

Introduction

In the predawn light of October, AD 75, a 13-year-old trudges bleary-eyed through the streets of Rome. Cocks are not yet crowing, but occasional sounds can be heard as the city slowly stirs from slumber. Our youth is excited and nervous: he is on his way to his first day of school under the *rhetor*'s tutelage, the place where he will spend the rest of his teenage years learning the art of oratory.¹ He is about to make the acquaintance of a man long dead, a man whom neither his parents nor his grandparents knew personally, but who will be of fundamental importance for the next few years of his life: Marcus Tullius Cicero. In the rhetorical classroom he will spend countless hours reading Cicero's speeches and writing declamations about him or in imitation of him. He will be exposed to a very particular version of this famous figure, with some aspects played up and others played down – sometimes to make him a more exemplary classroom icon, sometimes as a legacy of political decisions made a century ago – and he will have this version thrashed into his head for years.² But of course he will not stay a schoolboy forever; he will eventually leave the *rhetor*'s school and embark on the *cursus honorum*, or a legal career, or a military campaign, or any of the other professional paths open to an upper-class youth of education and ambition. And yet even as an adult, those first impressions and that schoolroom image of Cicero will stick with him. When Roman literary authors talk about Cicero, we see in their texts the same themes and points of emphasis that originally developed in the rhetorical classroom. Education wields an enormous influence on the shaping of history and memory, and even more so in an age before printed books, television, and the internet. I will show the extent and nature of that influence on the

¹ For the basic details of the schoolday and schoolroom, see Bonner (1977) 126–145, Criboire (2001) 127–159, Bloomer (2011) 12–17, and Criboire (2015). The guess of October as a plausible date is based on Mart. 10.62; Martial is also a witness to the early start to the schoolday (14.223).

² Literally: as a snippet of Pompeian schoolroom graffiti reminds us (*CIL* IV.4208), “If you don't like Cicero, you will be beaten,” *si t[ibi] Cicero do[let], uap[us] labis*. See p. 30 below.

afterlife of Cicero, one of Rome's most famous sons. This book is the story of what, how, and why our young 13-year-old will learn about Cicero, and what he might do with what he learned. It is the story of Cicero's reception in the early Roman Empire.

It is a truism that Cicero is a "school author," a cornerstone of the ancient curriculum. He is synonymous with rhetorical education in authors as diverse as Martial and Messius.³ The truism is true: Cicero really was central to the rhetorical schoolroom. My purpose in this book is to explore what that schoolroom centrality means, and what its consequences are. What are the effects of having a particular image of Cicero hammered into you for years? What are the consequences of focusing on this author as *the* paragon of oratorical excellence? In this investigation we will have to try to set aside our own preconceptions arising from two millennia of reception; the way things turned out is not necessarily the way that they had to be. The Cicero I describe will be simultaneously strange and familiar. From a modern perspective, it is an undeniably partial and indeed flattened image. Cicero was remembered, as Tadeusz Zielinski wrote, for his life and his works⁴ – but not for all of them. So much that the ancient world could have engaged with it simply does not; their Cicero is in some ways but a shadow of the original man, and yet it is a towering shadow that later generations struggled mightily to escape from. This partial Cicero, stripped of the complex contradictions of his own lifetime and refashioned into a literary and political symbol, *is* the Cicero of the early Empire, and he is largely created in the imperial schoolroom.

The seeds of this reception were sown by Cicero himself and by political forces in the immediate aftermath of his death. In his own lifetime he was very conscious that he was shaping his reputation for posterity; in the *Pro Archia*, for example, he writes, "Everything that I did, already then when I was doing it I realized that I was scattering and planting the seed of myself in the world's everlasting memory" (*ego uero omnia quae gerebam iam tum in gerendo spargere me ac disseminare arbitrabar in orbis terrae memoriam sempiternam, Arch. 30*).⁵ Cicero was also well aware of how important the schoolroom would be as the mediator of his reception. Not only does he publish his work – already a deliberate act of image management – but he

³ E.g. Mart. 5.56.3–5; a member of the so-called *quadriga Messii*, Cass. *inst.* 1.17.7; cf. *GL* VII.449–514.

