

THE TEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF
LUCAN 10.107*

In Book 10 of Lucan, the narrative of Cleopatra's seduction of Caesar concludes with the following lines, which also serve to open the account of her celebratory banquet (104–10):

nequiquam duras temptasset Caesaris aures:
vultus adest precibus faciesque incesta perorat.
exigit infandam corrupto iudice noctem.
pax ubi parta *ducis* donisque ingentibus empta est, 107
excepere epulae tantarum gaudia rerum,
explicuitque suos magno Cleopatra tumultu
nondum translatos Romana in saecula luxus.

The exact meaning of line 107 is the subject of much dispute, as is d'Orville's emendation of *ducis* (instead of the manuscript *duci*), which was adopted and defended by Francken and Housman. The current consensus among commentators, as established by Schmidt ad loc. (and further argued by Holmes and Berti), is to read *duci*, as a dative of agent, with the sense, 'When the general (Caesar) obtained peace and purchased it with mighty gifts.'¹ According to Schmidt et al.,² the line refers to the reconciliation brokered by Caesar between Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy XIII and, specifically, to an episode narrated by Cassius Dio (42.35): when the Alexandrian mob learned of Cleopatra's presence in the palace and of Caesar's support for her claim to the throne, a riot erupted that Caesar was only able to quell through a reading of her father's will, by which she and Ptolemy were named joint heirs to the kingdom under Roman guardianship, and through his gift (hence Lucan's *donis*) of the Roman territory of Cyprus to two of their siblings, Ptolemy XIV and Arsinoe IV.³

* I am grateful both to my supervisor, Michael Dewar, and to the anonymous reader for their helpful suggestions and comments.

¹ G. Viansino (Milan, 1995) also briefly makes the same argument ad loc. There is, however, less consensus among recent editors of Lucan (as opposed to commentators): *ducis* is read by W. Ehlers (Munich, 1973), V.-J.H. Llorente (Madrid, 1967–81), G. Luck (Berlin, 1985) and D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Stuttgart, 1988), *duci* by R. Badali (Rome, 1992).

² In the basic lines of his argument, Schmidt follows and elaborates upon a brief comment by P. Graindor, *La Guerre d'Alexandrie* (Cairo, 1931), 40 n. 1 and a longer discussion by H. Heinen, *Rom und Ägypten von 51 bis 47 v. Chr.: Untersuchungen zur Regierungszeit des 7. Kleopatra und des 13. Ptolemäers* (Diss., Tübingen, 1966), 89 n. 1.

³ Berti goes beyond Schmidt in associating *donis* not only with the donation of Cyprus but also with Caesar's 'gift' of the joint kingship of Egypt to Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII, but this seems rather strained. After all, Egypt was not exactly Caesar's to give (at least Ptolemy and his followers must surely have thought so). Far from being a means of securing peace, Caesar's attempt to bestow a share of the rule upon the unpopular Cleopatra was the immediate spark for the riot narrated by Dio: Caesar was not giving half of Egypt to Ptolemy but taking away from him half of a realm to which he felt himself fully entitled. Although one could perhaps argue that it is Cleopatra's consent to a peace settlement that is being purchased here (Berti thus cites, in connection with the *donis ingentibus* of 10.107, the reference at 10.81 to Caesar's grant of Egypt to his beloved, *donare Pharon*), Cleopatra is the party desperately in need of such a settlement, as she herself admits (10.87–8), and is in no position to demand a high price for her acquiescence. The fact that Caesar refrained from annexing any Egyptian territory for himself, instead contenting himself with dividing it between Ptolemy and Cleopatra, is presented by Dio

If one were given line 10.107 in isolation and told only that it referred to Caesar's management of Egyptian affairs after his arrival in Alexandria, this would indeed be a very natural reading. Given the line's context within Lucan's narrative, however, such an interpretation becomes much less convincing. First of all, Lucan makes no mention whatsoever of the riot itself, of the specific donation of Cyprus (especially conspicuous by its absence is any authorial censure of Caesar's offer of surrender of Roman territory to a couple of Egyptian princelings)⁴ or of the two royal siblings, Ptolemy XIV and Arsinoe IV, to whom the donation is made (this Ptolemy never appears in Lucan, and Arsinoe only much later, at 10.519–23).⁵ Even Cleopatra's principal adversary Ptolemy XIII, although mentioned in her appeal to Caesar, does not appear at this point in the narrative as an active participant in negotiations; he only enters the scene some 30 lines later, briefly and anonymously, when Lucan marks the beginning of Cleopatra's banquet with the phrase *discubere illic reges* (10.136).⁶ The narrative context for 10.107 is concerned to relate not Caesar's dealings with Ptolemy XIII (or XIV, or Arsinoe), nor his dealings with the Alexandrian populace, nor even his actions towards Cleopatra, but rather Cleopatra's actions towards Caesar. The latter is the passive target of all her wiles: her charmingly distressed appearance (10.82–4), her flattering and plaintive address (10.85–103), her *voltus* and *facies* ... *incesta* (10.105), by which he is finally swayed (*corrupto iudice*, 10.106), and (immediately after 10.107) the banquet whereby she seeks to dazzle him with her immense wealth (10.108–10).⁷ All the active, personal verbs in this narrative sequence (that is, excluding the

