understanding the political atmosphere contemporary to the publication of the work, each epic also focuses on the more universal ideas of the dangers of power struggle and its effect on society. Though each reading is profitable in its own way, this project will focus on how apparitions in epic support the undeniable warnings of the dangers of civil war and unchecked autocratic rule and allow the individual reader

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[105] Prophecy and its purpose in epic is also addressed in contemporary scholarship, as noted in Chapter Two. See especially Bassett (1963), Bernstein (2001) Dick (1963), and Luck (1985) for an evaluation of the literary techniques

[106] In most modern scholarship, the two ideas can be mutually exclusive.

to decide on the necessity of a contemporary application to the rule of the emperor of that period.[107]

Lucan

Lucan wrote his *Bellum Civile* under Nero, beginning it during the emperor's reign in 61 AD. At first, the author received the favor of Nero and what even seems at times to be his encouragement in the writing of the epic. After their composition, several books were released and circulated through public recitation and use in the law courts. Tacitus, however, tells how works of Lucan were eventually banned shortly after their release, though the driving motivation is not explicitly mentioned.[108] Scholars are divided over whether the ban was a consequence of personal reasons or for broader political implications.[109] Regardless, the author and the emperor had a very public break with the proscription of Lucan's work in 64 AD. Lucan continued to work on his *Bellum Civile* in spite of the prohibition on his poetry, composing six more complete books and one unfinished at the time of his death. Early in 65 AD, shortly after the ban, Lucan joined the conspiracy to assassinate Nero and replace him with a new emperor.[110] He and his constituents were discovered, however, and he was put to death at age 26 on April 30, 65 AD.

For some, as they coincide with the banning of the *Bellum Civile* and Lucan's personal falling out with Nero, these details of Lucan's personal life and involvement in political proceedings endorse the idea that the *Bellum Civile* is an epic which promotes a

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[107] As will be supported by this discussion, I do believe that a contemporary application of the warning of unchecked individual rule can be made. Especially Lucan, and eventually Statius, both settle on a more universal message without being explicit and a reading which preserves this intentionality, however suggestive it may be, is most beneficial.
[108] *Annals* 15.70
[109] Toohey (1992) 168-169 and Braund (1999) xiii-xv both thoroughly outline the reasons for each explanation.

Republican Rome, and, at the same time, opposes the notoriously tyrannical rule of Nero,[111] but the alternate view argues for a stereotypical categorization of the *Bellum Civile* as Republican propaganda.[112] Others follow even another school of thought that the blatant political undertones are intentional and not meant to be taken as serious commentary at all. In fact, the epic should be read as "failed" propaganda which an "intelligent reader" will recognize and laugh at instead of take seriously.[113] One must acknowledge, however, that the goal of the Pisonian conspiracy was not necessarily to restore Republican Rome, but to replace Nero with another emperor. The objective was not to absolve absolute power; it was to install a ruler who would wield that power more fairly and "treat the Senate with more respect and dignity than Nero had."[114] Therefore, it is useful to read the *Bellum Civile* as a work written by an author who believed in the corrupting power of absolute rule and the necessity of avoiding it in order to maintain a harmonious socio-political atmosphere. Thus considering Lucan's allegiance to this more universal ideal instead of his immediate relationship with Nero, this discussing of apparitions in *Bellum Civile* will focus on a more moralizing reading of the text instead of focusing on it as a direct commentary on the rule of the emperor.

The Personification of Rome

As defined in Chapter One, the first autonomous apparition[115] to appear in *Bellum Civile* is the disheveled matron, a personification of Rome herself. As Caesar approaches

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[111] More recently, Bartsch (1997) and Leigh (1997) touch on this to some extent. Dilke (1972) and Johnson (1987), however, more explicitly support a Republican reading of *Bellum Civile* and focus on proving this interpretation.
[112] Cf. especially Masters (1994)
[113] Ibid pg. 168.
[114] Braund (1999) xv
[115] For autonomous in the sense I intend, see Chapter One.

the Rubicon, she appears and warns him not to invade his own country. Her physical appearance foreshadows the inevitable fate to befall Rome after such an invasion,