⁴ Zielinski (1929) 9.

⁵ Instances of this self-conscious self-presentation are legion; think, for example, of the way that Cicero remodels the image of his exile *post reditum* (see p. 164 below and May [1988] 88–127). On Ciceronian self-fashioning, see recently Dugan (2005), Steel (2005), Kurczyk (2006), van der Blom (2010), Pieper (2014), Scheidegger Lämmle (2017).

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publishes speeches specifically for the edification of young students (*Att.* 2.1.3; cf. 4.2.2); he talks constantly of the use of his writings in the schoolroom (e.g. *Brut.* 123, where his texts displace orators of the older generation); he even goes so far as to augur that schoolboys will learn some of his speeches off by heart (*ad Q. fr.* 3.1.11).⁶ Cicero knew full well how important the schoolroom would be in preserving the monument that he had labored to build for himself.

The political forces at work in the decades following Cicero's death also helped shape what was presented in the schoolroom. While for any number of reasons his ghost might seem an unlikely bedfellow for the living Octavian, in fact Cicero's outspoken opposition to Mark Antony made him a perfect ally of the new regime after Actium.⁷ As the years rolled on, of course, the political context changed dramatically: the issues that were so lively and important in the 20s BC were a dead letter a century later.⁸ And yet the schoolroom curriculum was very conservative and consistent. The fundamental terms of Cicero's reception were set early on, frozen and fossilized in the tumultuous years following his death, and they remained remarkably constant. Sensitive and sophisticated writers like Seneca the Younger, Tacitus, and Pliny can put those terms to different uses, but the issues surrounding Cicero that were debated in Augustan declamations continued to be replayed in the classroom of Quintilian a century later and beyond.

Is the Cicero of the schoolroom the only "Cicero" that survived into the early Empire? Perhaps not, and I cannot claim that I have exhausted all interpretive possibilities. Nothing absolutely compelled ancient audiences to engage only with a partial Cicero. Whatever we know of Cicero today, antiquity, at least in theory, could have known too. But we should remember that essentially every literary author we read – to say nothing of the politicians and advocates and countless other voices that have perished without echo today – was schooled in the rhetorical tradition that I discuss in this book; the influences that I describe were foundational for everyone. I see the schoolroom as the predominant factor conditioning Cicero's early reception, and I want to bring out the interest in the very

⁶ Stroh (1975) 21, 52–53 perhaps goes too far in believing that Cicero's overriding concern in publishing his speeches was to provide examples for the rhetorical classroom, and recent work like that of Steel (2005) has shown just how sophisticated Cicero is in using publication to shape his public persona. Nevertheless, Stroh is right to emphasize that Cicero was eager for canonization as a school author. Cf. the humor of Horace on his own schoolroom fate (*epist.* 1.20.17–18).

⁷ This theme will be developed particularly in chapter 3.

⁸ On the evolution in the ways Romans in the early Empire looked back at their Republican past, see esp. Gowing (2005).

particular – and flattened and simplified – Cicero that the ancient schoolroom so influentially presents. Ancient authors are not limited to what they learned in the schoolroom, and we will see some go far beyond it, but even this we can only properly appreciate when we understand its schoolroom foundation.

The seeds of Cicero's afterlife were sown by Cicero himself and by post-mortem political propaganda, but they were tended by the rhetorical teachers and nourished to maturity in their classrooms. Cicero's reception in the early Empire is decisively influenced by the Roman rhetorical schoolroom.