as one of the measures designed to placate the Egyptian mob, but such self-restraint can only be thought a 'gift' in the loosest possible sense and is explicitly distinguished by Dio from the actual gift of Cyprus (42.35.6): τοσοῦτον γάρ που δέος αὐτὸν ἔσχεν ὥστε μὴ μόνον μηδὲν τῶν τῆς Αἰγύπτου προσλαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν οἰκείων τι αὐτοῖς προσδοῦναι.

⁴ It may well be true, as Schmidt argues, that Caesar never in fact followed through on this reckless promise, but Lucan's reticence cannot be satisfactorily explained (as by Schmidt) on this basis alone. Lucan is, after all, never shy of faulting Caesar for his designs as well as for his actions, for instance during the mutiny of Book 5 (a situation akin to Dio's Alexandrian riot), when Caesar is said to have been willing to grant any outrage to placate his soldiers, even the sack of Rome (5.305–7). Line 10.107 also occurs in a general context that is much concerned with the issue of eastern threats to Roman sovereignty, both from Parthia (10.46–52) and from Cleopatra herself (10.63–7). It is therefore highly implausible that Lucan would simply allude to the donation of Cyprus in such an oblique fashion and without any outburst of patriotic indignation.

⁵ According to Schmidt, Lucan omits any mention here of Ptolemy XIV or Arsinoe IV in order to give the invidious impression that Cleopatra herself is the beneficiary of Caesar's gift of Cyprus. It is, however, somewhat perverse to argue that Lucan is expecting his readers to recall the donation of Cyprus (from the single word *donis*) but not the recipients of that donation; moreover, if the reader is at all familiar with the circumstances of the riot during which the donation is supposed to have occurred, he or she will be aware that it would have completely defeated the purpose of Caesar's offer if he had bestowed Cyprus on the unpopular Cleopatra, since his goal was precisely to appease the mob's wrath at the favour he had already shown her in endorsing her claim to the Egyptian throne.

⁶ Francken ad loc. notes Ptolemy's absence from the proceedings, although he goes too far when he denies a reference at 10.136 to Ptolemy's attendance of the ensuing festivities.

⁷ Furthermore, as Schmidt comments (in his note on 10.58), Lucan departs from the historical record (embodied in Dio Cass. 42.34.3 and Plut. *Caes.* 48.9) when he states that Cleopatra's arrival in the palace occurred *ignaro Caesare* (10.58); indeed, according to Plutarch, Caesar actually sent for Cleopatra in order to use her as a counterweight to the faction of Ptolemy and Pothinus, while in Dio it is instead Ptolemy who is singled out as being in ignorance of Cleopatra's arrival (λάθρα τοῦ Πτολεμαίου, 42.35.1). Lucan thus begins his narrative of the famous meeting with a strongly marked emphasis on Caesar's passivity with respect to Cleopatra.

verbs of Cleopatra's speech) have for their subject either Cleopatra herself or her attributes or possessions: *adit* (10.83), *orsa* (10.85), *temptasset* (10.104), *adest* and *perorat* (10.105), whose subjects are Cleopatra's *voltus* and *facies* respectively, *exceperet* (10.108), with a subject in the *epulae* provided by Cleopatra, and *explicuit* (10.109); Cleopatra also serves as both the subject of *exigit* and the agent of the perfect passive participle *corrupto* in the line immediately preceding 10.107. If the interpretation of the modern commentators is accepted, then, not only must the reader supply an array of historical circumstances and personages that are completely absent from Lucan's text, but he or she must also make the awkward mental shift from Cleopatra to Caesar as agent (for a single line) and then immediately back to Cleopatra in her preparation of the banquet. It is on these grounds that I find the reading of *ducis* more plausible, where Cleopatra is the implied agent for both *parta* and *empta*, and where the phrase *donis ... ingentibus* refers (ironically) to her sexual favours towards Caesar;⁸ this would follow naturally from *corrupto iudice* in the previous line, especially since *corrumpere* and *donis* are such easily and commonly paired words (as at Tib. 1.9.53, Sall. *Iug.* 97.2, and Curt. 6.10), suggesting a close conceptual link between 10.106 and 107.