> ingens visa duci patriae trepidantis imago
> clara per obscuram voltu maestissima noctem,
> turrigero canos effundens vertice crines,
> caesarie lacero nudisque adstare lacertis
> et gemitu permixta loqui,…
>
> a huge ghost of his distressed country with a most unhappy
> countenance was seen clearly by the general through
> the dark night, white hair streaming from her turreted-crowned
> head, she stood by him with mangled hair and bare arms,
> and spoke having mixed her speech with sobs
> <div align="right">(Bellum Civile 1.185-190)</div>

The appearance of the ghost of Rome includes features characteristic of a woman in mourning. Her hair is let down (*effundens vertice crines*) and her arms are bare (*nudis lacertis*). The description of her speech, broken by sobbing (*gemitu permixta loqui*) alludes to the wailing characteristic of women mourners.[116] Rome as a mourner herself foreshadows not only the ruined state of the country were Caesar to invade it, but the metaphorical death of what Rome ideologically stood for at that time. Rome would suffer horrible consequences and the 'death' of Rome herself as a result of Caesar's uncontrollable desire to gain sole control.

The initial portrayal of Rome is highly symbolic, but superficial at the same time. The imagery of the matron in her distress is easily translated into the fate of Rome should Caesar invade his fatherland.[117] Caesar and the corrupting effects of power on the ruler are not the focus of this scene, however, but rather the consequences on Rome herself take the spotlight. Certainly, Caesar's actions would bring them about, but the shift of

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[116] For more on the Romans and mourning rituals, see (Hope) 2007, especially Chapter 5 "Grief".
[117] This overwrought symbolism would support Masters (1994) assertion that the obvious analogies in Lucan contribute to Lucan's "political tub-thumping."

emphasis from Caesar to Rome underlines the monitory effect of the scene and delivers

this message to the reader. Where Caesar embodies the negative characteristics of a

power-driven ruler, Rome typifies the consequences of unrestrained desire to attain that

power. Rome can easily represent the governing body or society of any reader, and her

state becomes a warning to prevent any metaphorical Caesar from invading it.

Julia

The second female apparition in *Bellum Civile* is Julia who foretells to Pompey

his impending defeat and eventual death. Unlike the personification of Rome, Julia

appears strong, defensive, and vengeful. She threatens to haunt Pompey, disturbing his

sleep every night and appearing in the middle of battles,

> Dum non securos liceat mihi rumpere somnos
> et nullum vestro vacuum sit tempus amori,
> sed teneat Caesarque dies et Iulia noctes.
> me non Lethaeae, coniunx, oblivia ripae
> Inmemorem fecere tui, regesque silentum
> permisere sequi. Veniam te bella gerente
> in medias acies.
>
> As long as it is permitted that I disturb your untroubled
> sleep and there is no time for love for you, but
> Caesar takes up your days and Julia, your nights.
> The forgetful shores of Lethe has not made me, your wife,
> forgetful of you, and the rules of the dead allow that I haunt
> you. I will come to you as you are waging war in the
> middle of the battleline.
>   (*Bellum Civile* 3.25-31)

Julia's promise to constantly haunt (*sequi*) Pompey brings Pompey's past actions and

decisions into his immediate present. Julia will be a constant reminder of his decision to

sever ties with Caesar and her prophecy will ever-presently be looming as he faces his

opponent. At *Bellum Civile* 1.111-120, Lucan tells us that the split between Pompey and

Caesar resulted from Julia's death in 54 BCE. Though her death was not caused by

Pompey, her absence and replacement by Cornelia ended the relationship between the

two politicians and their rivalry could no longer be quelled through loyalty.[118]

Julia's haunting thus represents the collapse between the past and future for

Pompey. Julia's speech recognizes Pompey's decision to sever his relationship with

Caesar following her death,

> abscidis frustra ferro tua pignora: bellum
> te faciet civlie meum…
>
> in vain you sever your pledge with a sword:
> civil war will make you mine.
> <div align="right">(Bellum Civile 3.33-34)</div>

Pompey's decision to cut ties with Caesar and pursue sole rule results in his eventual

death, prophesied at line 35.   The Civil War will take Pompey and he will join Julia in

the afterlife. By sacrificing familial ties in pursuit of political ambition, Pompey makes a

strategic decision. This decision leads to his demise, however, rather than the acquisition

of power. Pompey's fate warns against the negative consequences of his prioritization, a

decision which, like Julia, will haunt him indefinitely.

