

Abstract

This thesis is an attempt at a partial interpretation of Lucan's epic *The Civil War (Bellum Civile)*. It pays special attention to the character of Caesar, who turns out to be at the centre of the poet's narrative and to whom the essential themes presented by the poet are related.

The introduction of the work points to the importance of interpreting inconsistencies in the Roman epic (O'Hara), which has become the methodological basis for the submitted literary analyses of Lucan's work. Indeed, modern Lucan research (Henderson, Masters, Roller, O'Hara) shows that the fragmentation and inconsistencies of the individual voices, scenes and events in the epic are the artistic intent of the author and mirror the theme of his work – the deeply divided world in the civil war – in the form of his narrative.

The main part of the work is devoted to analysing the passages of the epic in which the character of Caesar has a central position and which prove to be essential in the interpretation of the overall narrative of the work. These analyses show that one of the prominent themes of the epic is the theme of power. As can be seen from Caesar's characterization and his actions in the first five books of the epic, the character of Caesar is shrouded in an image of monstrosity and unstoppable, which, however, is in many places challenged by the poet. And it is this inconsistent approach to the issue that proves to be an ingenious strategy, through which the poet raises questions about the possibility of halting Caesar in the story, and allegorically about the possibility of halting the boundless power of the emperors of the early principate of which Caesar is the architect.

The submitted work thus concludes on the ambiguity of the cyclical image of the character of Caesar, who, by his action in the epic, simultaneously brings permanent conflict into Roman society and is the only one in the epic to prove to be a successful reformer who can use the position of power to escape any crisis, thereby encouraging the reader to be active.

Keywords

Lucan, *Bellum Civile (Pharsalia)*, Caesar, inconsistency, epic, metapoetics