An Orientation

It is a topos to say that the object of one's proposed study has been ("unfairly" or "surprisingly") neglected by scholarship. I cannot claim that the reception of Cicero has been entirely neglected, but it has been the subject of only a handful of significant studies, especially as concerns its earliest period.⁹ The most important and extensive of these is Tadeusz Zielinski's *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* (fourth edition 1929), which for all its many virtues treats the first century only briefly, being concerned with the reception of Cicero from antiquity through the French Revolution. Zielinski's work is really an attempt at large-scale cultural history viewed through the figure of Cicero, focusing on three *Eruptionsperioden*, first the expansion of Christianity, then the Renaissance, and finally the Enlightenment.¹⁰ His treatment of the period that I examine is thus superficial by design, and he occasionally makes odd statements, claiming for example that Cicero was first acknowledged as the head of Roman literature in the time of Quintilian.¹¹ Nevertheless, among many acute observations Zielinski does briefly advert to the importance of the schoolroom.¹²

There is also the eminently readable and intensely personal *2000 Jahre Cicero* of Bruno Weil (1962), which is likewise sweeping in scope – encompassing, as the title promises, the two millennia from Cicero's

⁹ For brief comments on some of the twentieth-century scholarship not mentioned here, see Kennedy (2002) 481–483. Kennedy's essay itself is a whirlwind tour of Cicero's reception from antiquity to the nineteenth century.

¹⁰ Zielinski (1929) 2–3.

¹¹ Zielinski (1929) 36: "So kam es, daß erst jetzt, zur Zeit seines zweiten säkularen Gedenktages, Cicero das anerkannte Haupt der römischen Literatur war." We will see by contrast that Cicero was accorded this status almost from the moment of his death.

¹² E.g. Zielinski (1929) 10, 15. His foundational discussion of *Cicerokarikatur*, i.e. a negative tradition critical of Cicero, also acknowledges the importance of declamation (280–288).

death to Weil's present – and prone to dubious or misguided inferences.¹³ Weil is not concerned with the schoolroom and passes through the period that I discuss in about thirty pages. Besides the monographs of Zielinski and Weil, three collections of essays devoted to Cicero's afterlife have recently been published, William Altman's *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Cicero* (2015a), Nancy van Deusen's *Cicero Refused to Die: Ciceronian Influence through the Centuries* (2013), and Gesine Manuwald's *The Afterlife of Cicero* (2016). The first of these focuses almost exclusively, the second and third exclusively, on Cicero's later reception. Finally, Catherine Steel's *Cambridge Companion to Cicero* (2013) concludes with six essays on Cicero's reception, one treating the imperial period.

The other book-length treatments of Cicero's reception are unpublished dissertations, Gambet (1963), Lavery (1965), Wright (1997), and Sillett (2015), the last of which I have not seen.¹⁴ Both Gambet and Lavery proceed chronologically – Gambet up to AD 79, Lavery through the reign of Hadrian – in an attempt to assemble and appraise all the surviving evidence. Lavery's dissertation takes the form of passages and commentary, capped by a brief conclusion in which he identifies three strands of reception: one negative, one positive, and one eulogistic of Ciceronian oratory without touching on his life. It is to be certain a good collection of material, and from the notes to individual passages some insights may be gleaned, but otherwise Lavery's work remains atomistic commentary that is not unified in the pursuit of broader claims.¹⁵ Gambet, on the other hand, is both more sensitive and much more thorough, having written a hundred more pages than Lavery on a less expansive time period. He also, like Zielinski, correctly observed the importance of rhetorical education.¹⁶ Nevertheless, his treatment of the schoolroom remains superficial, and his methodical examination of each author in chronological order, always followed by a judgment about whether the writer in question liked Cicero or not, prevents him from seeing the unifying themes that originate in the declamatory classroom and pervade the thoughts of writers in the first century and beyond. What he is really concerned with is establishing

¹³ For example, Weil believes that there was a ban on Cicero's writings under Augustus (pp. 38, 41, 46–55). Weil himself was a lawyer, not a professional classicist, and fled the Nazis. He identified with Cicero both as an advocate and as an exile, and hoped desperately for a "return to Cicero" in post-war Germany. See Altman (2015b) 215–219.