Pompey does not fear the ghost or heed its warnings. He expresses his attitude

derisively,

> et "quid" ait "vani terrmur imagine visus?
> aut nihil est sensus animis a morte relictum
> aut mors ipsa nihil
>
> and he said "why should we be terrified by the sight
> of a meaningless vision? either no feeling of the soul
> remains after death or death is nothing.
> <div align="right">(Bellum Civile 3.38-40)</div>

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[118] Also cited in Plutarch *Life of Pompey* 53

Pompey's assertion may be Lucan's own philosophical ideology, but here it shows how insignificant Pompey deems the specters appearance and her warning. She is simply a 'vani imagine.' Her appearance proves only that if sensation remains after death, then the apparition is spurious. If sensation remains, then death should not be feared. Either way, the ghost of Julia is insignificant to Pompey, insofar as he does not consider her appearance or her monition suggestive of the consequences of his actions.

Though unrecognized by Pompey, Julia's ghost represents Pompey and his past actions.[119] His past will be a constant in his present until eventually his fate catches up with him. Even after his death, Pompey's past will still be a part of his future. He will not be with Cornelia in the afterlife, but he will become Julia's. Julia represents this continuum of the past into the present and future and the perpetuation of consequences for his actions indefinitely. The apparition of Julia suggests to the reader that the past will inevitably be present in the future.

Erictho's Necromancy and the Cadaver

A soldier raised from the dead gives the final prophecy in *Bellum Civile* 6. Unlike Julia and many of the ghosts who appear in Statius and Silius Italicus, the soldier has no familial relationship to Sextus Pompey when he fortells the fate of not only his father Pompey, but of Sextus as well.[120] Before the corpse tells Sextus his future, he recounts the many dead he has encountered in the underworld. He sees Brutus, rejoicing because his descendant would kill Caesar. Catiline has broken from his chains, and the Gracchi who are described as being unchecked in their boldness Of all the notable men present in

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[119] Whether or not this representation is a fair one is debatable, but Julia's speech in the text clearly demonstrates the idea that Pompey's decision to sever ties with Caesar and engage in the war are condemnable and he will be punished with defeat as a result.
[120] *Bellum Civile* 6.802- 820

the underworld, only those who were notorious in their life time for relentless acquisition

of power are described as fettered and rejoicing.[121] Even death has not subdued their

desires, and they are seen raging among their more even-keeled peers.

In spite of the dispositions of these men, the cadaver makes an interesting

observation of the effect of death on men,

> …Nec gloria parvae
> sollicitet vitae: veniet quae misceat omnes
> hora duces.

> …Let not the glory
> of a short life trouble you: the hour will come
> which makes all the leaders equal.
> (*Bellum Civile* 6.805-807)

Despite their behavior in life, all leaders eventually die and have arrived in the

underworld. The glory that anyone receives from victory in battle is short –lived and

death, the great equalizer, is indiscriminate. Pompey, too, will meet his eventual fate, just

as his counterparts have. The cadaver reveals the general's place of death at the end of

his speech, "toto nil orbe videbis/tutius Emathia" (you will see nowhere in the whole

world more dangerous than Pharsalia).

With the end of his speech, the raised soldier prophesies Pompey's eventual

defeat. Moreover, Pompey will die in his confrontation with Caesar at Pharsalia, the

meeting place of their civil strife. In book 7, the two generals will meet in a battle for

absolute control. Initial depictions of Pompey in the *Bellum Civile* paint him equal to

Caesar in his desire for power, but later books personify Pompey as the champion of

Republicanism.[122] If this is the case, the triumph of Caesar represents the victory of

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[121] 6.791-799.

[122] See Bartsch (1997) for an enlightening discussion of the two Pompey's of *Bellum Civile.* Bartsch
demonstrates both how the character of Pompey evolves over the course of the text and how the character

tyranny over Republicanism and the soldier's prophecy, in turn, foreshadows this negative outcome of Caesar's unrepressed pursuit of obtaining power.

