Introduction

> Rapuisti tum Ciceroni lucem sollicitam et aetatem senilem et vitam seriorem, te principe, quam sub te triumviro mortem, famam vero gloriamque factorum atque dictorum adeo non abstulisti, ut auxeris. Vivit vivetque per omnem saeculorum memoriam, dumque hoc vel forte vel providentia vel utcumque constitutum rerum naturae corpus, quod ille paene solus Romanorum animo vidit, ingenio complexus est, eloquentia illuminavit, manebit incolume, comitem aevi sui laudem Ciceronis trahet omnisque posteritas illius in te scripta mirabitur, tuum in eum factum execrabitur citiusque e mundo genus hominum quam huius nomen cedet.
>
> (Vell. 2.66.4–5)

> "You took from Marcus Cicero a few anxious days, a few senile years, a life which would have been more wretched under your domination than was his death in your triumvirate; but you did not rob him of his fame, the glory of his deeds and words, nay you but enhanced them. He lives and will continue to live in the memory of the ages, and so long as this universe shall endure – this universe which, whether created by chance, or by divine providence, or by whatever cause, he, almost alone of all the Romans, saw with the eye of his mind, grasped with his intellect, illumined with his eloquence – so long shall it be accompanied throughout the ages by the fame of Cicero. All posterity will admire the speeches that he wrote against you, while your action against him will call forth their execrations, and the race of man shall sooner pass from the world than the name of Cicero be forgotten."[1]

Cicero never died. His assassins mutilated his *corpus*. They cut off his head and hands to eradicate his memory and spiritual legacy.[2] Yet Cicero's genius survived the accidents of time and stamped its mark on every age. As predicted by the Roman historian Velleius Paterculus, Cicero's intellect

[1] Text and translation (with minor modification): Shipley 1924. [2] Plut. *Cic.* 48.6; *Ant.* 20.3.

and eloquence transcended the fragility and perishability of the human being.[3] Murdered by the sword of Antony's hitmen, Cicero survived the fragility of life through his writings.[4] The poignant scene of Cicero's violent death, recreated in dramatic forms by historians, poets and talented declaimers,[5] pays tribute to the statesman's and orator's accomplishments and immortalizes the last fighter for the liberty of the Roman republic as the "embodiment of verbal *ingenium.*"[6]

From the last decades of the Roman republic and early empire to modern times, Cicero has wielded tremendous power over the minds of literate individuals and permeated every aspect of cultural life. His influence went well beyond prose writing. Modern scholarship has long dwelled upon the consolidation of Cicero's reception as orator and philosopher in the Fathers of the Church and Christian literature.[7] Scholarly attention has also been paid to the revitalization of the Ciceronian model in the Renaissance,[8] the centrality of Cicero's thought to the Enlightenment movement[9] and Cicero's pervasive presence in literature and popular culture over the course of the last two centuries.[10] As a philosopher, orator and statesman, Cicero has exerted a long-lasting impact on the history of ideas and the formation of a class of educated readers, destined for respectable careers as men of culture and politics.

Naturally, changing historical and cultural factors have impacted on Cicero's *Nachleben* over the times. Zielinski's influential study, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte,*[11] claims that each epoch responded to Cicero with its own sensibility, its *Eigenart,* recreating a "single," one-sided Cicero, appreciated or imitated by virtue of a process of self-evaluation. As Altman makes clear, "Cicero in his integrity was the whole: it was we, his epigones, who repeatedly proved ourselves onesided in our appreciation."[12] Whatever the evaluation or reconstruction of Cicero over the centuries, a fact remains undeniable: Cicero's powerful and magnificent personality has stamped its mark indelibly on each age and continues to hold an endless fascination for readers and men of culture.

[3] Woodman 1983: 144–155; Schmitzer 2000: 184–9. [4] Sen. *Suas.* 6.4; 5; 19; 7.2; 7–8.
[5] Sen. *Con.* 7.2; *Suas.* 6 and 7. [6] Kaster 1998: 261.
[7] MacCormack 2013: 256–81; Kendeffy 2015. On the influence of Cicero's philosophy in Augustine, see O'Donnell 2015.
[8] Marsh 2013.
[9] Fox 2013. On Cicero's place in modern European (and American) culture and the role played by Cicero's rhetoric in Luther's Reformation, see Springer 2017. See also Manuwald 2016, for artistic and literary responses to Cicero in European and American culture from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. For Cicero in the age of the Counter-Reformation, see Gatti 2017.
[10] Cole 2013; Fotheringham 2013b. [11] Zielinski 1929 (first edition 1897). [12] Altman 2015: 4.