Nevertheless, if Cleopatra is the buyer, what exactly is she purchasing? In other words, the precise meaning of *pax ducis* still requires elucidation, and several explanations seem possible. The *TLL* (s.v. *pax* 1.IA.2a) suggests one of these by citing, as a comparandum for Lucan 10.107, Martial 14.34.1, where a scythe is speaking: *pax me certa ducis placidos curvavit in usus*. In Martial, the genitive is clearly one of subject, with the phrase expressing 'the condition of peace upheld or provided by the general (in this case Domitian)', along the lines of *pax Numae*, *pax Augusta* or *Augusti*, or the combination of *pax* with a possessive adjective that often appears in flattering literary addresses of the reigning emperor, including Nero.⁹ If the same is true for Lucan's use of *pax ducis* at 10.107, Cleopatra should be seen as having, through the boon of sexual pleasure, purchased Caesar's agreement to impose a peace settlement on the reluctant Ptolemy. Such a rendering of *pax*, however, shares with the manuscript *duci* the basic problem that the reader is forced to supply circumstances absent from the immediate text, namely Caesar's enforcement of a reconciliation between Cleopatra and Ptolemy (although this is much less obscure than the riot and donation narrated only by Dio); Cleopatra's dominant agency, which, as I argue above, is key to the entire scene, is also compromised by the attribution to Caesar of an active peacemaking role.

⁸ The sexual interpretation of Lucan's *donis* is adopted by e.g. P. Burmann (1740, cited by Schmidt). For the idea of sexual intercourse as a gift used to secure *pax*, compare Ov. *Ars am.* 2.459–60 (I am indebted to Michael Dewar for this reference): *oscula da flenti, Veneris da gaudia flenti, | pax erit*. The use of *donum* in reference to a night spent in the arms of a beautiful woman (cf. Lucan's *exigit infandam ... noctem* at 10.106) is found in Plaut. *Asin.* 194: *hanc tibi noctem honoris causa gratiis dono dabo*. The Ovidian passage also exemplifies the sexual connotations of *gaudium* (on which see *TLL* s.v. I.2), with significance for a reading of Lucan 10.108: *exceperet epulae tantarum gaudia rerum*. Line 10.107 is therefore bracketed by more or less explicit allusions to sexual relations.

⁹ For *pax Numae* see Cic. *Rep.* 5.3; *pax Augusta* is found in e.g. Ov. *Pont.* 2.5.18 and Vell. Pat. 2.126.3; and *pax Augusti* is a popular coin legend from Galba onwards (e.g. *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, 1.360, 377, 380–1 and 383). For *pax* used of an emperor with a possessive adjective see German. *Arat.* 16, Vell. Pat. 2.92.2 and Sen. *Clem.* 1.1.2 and 1.8.2.

On the other hand, both Francken and Housman explain *pax ducis* in terms of the common phrase *pax deorum* (Housman cites Verg. *Aen.* 3.370), where *pax* denotes *favor, gratia, benevolentia*, etc.: 'When the general's¹⁰ favour was obtained and purchased with mighty gifts'.¹¹ Given that Cleopatra is striving to procure Caesar's goodwill and break through his harsh indifference to her plight (indicated by the phrase *duras ... aures* at 10.104), their interpretation certainly fits the context. Holmes rejoins that '*pax* in the sense of favour is only used of gods', but Cleopatra appeals to Caesar precisely as a godlike figure, above all with the exhortation *tu gentibus aequum sidus ades nostris* (10.89–90), which points toward his eventual apotheosis in the form of the *sidus Iulium*. Moreover, Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 1.21 presents *pax* and *benevolentia* as equivalent reactions of an orator's audience, and the ablative *pace* is frequently attached to genitives or possessive adjectives with the meaning 'by one's leave or favour' (according to the *OLD*), in reference to humans as well as gods.¹²