The necromantic prophecy of book 6 is significant in two major ways. It first shows that death and the underworld make all leaders equal to one another, despite their behavior before they pass. This philosophical idea introduced by Lucan applies also to Pompey who will be defeated by Caesar in the battle at Pharsalia. This battle symbolizes the defeat of the Republic by tyranny.[123] On a more moralizing level, the prophecy of Pompey's defeat warns the reader that he to, despite his quest for power, is ultimately mortal and will die. As a political statement, this prophecy, as others in *Bellum Civile* do, warns against the dangers and destructive ends of the pursuit of unchecked rule.

Statius

Like Lucan, Statius' political sentiments are a popular topic of contention amongst contemporary scholars. In particular, Statius' intentions stated at Thebaid 1.17-31, to execute the *Thebaid* as a panegyric work, serve as a frequent subject of debate among contemporary Statian scholars. Some assert that Statius' efforts to praise the emperor Domitian were insincere and obligatory;[124] in fact it has even been suggested that his references to and imitation of Vergil, perhaps the most notorious characteristics of the *Thebaid*, were to recognize his literary predecessor, bringing honor to the epic tradition rather than glorify Rome.[125] Even Domitian himself as a political figure is debated, much like the figure of Caesar or Augustus. To some, he is an oppressive

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is read as the pivot point for the epic, an illumination of both the potentially cynical and idealistic messages of the epic. See pg. 7-9 and 89-93 for her full discussion of Lucan's change in attitude towards Pompey.
[123] Many scholars read the battle between Pompey and Caesar as the allegorical triumph of despotic rule over Republicanism. See especially Dilke (1972) and Walde (2006).
[124] Dominik (1994); Pollman (2001) 3 and see notes 10 & 12
[125] Pollman (2001) 4-6.

"monster,"[126] but others argue the sources which portray Domitian as tyrant are inherently biased.[127] Regardless of whether Statius intended to write the *Thebaid* as a subtle condemnation of Domitian's rule or to publish an epic which follows the the tradition of the *Aeneid*, the *Thebaid* presents a clear portrait of the evils of tyranny.[128] This view of autocratic rule, rather than the opinions of the author on the emperor, will be at the center of this discussion of autonomous apparitions, like that of the *Bellum Civile*.

Laius in Thebaid 1 and Thebaid 4

The character of Laius is the primary autonomous ghost to appear in Statius' epic.[129] He appears twice, once at the beginning of book 2, and again during the necromantic ritual of book 4. Laius appears to each of the brothers, Polynices and Eteocles, presaging the same events each time. As the reader knows, the fate of the two brothers, each striving for autocratic rule over Thebes, is identical. Incited by Jupiter, Laius first visits Polynices as he sleeps and warns him of Eteocles' impending attempt to maintain control of the city, even though it is Polynices' turn to take the throne. Jupiter's request of Laius is interesting as Gossage notes, commenting on the passage, "men and especially their rulers become depraved in spirit and commit monstrous crimes…then he [Jupiter] incites them to destroy each other."[130] If this is, as Gossage continues to argue,

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[126] Toohey (1992) 186.
[127] Jones (1992) 189.
[128] Dominik (1990) 74 most explicitly and accurately sums up the theme of the *Thebaid*, "The *Thebaid* is about power." The following will keep this most basic statement at the forefront of discussion in order to avoid presuppositions about contemporary applications which will be presented in the conclusion of this thesis, but none subscribed to. As with Lucan, such a commitment is suggested by this discussion of autonomous apparitions, but additional evidence would be necessary in order to fully support it.
[129] The other appearance of an autonomous apparition in this epic is that of Amphiaraus in *Thebaid* 10. His appearance is much briefer than the other two incidents, but what is present follows in accordance with the pattern which will be well established by the time his scene is reached in sequential order. In order to avoid needless redundancy, an independent discussion of his appearance has been omitted from this chapter, but may be included upon future expansion of this project.
[130] Gossage (1972) 184.

a characteristic of Imperial epic, then ghosts can be a vehicle by which this desire of

Jupiter's is carried out.