¹⁴ Also Petzold (1911), whose third chapter briefly considers Cicero's *laudatores* and *obtretores* after his death; the schoolroom is touched on cursorily pp. 55–58. I know Sillett (2015) only from its abstract, from which it appears complementary to but not co-extensive with my project.

¹⁵ The schoolroom finds occasional brief mention; see Lavery (1965) 45–46, 164, and 181.

¹⁶ So most clearly stated in his conclusion, e.g. Gambet (1963) 231, 237–238.

a “positive” and a “negative” tradition – his focus is on Cicero’s posthumous “reputation” – and he is obsessed with determining the sincerity of the various witnesses to these traditions.¹⁷ He also thinks that he detects a fall and then a rise in Cicero’s fortunes, but this proves illusory on closer examination.¹⁸ Furthermore, he stops his investigation at the death of the Elder Pliny, thus omitting three of the most important witnesses to Cicero’s early *Fortleben*: Quintilian, Tacitus, and Pliny the Younger (to say nothing of Plutarch and the Greek historians and the pseudepigrapha I discuss).

Wright (1997) disregards the influence of the schoolroom and declamation, but rightly emphasizes the ideological dimension of Cicero’s early reception.¹⁹ His study ranges from the triumviral period through the early Julio-Claudian era, and he observes that you do not find the complex array of reactions to Cicero that you might have expected.²⁰ While we differ on numerous points of detail and I cannot agree with all of his conclusions, his focus on ideology productively moves beyond the reductionistic “positive” and “negative” traditions that had characterized earlier work. I should note that even though Wright downplays the declamatory influence on Cicero’s reception, he is a particularly sensitive reader of declamation, as shown in his article from 2001 (an appendix to the thesis).

There have also been book chapters and articles treating various aspects of Cicero’s first-century reception, among which the two most significant for my purposes are Michael Winterbottom’s “Cicero and the Silver Age” (1982) and Robert Kaster’s “Becoming ‘CICERO’” (1998). Winterbottom makes many trenchant observations, particularly regarding Quintilian. He does not, however, deal as much with the declamatory tradition, and he lacks the space to go into detail except as concerns Quintilian. Kaster focuses on how Cicero’s writing and style became identified with his life in the declamatory tradition. His essay is useful, but deliberately limited in scope; he modestly disclaims a full treatment of Cicero’s early reception, concentrating on the declaimers preserved in Seneca the Elder. Other

¹⁷ Sincerity or lack thereof is a persistent concern, e.g. Gambet (1963) 57–60, 91, 246–247.

¹⁸ E.g. Gambet (1963) 33, 85, 92, 118, 147, 190, 218, 230–231, 233, 239, 249. Some of this speculation is built on a misreading of the evidence (see his p. 118 on the phrase *nemo ausus est*), some on simply ignoring the clear fact that, as demonstrated throughout my book, Cicero was read as a foundational part of the school curriculum through the entirety of this period. This notion is not confined to Gambet; see e.g. Bishop (2015) 289–290, 293–294; van der Blom (2016b) 88. Wright (1997) 214–236 refutes the notion of a “Ciceronian dark age” in detail.

¹⁹ Wright’s thesis did not become available to me until my own work was substantially complete, but it has not led me to alter any of my arguments.

²⁰ Wright (1997) 4.

recent contributions include the chapter by Alain Gowing (2013), a sensitive look at two concrete examples of Ciceronian reception in Seneca the Younger and Quintilian. Bishop (2015) considers the Cicero of Asconius and the Cicero of Macrobius, implicitly and rightly marking the contrast between the oratorical Cicero of the early Empire and the philosophical Cicero of later centuries. More general overviews include Pierini (2003) and Richter (1968), both concerned above all to place on record and summarize the first-century evidence, and van der Blom (2016b), a brief treatment with emphasis on Cicero's self-fashioning as found in his preserved speeches.