In any event, *pax deorum* is only a special case of the general category of the genitive used with *pax* to indicate the party (whether human or divine) with whom one has concluded a treaty of peace, along the lines of *pax Pyrrhi* or *Philippi*.¹³ It is by virtue of a pact with the gods that mortals enjoy their favour (see *OLD* s.v. *pax* 1–2). Although the broader sense of *pax* is likewise well suited to the narrative context, the main reason why I argue for the translation 'pact' here in addition to 'favour' (the two are by no means mutually exclusive) lies in the striking correspondence between 10.107 and a passage near the end of the previous book, during the scene in which Ptolemy's minion presents Caesar with the gift of Pompey's head. In the minion's speech, the murder is characterized alike as a commercial transaction and as the striking of a treaty (9.1020–1): *tanto te pignore, Caesar, | emimus; hoc tecum percussum est sanguine foedus*. These words are almost perfectly counterpoised with those of 10.107: *pax ubi parta ducis donisque ingentibus empta est*. Where the elided verb form *empta est*, with Cleopatra as its agent (given a reading of *ducis*) and *donis ... ingentibus* as its instrument, falls emphatically at the end of 10.107, *emimus*, whose subject is the party of Ptolemy and Pothinus, opens 9.1021 with equal emphasis and is accompanied by the instrumental ablative *tanto ... pignore* (*ingens* and *tantus* both being adjectives of magnitude); on each occasion, *emere* is jarringly applied to Caesar (either himself or his *pax*), who is

¹⁰ Schmidt is wrong to attribute to Housman an interpretation of *ducis* as referring to Ptolemy rather than Caesar (*ducis Romani*, as Housman glosses in his note). Where Housman does diverge from the other editors who have read *ducis* (e.g. Francken) is in portraying the *reges Aegyptii* in general as the acquirers of Caesar's favour, rather than Cleopatra specifically: *pepererunt reges Aegyptii pacem, hoc est gratiam et favorem ... ducis Romani*. It is, however, difficult to see how Ptolemy can be said to have won Caesar's favour, given that Caesar has taken half his kingdom away from him, nor what Ptolemy had to offer Caesar by way of a bribe to secure such favour, since Caesar emphatically rejects the gift of Pompey's head at the end of Book 9.

¹¹ Such is the interpretation of *pax* adopted by almost all of those translators who read *ducis*, e.g. J.D. Duff (Cambridge, MA, 1928), W. Ehlers (Munich, 1973), R. Graves (Harmondsworth, 1956), V.-J.H. Llorente (Madrid, 1967–81), G. Luck (Berlin, 1985) and P.F. Widdows (Bloomington, 1988); an exception is S.H. Braund (Oxford, 1992), with 'the general's truce'.

¹² As is pointed out by *TLL* 1.1A.2a, Auson. *Prof. Burd.* 6.46 (*sine pace patris*) also employs *pax*, with reference to a human being, in the sense of *benevolentia*. For the use of *pace* with genitives or possessive adjectives, see *OLD* s.v. 3 and *TLL* s.v. 1.1A.2a and 3a.

¹³ The phrase *pax Pyrrhi* is found at Cic. *Cael.* 34, *pax Philippi* at Liv. 31.29.16. See also e.g. Ter. *Haut.* 998, Caes. *B Gall.* 1.37.2 and Cic. *Off.* 3.109.

thereby reduced from demigod to mere object of purchase.¹⁴ Similarly, *pax*, at the start of 10.107, finds its complement in another noun signifying union and harmony, *foedus*, which closes 9.1021 and is like *pax* the subject of a perfect passive verb, with an instrumental ablative in *hoc ... sanguine*. 10.107 therefore seems designed to evoke 9.1021 very closely, with the result that an interpretation of *pax ducis* as analogous to *foedus tecum* is strongly encouraged, 'a pact with the general'.¹⁵

The foregoing serves to illustrate the enrichment of meaning afforded by the emendation *ducis* at 10.107 through the consequent moral equation of Cleopatra to Ptolemy.¹⁶ The parallel is reinforced by Cleopatra's *donis ... ingentibus*, which can be likened not only to the *pignore* and *sanguine* in the minion's address but also to the grisly *regis dona* that he carries in visible proof thereof (Pompey's head is so described at 9.1011 and 9.1065). Lucan has accordingly exemplified the corrupt and venal *mores* of Ptolemaic Egypt through both of the warring court factions, showing each as bad as the other in their respective efforts to suborn their arbiter Caesar through a kind of bidding war.¹⁷ Cleopatra only distinguishes herself from her brother in her superior mastery of the Alexandrian art of bribery, first when she bribes the harbour guards to admit her (*corrupto custode*, 10.57), presumably with money, and then in her successful deployment of her physical charms against Caesar (*corrupto iudice*, 10.106). Her comparative tact and diplomacy are highlighted by the fact that, while 9.1020–1 is put in the mouth of the *satelles*, Lucan's own voice pronounces 10.107: unlike the vulgar henchman, Cleopatra does not risk

¹⁴ Compare Lucan's reference to the buying (*emere*) and selling of Rome at 4.824; for Roman disapproval of the sale or purchase of peace, see e.g. Cic. *Prov. cons.* 4 (*empta pace*) and Flor. *Epit.* 1.36 (*pacem emit*), as well as Aeneas' contemptuous dismissal of *belli commercia* at Verg. *Aen.* 10.532.