Polynices exemplifies in this early book the lust for power which Statius so

vehemently warns against with his apparitional appearances. Even before Laius appears

to his grandson, Polynices is portrayed preoccupied by his desire for sole control of

Thebes,

> ….tenet una dies noctesque recursans
> cura virum, si quando humilem decedere regno
> germanium et semet Thebis opibusque potitum
> cerneret; hac aevum cupiat pro luce pacisci.
>
>   …one recurring thought holds the man,
> day and night, if ever he would see his brother
> step down from the throne and himself in possession
> of Thebes and power. For this day he desired to wage a
> lifetime for.
> <div align="right">(Thebaid 1.316-319)</div>

Polynices, who arguably has a legitimate desire for power because it is his turn to rule, is

still subject to its corrupting nature. Legitimate desire for power is the desire for power

nonetheless. Moreover, the incited Polynices becomes obsessed with the idea of Eteocles

abdicating his own turn in power and relinquishing it to him so that he would rule alone.

Because Polynices has already been seduced by the hunger for solitary power, Laius'

appearance later in Book 2 easily exhorts Polynices to actions which will in turn bring

about the destruction of the two brothers.[131]

When Laius appears to Polynices later in *Thebaid* 2, his exhortation to his

grandson echoes the events which will transpire later in the epic,

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[131] Coffee (2006) makes some interesting observations about the differences in the way that Eteocles and Polynices lust for power, but bases his argument on diction related to economics. Though not directly relevant here, this article would be indispensable for a further investigation of the power struggle between the two brothers.

>...habe Thebas, caecumque cupidine regi
>ausurumque eadem germanum expelle, nec ultra
>fraternos inhiantem obitus sine fidere coeptis
>fraudibus aut Cadmo dominas inferre Mycenas.

>...keep Thebes and drive out your brother blind
>with the desire for kingship just as he too dares, and
>do not allow him to trust in the trouble he has started
>bring about his brother's death or to impose Mycenae's
>rule on Cadmus.

<div align="right">(Thebaid 2.116-119)</div>

Laius' commands to Polynices foreshadow his grandson's fate, but also display the typical political ideology of a moniton of an autonomous ghost. Laius notes that both Polynices and Eteocles are 'blind with the desire for kingship' (*caecumque cupidine regi*) an interesting choice of words considering their family legacy of blindness. Oedipus' blindness was a self-imposed punishment for his actions, whereas the brothers' blindness will be the cause of the negative consequences as result of their actions. Each brother, blind with desire for kingship but also to his destiny, will pursue any means available to overthrow the other. Much like in the *Bellum Civile* Pompey sacrificed his relationship with Julia and, consequently, Caesar, the brothers will also sacrifice their familial loyalty in order to attain the most power possible.

Laius will again appear in *Thebaid* 4, during a necromantic ritual characteristic of the epic tradition. In this evocation, Laius speaks with Eteocles, instead of Polynices, and again prophecies of the battle and its pestilent outcome,

>...certa est victoria Thebis,
>ne trepida, nec regna ferox germanus habebit
>sed Furiae; geminumque nefas miserosque per enses
>(ei mihi!) crudelis vincit pater...

>...victory is certain for Thebes,
>do not be afraid, your fierce brother will not have the
>kingdom, but the Furies; through twin impiety and wretched

<div align="center">60</div>

swords (woe to me!) your cruel father prevails…

(*Thebaid* 4.641-645)

Not only will Eteocles fall in battle, but his brother Polynices will be defeated as well. Both brothers are victims of their own desire for power and will suffer accordingly. The mention of Oedipus (*crudelis vincit pater*) reminds the reader of the inheritance of the house of Oedipus, marked from its inception by intrafamilial murder. The civil strife of the *Thebaid* is distanced from that of the *Bellum Civile* because of the more intimate connection between the two brothers, in contrast to the relationship between Pompey and Caesar. The fratricidal strife also unmistakably echoes the same which Rome was founded upon and would speak directly to the reader of Roman epic.[132]