Thus while workers have toiled in these fields before, there remains a considerable crop to harvest. By choosing a broad but restricted chronological basis and looking at the evidence through the lens of rhetorical education (see "Scope and Structure" below), I hope to show just how important the schoolroom was in mediating Cicero's memory. Such an investigation does not merely help us understand Cicero's imperial reception. A deep dive into the waters of a single – indeed *the* single – Roman rhetorical model sheds a different kind of light on ancient educational practices from that provided by broader surveys.²¹ Moreover, such a study addresses questions of Roman identity and ideology. Scholars have recently emphasized how important declamation and rhetorical education were in forging "Roman-ness" in elite Roman men, and these same educational forces also preserved and transmitted imperial ideology. I explore how and why the particular case of Cicero was, as Emma Dench puts it, "so good to think with as a Roman exemplar in the early imperial period."²² Indeed, the investigation of the early Empire's relationship with one of its most significant late Republican predecessors is part of a broader conversation about the construction of memories of the Roman Republic in the early Empire, a conversation in which the schoolroom is generally ignored.²³ I show that it is of vital importance in transmitting and indeed creating the

²¹ Indispensable surveys include Marrou (1964), Bonner (1977), Morgan (1998), Criboire (2001), and more interpretively Bloomer (2011). See also the essays in Bloomer (2015a).

²² Dench (2013) 122. On the importance of declamatory education in shaping ancient *mentalité*, see e.g. Beard (1993), Bloomer (1997a), Bloomer (1997b) 110–153, Gunderson (2003), Migliario (2007) 17–22, Bloomer (2011) 170–191. From a somewhat different perspective, Connolly (2007) explores the implications of rhetoric and rhetorical education in constructing the "state of speech," i.e. the entirety of the Roman *res publica*. See her pp. 237–261 on declamation and Quintilian.

²³ The periodization of "late Republic" and "early Empire" is not necessarily self-evident, especially to ancient authors, for whose understanding see Sion-Jenkis (2000) 53–64. (In the *Dialogus* Tacitus in fact implicitly dates the beginning of the Empire to Cicero's death: see p. 272 below.) Further on these issues Gowing (2005) 3–6, whose definition of "Republic" I here follow: "a chronological as well as cultural marker, to denote the period between the end of the Roman monarchy in 509 BC and

memories which imperial authors preserve. Furthermore, the whole history of Latin prose literature after Cicero is in part a set of responses to his overwhelming influence, as mediated by the rhetorical schools. Whether we want to understand nuances of imperial Latinity, or Seneca's style, or Tacitus' intertextuality, or Pliny's anxieties, we must first understand not just Cicero, but how Cicero was understood by later authors. I hope finally that by coming to grips with later authors' reception of Cicero, we might gain better insight into our reception too: we are none of us free from the biases and filters that shape our understanding, but by seeing those of others we might be able to be more conscious of our own.

Scope and Structure

My study of Cicero's reception begins where his own control over his legacy ended: the moment of his death. The living Cicero's self-fashioning has been extensively studied in recent scholarship,²⁴ and while I have derived considerable profit from such discussions, I will not rehash them here. Although I constantly make reference to Cicero's life and works in what follows, my goal is not so much to talk about the "real" Cicero – if indeed any Cicero is not simply someone's (re)construction – as the imperial reception of the man. As a result I start with authors writing after Cicero's death and follow their lead backwards and forwards. The endpoint for my investigation is, roughly speaking, the age of Pliny, Tacitus, and Plutarch, and I have at least some discussion of most authors who wrote between 43 BC and AD 117.²⁵ I have also constantly found it useful to bring in later testimony as important witnesses to an earlier tradition, and so texts as diverse as Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and undatable pseudo-Ciceronian writings find their place alongside works written squarely in the first century. The reasons for this are made clear when the texts are discussed, as are questions of dating, when relevant.