The solemn celebration of Cicero's undying memory by Roman historians and declaimers started what has been defined as the "reduction" and simplification of the consummate statesman and orator to a cultural icon.[13] This was an untroubled process only in appearance. One might be reminded of Cicero's place in the so-called "quarrel of the ancients and the moderns," that is, the debate over imitation of the past and modernity of style that pervaded first-century literary criticism, discussed at length in Tacitus's *Dialogus.*[14] Recent analysis by Gowing has also called attention to the variable treatment of Cicero in the early empire, pointing to Quintilian's recuperation of Cicero as a good man and an ideal writer, in contrast with Seneca's moralistic vilification of the orator as an individual.[15] It is beyond question that Cicero's reputation had long suffered from this tension between opposing evaluations, condemnation and blame for his disputable political conduct, on the one side, and universal recognition of his excellence in the art of speaking, on the other. This is not to say that Cicero's personal achievements faded into insignificance. They continued to be a source of interest for late pagan and Christian writers.[16] In spite of his controversial life, Cicero's mastery of dialectical arguments and his moralistic approach to Greco-Roman philosophical and rhetorical doctrine exerted a considerable influence on literature and culture in late antiquity. Macrobius approached him as an encyclopaedic author, the source of all human knowledge.[17] To many Christians, he represented a paradigm of ethics and morality.[18] Lactantius, the *Cicero Christianus,* "shared Cicero's purpose to put eloquence in the service of a moral doctrine."[19] Yet Cicero played an influential role more as orator and prose writer than as man. Read and revisited in classrooms as the incarnation of the power of speech, Cicero "the icon of eloquence" and master of the Latin language gradually replaced Cicero the man.[20] In schools a new Cicero came into existence – Cicero the writer and man of letters whose memory had been preserved and carried forward by many generations of intellectuals over the times.

Icon of Eloquence

Identified with his writings and words, Cicero soon established himself as the name and symbol of eloquence.[21] As we have said, at the end of

[13] Kaster 1998. [14] Dressler 2015. [15] Gowing 2013. See also Winterbottom 1982a: 254.
[16] MacCormack 2013: 252–5. [17] MacCormack 2013: 282–9. [18] Gasti 2016: 41–4.
[19] Kendeffy 2015: 91. [20] Kaster 1998: 262. [21] Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.112.

a process of historical erasure Cicero as a man, long censured as a prototype of political inconsistency and targeted as an example of an unphilosophical life, faded into the past. Cicero the statesman and politician was replaced by Cicero intellect and "pure form,"[22] abstracted from the social, political and historical preconceptions that had negatively affected his fame. One might say that this is the first, great legacy we have inherited from the school: the disentanglement of Cicero as a prose model from the historical and political Cicero and his consecration as the ideal orator, an image – passed down from generation to generation – that had dominated the history of education throughout the centuries and still remains at the heart of modern pedagogy.

The transformation into an icon of language and a model of Latin prose was a decisive moment in the history of the reception of Cicero in antiquity. If, as a historical figure, Cicero continued to encounter criticism and thereby elicit reflections on questions of Roman identity, offering space for debate about the survival of republican values in imperial times,[23] no one disputed his supremacy as a man of letters and an exemplary prose writer. Cicero met the high standards of ideal oratory. He was set as the example of the perfect orator, the *vir bonus dicendi peritus,* who combined moral virtues with the power of words and embodied therefore the ideals of Roman aristocratic culture. The truly Ciceronian Quintilian, as a schoolteacher and practicing advocate, held out Cicero's speeches as the models of the art of speaking. In the vast corpus of forensic, deliberative and civil law orations of Cicero, he found material for apprehending good Latin and the precepts for real-life oratory.