Laius' appearance in *Thebaid* 4 reinforces the expected outcome of the power struggle between the two brothers. As the ghosts before him, Laius issues a prophecy revealing their eventual destruction at the hands of their own desire for power. Like their literary and mythological predecessors, the brothers participate in a continued struggle for autocratic rule. Their motivations are slightly different; Polynices has an insatiable quest for monarchal power[133] and Eteocles' abuses his elevated position and unstoppably pursues his desire to retain the throne.[134] The outcome for each, however, is one and the same despite their varied intentions. The brothers are not exempt from power's pernicious effects. The ghost of Laius in his appearances to each warns the brothers of these consequences to no avail. Thus, the apparition enters the text and reminds the reader again of the dangers of unchecked rule and draws attention to how its repercussions have manifested in the brothers themselves.

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[132] For more on the relationship between Polynices and Eteocles, see Bernstein (2003)
[133] For evidence, see especially *Thebaid* 1.314-23; 2.307-21; 4.88
[134] *Thebaid* 2.399

Silius Italicus

The theme of Silius Italicus' *Punica* seems anomalous in the wake of the *Bellum Civile* and the *Thebaid*, but the author does, in fact, approach the same topics of the previous discussions in some ways. In this project, *Punica* has been mentioned intermittently, often as a counterexample because of its frequent violations of the norm of apparitions in Imperial epic. With the *Punica* itself, Silius Italicus varies from his predecessors by telling the story of an external enemy and a battle not mythologically based, but far removed from contemporary historical memory. At first, his choice seems to be in direct opposition of Lucan and Statius, and perhaps in some ways it is. For example, the second appearance of Scipio's father to Scipio in his dream becomes particularly troublesome for immediate purposes because it directly breaks with the patterns of autonomous apparitions of the other Imperial epics. A discussion of Silius Italicus' use of ghosts, however, is still important when considering the literary trajectory of apparitions in both the epic similarities and differences.

The first scene in Silius Italicus to feature apparitions is the necromancy scene of *Punica* 13. In many ways, the necromancy follows the patterns of its epic predecessors. Structurally, it is very similar to *Bellum Civile* and particularly the *Thebaid*. A Sibyl evokes the spirits from the underworld and Scipio seeks his fortune from them. He sees the apparitions of many famous men, notorious for their powerful political roles, who have perished. The types of men and women who visit Scipio are varied and there is no pattern to those who speak with him and those who do not. The Sibyl tells Scipio the fate of Pompey, Caesar and the Republic. In response, Scipio delivers a lamentation for the

harsh destiny of the Roman state.[135] The theme in the other epics, the danger of

unchecked power, is subtly repeated here in the *Punica*, amidst all the other apparitional

addresses. Even in Scipio's more noble quest for power, those who pursue it disreputably

will bring about destruction for the cause he fights for.

As a whole, the *Punica* is generally read as a more optimistic text than the *Bellum*

Civile or the *Thebaid*.[136] Most fundamentally, two of the major concepts are *fides* and

pietas, a direct challenge, for example, to the theme of *nefas* so notorious in the

Thebaid.[137] As backlash against Nero, the text is most often considered a revival of

earlier literary tradition, such as the *Aeneid*, in order to reflect the cultural optimism that

arguably replaced the pessimism which resulted from Nero's reign. The values and

traditional ideologies expressed in the *Punica* are stressed to aid the stability of the new

Flavian dynasty.[138] The necromantic ritual, however, more closely follows the macabre

patterns of Lucan and Statius. Many of the apparitions Scipio sees in the underworld are

preparing for battle or telling the outcome of a battle already fought. As they ready for

their civil wars, the ghosts of Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar in particular break from

the work's characteristic optimism and again remind the reader of the same message of

the dangers of civil war and unchecked rule as its literary predecessors.