The book consists of seven chapters followed by a brief epilogue. It is broadly divided into two parts joined by a central linking chapter. The first four chapters, arranged thematically rather than chronologically, focus on

the beginning of the Augustan principate in 31 BC" (6). On memories of the Republic in the Empire, see Gowing (2005) and Gallia (2012).

²⁴ Cf. n. 5 above.

²⁵ The notable exception is Sallust (*ca.* 86–35 BC), who represents a special case. Even if he was writing a year or two after Cicero's death, his *Bellum Catilinae* is the report of events he lived through, and his portrait of Cicero was not subject to the influence of the Ciceronian school curriculum but rather his personal knowledge of and interactions with the man himself. Wright (1997) 10–29 discusses Cicero in Sallust.

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the rhetorical schoolroom and its pervasive influence; the final two chapters are case studies of the reception of Cicero in Tacitus and Pliny, which have Quintilian as their educational fulcrum. The bridge is the fifth chapter, a study of Cicero in Seneca the Younger, which spans the gap both chronologically and thematically between the evidence of Seneca the Elder, Seneca the Younger's father, and Quintilian, Seneca the Younger's reactionary conservative successor. The studies of Seneca, Tacitus, and Pliny, while grounded in the classroom, also move beyond it – just as these three authors were grounded in the tradition of rhetorical education but rose above it. In the first half of the book we see Cicero “flattened” as he is textualized and transformed from a living man into words on a page, but this very textualization also allows for a sort of reinflation by more sophisticated authors as they put to various uses the icon that Cicero has become. In particular we see in the later chapters a debate not just over Cicero the educational figure, but also over Cicero the educational theorist.

In the first chapter I establish how a Ciceronian speech was taught in the early Empire, focusing on Cicero's *Pro Milone*. By triangulating among three ancient sources (Asconius, Quintilian, and the scholia Bobiensia), I try to reconstruct how the speech would have been taught in the ancient rhetorical classroom. Careful scrutiny of the preoccupations and interests of these teachers reveals what students in the early Empire would have learned about Cicero from their closest surviving link to the man: his speeches. The emphasis in the rhetorical classroom is always on Cicero's supreme skill as a speaker and his status as exemplary orator; appreciation and imitation of his rhetorical artistry is all-important.

Having discussed how Cicero was read in the ancient classroom, I turn next to the other major activity of the rhetorical school, the practice of writing declamations and rhetorical exercises. In my second, third, and fourth chapters I examine ancient schoolroom declamations about Cicero and declamations written in his persona, including “spurious” pseudo-Ciceronian texts. Certain dominant themes and emphases immediately appear, and they continue to reappear in literary treatments of the man. Chapter 2 further develops the idea of Cicero as the model for eloquence, the factor which ensured his centrality to a school curriculum dedicated to teaching that very quality. I argue that this reputation was not inevitable, but once established proved unshakable and undergirded his entire reception. Cicero becomes identified as the “*uox publica*,” and I consider various ways in which his eloquence was discussed in the schoolroom, including comparisons with Demosthenes and the notion of an oratorical decline

since Cicero's day, and show that these discussions have ramifications far outside the classroom walls.

The rhetorical schools contended that Cicero's eloquence led to his death, and that death is the subject of my third chapter. Cicero's death was simply the historical event most significant for his reception, and its details were replayed again and again in declamation. These declamations were themselves first subject to the influence of imperial ideology, then acted as propagators of it, and I show how declamation played a central role in shaping history and memory. What young men learned about Cicero's death at school reappears in their literary writings as adults, whether they are historians like Velleius Paterculus or poets like Juvenal. Indeed, the declamatory version of events even influences Greek writers like Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio.