Reconfigured as an exemplary orator and prose writer, Cicero had a significant impact on the history of Roman education from the end of the republic onwards. We have rapidly noted that the early imperial debate about education and the persistence of established values pivoted on Cicero as the exemplar of eloquence and a model worthy of being imitated, emulated and reproduced by aspiring orators. Cicero did not only shape the form and practice of Roman rhetoric. He also shaped the ways in which the Romans reflected on education and its social and political function. By identifying Cicero with the art of eloquence Roman male elite students looked at the orator as the embodiment of successful oratory, the *vir bonus* who owed his pre-eminent social and cultural status to the rhetorical and oratorical skills that he had acquired and displayed over the years. Through Cicero they learned the ways by

[22] Dressler 2015: 147. [23] Dench 2013.

which they could empower themselves and attain fame and prestige in Roman elite society. Rhetorical education, the result of an "amalgamation of practical training with broad cultural expertise,"[24] was an aristocratic cultural process strictly embedded in the social and political landscape of Rome. Cicero's oratory represented the cornerstone of this process. It provided the tools by which young elite men were turned into true orators, well-educated speakers with the knowledge and practical experience necessary to establish themselves as leading figures in the intense competition of Roman political life.

Cicero and Roman Education

Abundant scholarship exists about the Roman educational system,[25] its three-stage arrangement[26] and the place of rhetoric in the formation of an educated Roman elite.[27] Analogously, the part played by Cicero as a master of Latin prose in literary instruction and rhetorical training has been well stressed.[28] As soon as one starts to examine the presence of Cicero in Roman education, it appears that there were two dominant scholarly approaches to his figure, closely related to each other. On the one hand, Cicero was reverently adopted as an unquestioned model of good and "pure" Latin, an invaluable source of linguistic and aesthetic devices to be successfully applied to real trials.[29] On the other, he was read, studied and imitated as the master of oratory as the "art of illusion,"[30] the model of ideal oratory devising and adapting persuasive arguments to the specificities of the trial at hand, manipulating the truth by means of pseudo-historical narratives, deploying verbal tricks and irony to destroy his opponent's credibility, delivering passionate and emotional performances and exploiting past events (as well as law decrees or statutes) to lend force and authority to his case. The speeches functioned naturally as the foundational texts of this didactic treatment of Cicero. Though delivered under different historical and legal circumstances, all speeches by Cicero

[24] Steel 2006: 65.
[25] Gwynn 1926; Marrou 1965; Bonner 1977; Harris 1989: 233–48; Morgan 1998a; Too 2001; Bloomer 2011b (for literate education in fourth- and fifth-century Gaul, see Haarhoff 1920). For Roman education in the republic, see Corbeill 2001. On rhetorical education and declamation, see Bonner 1949; Kaster 2001; Bloomer 2007.
[26] Kaster 1983. [27] Clarke 1953; Corbeill 2007 (with further bibliography).
[28] On Cicero's ideal of oratorical education, see Bonner 1977: 76–89 (on standard rhetorical theory and Cicero: 287–308).
[29] Gasti 2016: 38–40 (on the *Tulliana dignitas* and Cicero as teacher of "good Latin").
[30] Gotoff 1993b.

displayed the potentialities of Roman language and oratorical art. Under the guidance of trained schoolteachers the young apprehended how to extract from a speech of Cicero all the linguistic and rhetorical material needed to display their oratorical talent and intellectual skills and perform thereby as accomplished speakers.

Any scholar trying to trace out a history of Cicero's place in Roman education should thus look at the reception process from two interconnected perspectives. From the standpoint of rhetorical education, our understanding of the reception of Cicero entails by necessity a study of the process of reinterpretation and re-evaluation of his rhetorical theory and practice in the light of the speeches, the texts most embedded in the political, social and cultural environment of the Roman republic. From a linguistic perspective, it involves an examination of the ways by which ancient scholars and schoolteachers approached Ciceronian language and style as a step towards defining the rules of correct Latin.

With respect to the linguistic side, it is well known that liberal education in Roman schools largely relied on Cicero's *auctoritas* in establishing the principles of good Latin. The *Attic Nights* of Gellius, the encyclopaedic dictionary of Nonius Marcellus, the collection of *singularia* of Statilius Maximus and late educational grammatical handbooks testify to the relevance of Cicero to the study of Latin language and style (*ars grammatica*). Proper pronunciation, vocabulary, word order and appropriateness of morphology and syntax were thought to be essential to the acquisition of *Latinitas,* the ideal of pure and correct Latin style and idiom, a notion firmly embedded in Roman elite culture. What seems much more significant is that, by learning Ciceronian language, the young members of the dominating classes expanded their opportunities to acquire a respectable place in Roman society. Since incorrect Latin diction was associated with immorality and the transgression of established social values, appropriation and mastery of Cicero's language promoted an elite ideal of Romanness and enabled the youths to play a part in the Roman community. As has been said, "in Roman society preference is given not to personal development and individual improvement, but to training youth for the community of the elite through replication by example."[31] By acquiring and replicating Cicero's *Latinitas* the elite male students learned how to become true Romans and establish themselves as educated promoters of Roman cultural tradition.