¹⁵ *Pax* and *foedus* are paired together as virtual synonyms in e.g. Lucan 8.435, Plaut. *Amph.* 395, Just. *Epit.* 41.4.9, Amm. Marc. 27.12.10, and Cic. *Phil.* 4.14, *Rep.* 2.14 and *Sen.* 16. One major difference is that, unlike *foedus*, *pax* tends to imply a prior or potential state of enmity between the parties involved. Ptolemy's *satelles* therefore has good reason to employ *foedus* instead in his speech to Caesar, since otherwise he risks drawing attention to his listener's presumed grievance against Ptolemy for having supported Pompey (according to Pothinus at 8.517–19, it is in order to erase this record of prior support that Pompey's murder must be ordered). *Pax*, on the other hand, is appropriate for a pact struck by Cleopatra with her lover Caesar on account of the special connotations of 'favour' and 'goodwill' that it can carry (as discussed above), and that are absent from *foedus*; through its hint of potential enmity, the word perhaps also recalls Caesar's extremely hostile reaction to the minion, suggesting the danger faced (and deftly avoided) by Cleopatra in approaching such a haughty and easily offended warlord.

¹⁶ This is in contrast to the insistence on Cleopatra's moral superiority to her siblings that is found in the Caesarian account of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* (33).

¹⁷ It is perhaps significant that the only other conjunction of the noun *dona* with the adjective *ingentia* in extant Latin poetry prior to Lucan is in Ovid's *Heroides*, during the narrative of the judgement of Paris: compare Paris' account of the three goddesses' competitive gift-giving, *ingentibus ardent | iudicium donis sollicitare meum* (*Her.* 16.79–80), to Lucan's *exigit infandam corrupto iudice noctem. | pax ubi parta ducis donisque ingentibus empti est* (10.106–7). Whereas, in his own *Bellum Civile*, Caesar is keen to present himself as a loftily impartial arbiter of the dispute between Ptolemy and Cleopatra (see *B Civ.* 3.107 and 109), Lucan thus aligns the episode with the most notorious mythological exemplum of a crooked judgement. One can even press the analogy more closely: just as Paris rejects Juno's offer of *regna* (*Her.* 16.81) in favour of the combined *dona* (i.e. the sexual enjoyment of Helen) and *forma* of Venus (16.87), so Lucan's Caesar, scorning the minion's gift of political supremacy (*regna*, 9.1022), is swayed instead by Cleopatra's *forma* (10.82) and sexual *dona* (10.107). At any rate, the Ovidian passage refutes Schmidt's contention that a sexual significance to the *dona* of Lucan 10.107 is excluded by the epithet *ingentia*.

offending Caesar by making too explicit her attempt to purchase his support. It is also a measure of Caesar's progressive moral deterioration at the Alexandrian court that he is, through a series of clear verbal echoes, shown more susceptible to Cleopatra's pretty face than he was to the offer of his rival's head.

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doi:10.1017/S0009838809990681

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TWO NOTES ON PLINY'S *PANEGYRICUS*

I

Neque enim stipatus satellitum manu sed circumfusus undique nunc senatu, nunc equestris ordinis flore, prout alterutrum frequentiae genus inualuisset, silentes quietosque lictores tuos subsequebare. (23.3)

senatu *scripsi* : senatus *codd.*

In this description of Trajan's entourage on his first coming to Rome, the manuscripts read *senatus*, which, like *equestris ordinis*, must be understood as a genitive complementing *flore*. This reading has never been questioned by editors. Yet the senate is depicted in the *Panegyricus* as a monolithic whole, as a harmonious, concordant group: cf. 62.1 *praecipue tamen ex horum consulatu non ad partem aliquam senatus sed ad totum senatum*; 62.2–5; 62.7; 69.1–2; 71.1; 71.4 *a cuncto senatu*; 74.1; 75.6 *cum toto senatu*.

At the beginning of the section, Pliny had drawn a perfect social pyramid, with its apex, Trajan, showing the behaviour appropriate to every single part of it: he kisses the senators (*senatum*), greets the most prominent knights (*equestris ordinis decora*) by their names and, finally, hails his clients with gestures of familiarity. I suggest that in 23.3 *senatus* should be replaced by *senatu*, which may have been corrupted by the influence of *stipatus* and *circumfusus*. This creates a suitable parallelism with 23.1: *senatum* / *senatu*; *equestris ordinis decora* / *equestris ordinis flore* (cf. Flor. *Epit.* 2.9 *ex ipso equestris ordinis flore ac senatu*).