While Cicero's death was the most salient historical component of his reception, it was not the only one, and in my fourth chapter I discuss the other elements that recur with some frequency in later discussions of the man: his consulship as a *nouus homo*, his exile, and his activities in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination. I view all of these through the prism of pseudepigraphic texts, that is, texts that are ascribed to Cicero or his contemporaries but that are in fact products of the rhetorical schools. Declamation was naturally dialectic, and these themes give scope for both praising and blaming Cicero. There was, however, no simple dichotomy between a positive and a negative tradition, but rather a wealth of material that could be accommodated by enterprising speakers to the demands of the case at hand. Here too I show how the themes and points of emphasis that developed in the rhetorical classroom are echoed in history and literature. The chapter closes with a brief coda on an underappreciated part of pseudepigraphic technique, the use of intertextual allusions.

In chapter 5 I move away from detailed scrutiny of the ancient rhetorical classroom to broader case studies of how sophisticated literary authors make use of their rhetorical training and rise above it. Seneca the Younger is the son of Seneca the Elder and must have been steeped in the rhetorical tradition that his father preserves, and we do indeed see that version of Cicero in his writings. And yet Seneca engages – and chooses *not* to engage – with Cicero in wholly new ways. He ignores Cicero's philosophy; he forges his own stylistic path; he knows Cicero's letters but goes his own way in epistolography too, embracing a radical generic experiment; he rejects Cicero's broad educational vision. In his wholesale spurning of Cicero, he sets the stage for the neo-Ciceronian reaction of Quintilian, who was in a sense his successor as an imperial tutor.

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Quintilian's classroom is the pivot for chapters 6 and 7, which comprise case studies of Cicero in Pliny the Younger and Tacitus. Pliny was Quintilian's pupil, and Tacitus quite possibly was as well; Pliny and Tacitus were moreover friends and correspondents. I show first that Quintilian puts forth a simplified program of neo-Ciceronianism: Cicero, he says, was Rome's best orator, and since his day oratory has gone into a decline. Cicero also provided a guide to eloquence in his rhetorical treatises and courtroom speeches. Thus, Quintilian argues, if contemporary students wish to attain Cicero's greatness, they must do what the great man prescribes and follow in his educational footsteps.

In chapter 6 I demonstrate that Tacitus repudiates these ideals in his *Dialogus de oratoribus*. He mounts a sophisticated theoretical rebuttal of Quintilian's neo-Ciceronianism, but he does so in a remarkable fashion, cloaking his rejection in Ciceronian style and language. He thus rejects Cicero by subverting Cicero's own words. With cleverly destructive intertextuality, Tacitus actually explodes the entire genre within which he is working; while playing by its rules and conventions, he claims that the game can no longer be played and won. In a masterpiece of Ciceronian eloquence he argues that Ciceronian eloquence is no longer possible; the change in political circumstances from the late Republic to the early Empire has closed that route forever.

In the seventh and final chapter I show how Pliny, by contrast, tries to put Quintilian's Ciceronian classroom principles into practice in the rough and tumble world of Roman life and letters. He is nevertheless acutely conscious that neither his native talent nor the changed political circumstances allow him to do so successfully. His *Epistulae* thus show a persistently uneasy anxiety of influence, as he both desires to be compared with his great model and avows that he is not worthy of such an honor. I investigate both Pliny's explicit mentions of Cicero in the *Epistulae* and some more subtle Ciceronian echoes and motifs in those letters. I demonstrate that his relationship with Cicero remains an unresolved and unresolvable tension throughout his work.

In an epilogue I draw all these threads together and provide an aperçu on the late antique and early medieval reception of Cicero, which is very different. Throughout the early Empire, Cicero had been little valued as a philosopher, not least because those who wanted to read philosophy could read his Greek sources. With the advent of Christianity and the progressive erosion of Greek in the West, however, his stock as a philosopher began to rise. It became less and less necessary to look to him as a model of a Latinity whose character had fundamentally shifted,

and less and less possible to understand or relate to the political situation of a completely alien time, but more and more desirable to find improving moral elements in his *philosophica*. Augustine, a Greekless Christian, encapsulates this trend, and I briefly explore the decisive role of Cicero's philosophical works in his formation.