The second and final apparitional appearance in the *Punica* is the most atypical of

all apparitional appearances in Imperial epic. The ghost of Scipio's father visits him in a

dream and tells his son to attack Carthage and that he will be victorious. This chapter has

demonstrated how the negative prophecies of apparitions have foretold of the disasters

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[135] Punica 13.869-875
[136] Waters (1964)
[137] For *fides* and *pietas* as themes of the *Punica*, see Pomeroy (1990)122- 123 and von Albrecht (1964)
155. For the theme of *nefas* in the *Thebaid*, see especially Ganiban (2007).
[138] Pomperoy (1990) 123.

which were to befall the recipient. In the case of Scipio, however, his prophecy is positive. This final apparitional appearance shows the underlying optimism and positive outcome which is allowed by the narrative's subject. By returning to a traditional subject, that of Ennian epic, Silius Italicus chose a subject which indicated a time when a united Rome showed itself facing great adversities and coping with them. This message is delivered in the face of all the others. In some ways, it too warns of the potential dangers of power, but also insinuates that Rome, like in the Punic wars, will be able to overcome her adversities and be victorious.

Silius Italicus, along with Lucan and Statius, distract the reader from the narrative present with an interruption by a ghost from the historical and literary past. By turning from the present tense, the past averts attention from the present and draws attention to its consequences or towards the future. For the reader of Imperial epic, these historic memories become ghostly monitions, warning not only the character within the epic of their eventual fate, but also the reader of their own potential for destruction and the ruin of their society should they succumb to a desire for power.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

As agents of prophecy in Roman Imperial epic, apparitions function not only as legitimate characters, but also as subtle mouthpieces for the political ideologies of the epic authors. Many previous scholars have focused their studies of apparitions superficially; they attempt only to categorize or typify ghosts according to cultural beliefs or based on folk traditions. These studies consider apparitions from both Greek and Latin texts and from all different types of literature. The categorization of apparitions across language and genre boundaries has proved an inherently difficult task which these scholars have yet to resolve concordantly. Through a different approach, however, this study has argued that by defining a more exclusive set of qualifications for the texts to be examined, specific apparitional features can be obtained through a narrowed scope. This study has found that in Roman Imperial epic, ghosts who are active characters in the text act solely as warning apparitions. The monitions of these ghosts are always ominous and typically predict an impending death for the character to whom they are issued.

These types of prophecies are not exclusive to apparitions, but will typically be issued by them in favor of traditional divinatory practitioners. Because standard prophecies come from agents with a traditional tie to divinities, the author often constructs apparitional characters to mimic the gods. In doing so, the author alludes to a divine source rather than invoke it directly. Because of the nature of the prophecies, this allows the author to circumvent any allegations that he might be subconsciously supporting or criticizing a political event by having it supported or discouraged by a divinity. Therefore, apparitional prophets still carry the same authority to prophesy as

their divine counterparts, but the authors avoid any unwarranted accusations of political events or deaths being divinely ordained.

This becomes particularly important when one considers one of the underlying messages of Roman Imperial epic. The former chapter discussed the distinction between epics as texts concerned with ideas about power and corruption versus as political commentaries specifically applicable to the contemporary emperor. Because of the notorious oppression particularly of Flavian Rome, this distinction was absolutely necessary for the survival and success of both the epic and its author. By using apparitions as the vehicles for this certain type of prophecy, the author divorces the proceeding events of the epic from any type of divine partiality and, in turn, any speculation over authorial espousal.

The use of the dead as the vehicle for these prophecies represents not only a collapse between the narrative past and the present, but also between the readers' past and present. By reading the narrative theme of power and corruption universally, the cautionary messages of apparitions become applicable to readers of any time period. They, too, can be haunted by their past actions and will likely suffer the same calamitous consequences as the characters in the epic. Ghosts necessarily evoke nostalgia of the past and their presence in the text unmistakably brings preceding events to the foreground of the narrative.

An unconventional approach to the study of apparitions opens up their roles as legitimate characters in epic to unorthodox interpretations. While copious scholarship has explored the many ways in which Roman Imperial epics function as political commentaries, this study offers a uniquely different method for explaining how an author

uses his text as political commentary. The texts of Imperial Rome are unquestionably colored by the environment in which they were written, but nevertheless, their applicability does not have to be limited to the society in which they were written. Through apparitions and their prophecies, Imperial epic authors have left a common legacy for readers, one which warns of the dangers and corrupting capacity of unchecked, autocratic power. In any society, this message is not only pertinent, but also extremely substantial.

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