[31] Corbeill 2001: 282.

It goes without saying that Cicero as both a master of oratorical theory and practice and as an *exemplum* of successful eloquence had a dominant place in rhetorical training. Quintilian's construction of the ideal orator in his *Institutio* can serve as a case study for the deployment of Cicero's oratory in liberal education. At the heart of Quintilian's assessment of Cicero as a paramount model of oratorical prose is naturally the notion of imitation, which was integral to the development of the "good man" and "good orator." As an accomplished schoolteacher, Quintilian drew on Cicero's orations to clarify the correct exordial topic, illustrate different ways of dissimulating the truth and manipulating historical events and legal issues, underline wit and humor as productive rhetorical devices and offer examples of emotional delivery. Such an explanation of Cicero's technique of persuasion was preliminary to imitation and emulation of the great orator's rhetorical accomplishments. By propounding Cicero's speeches as models of oratorical excellence and elucidating relevant aspects of the manipulative strategy of persuasion Quintilian provided his pupils with all the most potent weapons in the armory of the orator and urged them to follow in the great orator's footsteps. To Quintilian, imitation of Cicero proved to be a powerful "tool of war" in the competitive arena.

Yet it is worth remembering that Quintilian's endorsement of Ciceronian oratory was also, and above all, a cultural and pedagogical project, based on imitation of the exemplary past as a means of inculcating elite young students with a set of values anchored in elite culture and society. In Quintilian's view, Cicero not only supplied students at the school of rhetoric with an impressive array of linguistic and rhetorical devices. He also helped to shape the youths' minds and make them mature individuals. Imitation of Cicero turned out to be an ethical concept, a notion embedded in the idealistic vision of education as an intellectual development from childhood to maturity, from young would-be Romans to "true" Roman citizens.

Quintilian was obviously not a voice in the wilderness. Cicero's place in the school curriculum and his importance as source of good Latin and a model of persuasion are amply demonstrated by the mass of exegetical material on the speeches, in the form of both independent commentaries and sets of marginal or interlinear notes, that goes under the name of *scholia Ciceronis* and ranges in date from the Neronian age, the time of composition of the commentary of Asconius Pedianus, to the late fifth or early sixth century.[32] A hitherto neglected chapter of the history of Cicero's

[32] Collected and edited by Stangl 1912 (= St). Edition of Asconius: Clark 1907 (= C); Lewis 2006 (with English translation); edition of the *Scholia Bobiensia*: Hildebrandt 1907.

reception, the scholia on Cicero's orations originated in the school environment, were the final product of the interpretative efforts of learned scholars and schoolteachers, reflected the multiple ways by which a speech of Cicero was approached, scrutinized and dissected, and ultimately presented to students a model for imitation. Just as Quintilian supplies us with insightful and precious comments on Cicero's oratorical art and its didactic use, Asconius enables us to establish the relevance of Cicero's speeches to the students' understanding of Roman republican history. Similarly, the *Scholia Bobiensia*, a linguistic-rhetorical commentary on a number of orations, is clearly rooted in a didactic context, connected as it is to basic training in linguistics and rhetoric. The commentary on the *Divinatio* and parts of the *Verrines*, which is commonly known under the name of Pseudo-Asconius, and the so-called *scholia Gronoviana* contain notes of some significance on Cicero's stylistic and linguistic features and his rhetorical practice. Taken all together, these scholiographic *corpora* join Quintilian in illuminating the multiplicity of roles played by Cicero in the school system, as a source of historical knowledge, a rhetorical theorist, a model of prose writing, a linguistic authority and a master of the art of speaking. To put it in different terms, Quintilian and the ancient scholiasts are essential to our reconstruction of Cicero's oratory as a foundational element in Roman education.

