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Edited by Monica R. Gale, J. H. D. Scourfield
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TEXTS AND VIOLENCE IN THE ROMAN WORLD

From the bites and scratches of lovers and the threat of flogging that hangs over the comic slave, to murder, rape, dismemberment, and crucifixion, violence is everywhere in Latin literature. The contributors to this volume explore the manifold ways in which violence is constructed and represented in Latin poetry and prose from Plautus to Prudentius, examining the interrelations between violence, language, power, and gender, and the narrative, rhetorical, and ideological functions of such depictions across the generic spectrum. How does violence contribute to the pleasure of the text? Do depictions of violence always reinforce status-hierarchies, or can they provoke a reassessment of normative value-systems? Is the reader necessarily complicit with authorial constructions of violence? These are pressing questions both for ancient literature and for film and other modern media, and this volume will be of interest to scholars and students of cultural studies as well as of the ancient world.

MONICA R. GALE is Professor in Classics at Trinity College Dublin. Her publications include *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius* (Cambridge, 1994), *Virgil on the Nature of Things: The Georgics, Lucretius and the Didactic Tradition* (Cambridge, 2000), and a commentary on Lucretius Book 5 (2009).

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To the memory of Shilpa Raval

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Notes on Contributors

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Preface

This volume began with a casual domestic conversation. Wondering one morning whether, as specialists in classical Latin poetry and late Antiquity respectively, we could find a suitable topic for a collaboration, we found ourselves drawn to violence – or more specifically, its representations in Latin literature. The initial outcome was a panel presented at the Classical Association Centenary Conference held at the University of Warwick in 2003. Encouraged by the lively discussion that the papers inspired, we then decided to embark upon a fuller and more systematic exploration of representations of violence in Latin texts from the mid-Republic to the late Empire and across a wide spread of literary genres. It seemed to us that, whereas violence (of various kinds) as a social and political phenomenon in the Roman (as in the Greek) world and depictions of violence (of various kinds) in particular ancient texts had come under scholarly scrutiny in recent years, an investigation specifically dedicated to its literary representations might help to identify and crystallize some central issues in a way beneficial to literary scholars and cultural historians alike. In framing the project, and in engaging with our contributors as they sent us successive versions of their chapters, we were also mindful of the significance of violence and its representations in the contemporary world, and the often heated debates around violent films, computer games, and other cultural phenomena. Of great relevance to our topic too is the relationship between violent acts and violent rhetoric, a theme brought starkly into focus by two shocking events which occurred during the preparation of this volume: the attempted assassination of US Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (and the associated killing of six people) in Tucson, Arizona in January 2011, and the murder of British MP Jo Cox in the run-up to the Brexit referendum of June 2016. Both acts of violence were widely linked in the media to the strident and inflammatory style of rhetoric that had become prevalent in the British and American political arenas, in Gabrielle Giffords' case specifically utilizing the imagery of the gun. We hope, then, that the book

will have something to say to readers outside as well as within the community of classical scholars and students.

These aspirations for the volume should not, however, be taken to imply a claim of comprehensiveness. Every reader will be able to think of further texts or genres which would merit discussion under the rubric of violence; we ourselves would like to have included chapters on (for example) Horace's *Epodes* or the epigrams of Martial, but as anyone who has edited a collective volume will be aware, the best intentions cannot always be realized. An absence of a different kind concerns us much more closely. Shilpa Raval, a rising star at Yale University, had begun to work with David Konstan on what is now Chapter 1 when she died unexpectedly, and tragically young. Neither of us ever met Shilpa, though one of us had had the privilege and pleasure of sharing with her by email a mutual enthusiasm for a modern 'text' full of representations of violence in both serious and less serious mode: Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Although she did not live to see the work through to completion, she is appropriately credited as co-author of Chapter 1, and the whole volume is dedicated to her memory.

It will have become apparent that (for a variety of reasons) this book has been a long time in the making. We would like to thank Michael Sharp of Cambridge University Press and all our contributors for their patience and forbearance, and trust that they, and all our readers, will find it worth the wait.

MRG/JHDS

Abbreviations

In general, abbreviations for ancient authors and texts follow the conventions of the fourth edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow; Oxford, 2012); the exceptions should cause no difficulties. Journal titles are abbreviated according to the system of *L'Année philologique*. The following common abbreviations are also employed:

ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> (Berlin and New York, 1972–).
LSJ	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott (eds.), <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th edn., revised by H. S. Jones (Oxford, 1940), with a supplement by E. A. Barber (1968).
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> .
OLD	P. G. W. Glare (ed.), <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (Oxford, 1968–82).
PG	J.-P. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> (Paris, 1857–66).
RE	A. F. von Pauly, G. Wissowa, et al. (eds.), <i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (24 vols., 19 vols., and supplement (15 vols.); Stuttgart, 1893–1980).

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