Key Questions

Modern scholars dealing with Cicero's relevance to the Roman educational system unavoidably face two key issues: What was the role played by the school in the survival of Cicero's speeches? And how and to what extent has ancient exegesis influenced our understanding of Ciceronian oratory? The assumption is that *what* we read of Cicero is largely the result of a process of selection that began in the school environment in the late republic. Many speeches survived the accidents of textual transmission by dint of their didactic function. Not all of them, however. A good number of orations had been lost, in spite of their stylistic quality and their recognized impact on educational training. The case of the two speeches *pro Cornelio* is illuminating. Yet, if we are allowed to appreciate Cicero's style and oratorical art, we owe it to the school and its codified system that helped to preserve literary texts from their publication to the oldest medieval witnesses.[33] In our frustration at the lack of surviving original

[33] Pasquali 1952: IX; De Nonno 2010: 32.

autographs, the presence (or absence) of some texts in the school curriculum is crucial to our comprehension of significant stages of textual transmission. And it is not by chance that the majority of the speeches commented on in the scholia (presumably arranged in chronological corpora) reappear in the oldest papyri scraps or parchments. From the first authorial dissemination to the medieval manuscripts passing through the school, the story of the transmission of Cicero's orations (a story similar to that of the greatest number of Latin literary texts) had profoundly been affected by their didactic relevance and influence on the educational system.

To the schoolteachers' concern about the textual quality of the scrutinized orations we also owe *how* we read Cicero and *which text* of Cicero we read. Ancient scholarship on Cicero offers abundant comments on textual issues. As expected, variant readings, alterations, omissions, interpolations and erroneous conjectures by earlier critics constituted the subject of heated debates among scholiasts and commentators engaged in establishing textual correctness and accuracy. As has been stated, "the history of ancient textual criticism is a poor substitute for the history of the texts themselves, but in the absence of manuscripts it is the only one we have."[34] Applied to the reception of the speeches in the Roman school, this view makes sense of a large part of ancient scholarship on Cicero as a useful supplement to the history of textual transmission. In particular, the scholiasts' discussions of specific textual points, in line with or in opposition to earlier interpretations, illustrate the enormous interpretative work done on Cicero's speeches over the times. As "variorum works," the scholia or commentaries on the orations collect, assemble and discuss earlier opinions, often in polemical terms. They detail variant readings or comment on apparently unused linguistic forms in order to provide a text matching the standard criteria of philological accuracy. Along with the late grammarians and rhetoricians, the scholiographic *corpora* offer us the chance of investigating and identifying otherwise inaccessible strata of transmission.

Reflecting on oratory and its didactic use, schoolteachers in antiquity responded to precise educational demands. Rhetorical training included not only instruction on language. Roman elite students had to be prepared for real-life oratory by acquiring rhetorical devices and stratagems. Within this context, the surviving scholia on Cicero are of the greatest significance for understanding *the ways by which* students read and interpreted the speeches. Preoccupied with the intellectual development of their pupils,

[34] Zetzel 1981: 1–2.

the scholiasts guided them through the complexities and intricacies of Cicero's text, acting as learned and expert advocates acquainted with the manipulative art of persuasion. Through a close integration of text and commentary, they illustrated and elucidated Cicero's strategy of persuasion, his use of rhetorical tricks, artful argumentations and aesthetic/emotional devices, spurring knowledge of traditional rhetorical patterns and stimulating adoption and imitation of Cicero's oratorical tactics. What has been said about Quintilian is equally valid for late scholiasts and commentators. The principle behind explanation of Cicero was that of appropriation/imitation, that is, the acquisition of the rules of the art of speaking and the related practical replication of the precepts regulating the art of persuasion.

It has been noted that "a rhetorical theory can claim authority if it is understandable, usable and efficient – or, at least, perceived as such."[35] Quintilian and late scholiasts explained, commented on and used Cicero's rhetorical treatises and speeches to provide students with the main basis of rhetorical theory and offer guidelines on how to handle real trials and produce effective oratorical performances. If the youthful treatise *De inventione*, expounded at length by late rhetoricians such as Victorinus and Grillius, along with Cicero's other theoretical writings (*De oratore, Brutus* and *Orator*), offered the basic precepts of rhetorical theory, the speeches supplied students with the practical means of persuasion. In the speeches Cicero grounded the theory in his own experience as an advocate. He showed how to organize and arrange the arguments, provided examples of persuasive strategies and the proper use of aesthetic and emotional devices and taught students to make their texts authoritative through the application of traditional rhetorical tools. Cicero influenced Roman education as a rhetorical theorist and an authority on prose writing and the Latin language. But perhaps the most powerful impact he made on the ancient pedagogical system was through his speeches, the texts that, more than others, testified to the force of oratory as the art of illusion and manipulation of minds. Roman students transformed themselves into accomplished orators and respectable citizens by looking at Cicero's authoritative model. It might be tempting to say that they engaged in public speaking and entered the public arena holding a volume of Cicero's speeches in their hands.

[35] Guérin 2006: 62.