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Introduction

THE PROBLEM WITH THE LATE REPUBLIC

The textual story of the late Roman Republic is a difficult one to tell. Where we would seek a breadth of representative sources, we have a handful of possibly anomalous ones; where we would hope for symmetry of aesthetics, activity, interests, and production, we have disparity in every category that would appear to matter; where we would value evidence for extensive communication between our most fully represented authors – or at least some indication that they recognized each other *as authors* – we have a handful of letters, one or two cryptic references, and frustratingly little else. We know there were textual "heavy hitters" in this period; we know there were men who wrote vast quantities of literature and men who seem to have captured the very essence of a genre in a few short lines. By the early Empire, the authors of the first half of the first century BCE (and with a few years added to the low end, this is the working definition of "late Republic" in this study) had come to be viewed with a sense of awe and nostalgia, as embodiments of a textual, social, and, in some ways, political world that had become impossibly out of reach. The story of this world seems an undeniably important and exciting one, but it does not give itself up easily.

My interest in the details of this story arose after several years of working "on" the late Republic produced the suspicion that there was a problem with my approach to these authors and texts. I realized that the literature of the late Republic is more pervasively influential on both our understanding of Republican literature as a whole[1] and the generic and lexical practices of later authors than any period that had come before it. I similarly recognized that Catullus and Cicero, while far from the only evidence from this period, constitute our most extensive sources for the textual

[1] As Goldberg 2005: 8 has noted, "the literary history of the Republic as we tell it is largely a first-century story."

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world of the late Republic. And yet I had come to suspect that, when all was said and done, I – *we* – understood less of this world than we might.

This is not to say, of course, that the middle and late Republic have not been the subject of many excellent and highly influential studies – in terms of both broad social and political analyses and keenly focused author-centered works. Such studies have sparked and maintained my interest in the incredibly complex world of the late Republic and my own work builds upon, and is deeply indebted to, what has come before. But it is the "cultural work" of texts and the "generation" of texts that work culturally that lie at the heart of my interests in the Roman world. And when it comes to the textual life of the late Republic – not that of the earlier Republic, projecting forward, nor that of the Principate and Empire, projecting back – I suggest that we lack sufficient understanding of how the texts of this period functioned in the lexical, structural, and social contexts in which they were produced. Because I do not imagine that my own textual venture is any more or less self- and community-interested than those of the period with which I am concerned, I admit that what captures me about the textual world of the late Republic is that I find the cultural work of its texts simultaneously familiar and foreign to the practice of modern scholarly publication. The texts of the late Republic are at times tantalizing and at times frustrating, and in all cases I feel it is necessary to return to these texts and their generation (and the generations that produced them), and the work that they did, in order to understand why I think of them – and indeed what it means to write and publish a social and textual history – as I do.

If I were to be more transparent than is advisable, I would admit "*the* problem with the Republic" is really "*my* problem with the Republic." To put it in more optimistic terms, however, let us call this not a problem with the Republic so much as a puzzle over its textual praxis. If it is not a puzzle that can be solved *in toto*, it is one we can begin to unravel with a careful and focused return to the primary evidence of the period, however asymmetrical the evidence and however difficult it may be to read it in concert. It is this puzzle from which this study sets out, then, and the cautious unraveling of this puzzle is its goal. And if we are to address the puzzle of how texts worked culturally in the late Republic, we must start from the beginning of late Republican texts. And at the beginning – I am speaking not temporally, but in terms of our most fully preserved representative authors – we have Catullus and Cicero.

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Catullus and Cicero. The former, an astonishing poetic genius and disingenuously apolitical socialite hoodlum, would have completed the whole of his corpus at about the age many graduate students in this field are completing their doctoral dissertations and beginning to search for a job. The latter, an ambitious political player and self-conscious bibliophile, turned to his markedly textual endeavors only at an age when most senior faculty might begin to reevaluate their retirement portfolios and notice that the undergraduates are now younger than their own children.[2] Catullus, a man who seems to hold himself aloof from the work of the forum – even as he is obviously well versed and deeply engaged with its activities, as befits his social status – offers the unique (and almost certainly anomalous; Lucilius is perhaps the only parallel) perspective of an upper-class individual who chose to play the outsider to, and observer of, late Republican politics. Cicero, a man who entered the forum eagerly and clung to it as long as he could (and even in death seemed to cling there still), offers the compelling (and, if not anomalous, at least anomalously productive) perspective of an individual who so identified with the Republican forum that his death came to mark, for later periods, the end of Republican oratory as a whole.[3] These two share ego (monstrous), talent (prodigious), and wit (witty). But other than that, it is at first difficult to imagine two more aesthetically opposed authors from whom to reconstruct the practice of a learned society: reconstructing the textual world of the late Republic can feel as though we are reconstructing an entire language based on but two of its native speakers.

The apparent asymmetry of Cicero and Catullus – both the documented distinctions of genre, age, and public and political activity, and the alleged (and as I shall argue, distorted) irreconcilability of aesthetic, social, and personal positioning – makes the pair a notoriously thorny one to combine in one study. Thus although recent years have seen a resurgence of studies on the late Republic, such studies – and there have been many excellent ones – have tended to address (with the outstanding exception of Krostenko 2001) the "Intellectual World" of Cicero and his group (so Butler 2002; Corbeill 1996; Dugan 2005; Fantham 2004; Rawson 1985; Steel 2001; Wood 1988) or the "Poetic World" of Catullus and his (so especially Janan 1994;

[2] Collins 1952: 11 has bought into these men's textual fictions rather eagerly. Catullus is the "uninhibited, ribald young poet . . . speaking and writing his mind with utter abandon and neglect of personal consequences" while Cicero is "vain, somewhat pompous" – and Catullus is *not?* – and a politician who "never used, not even in the mud-slinging *In Pisonem*, such lusty words as *confutuere* . . ."

[3] Thus Tacitus, *Dialogus*, has Maternus reckon the "recent period" of oratory *ab interitu Ciceronis* (*Dial.* 24.3).

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Fitzgerald 1995; Nappa 2001; Skinner 2007; Wray 2001; Wiseman 1974a; 1982); but virtually never the two at once.[4] This thematic and generic schism does not detract from any of the individual works cited above (nor from the group as a whole); but our approach to the practices of this period has suffered from a methodological blind spot that it will be useful to address.

For all of their stylistic and situational asymmetry, Catullus and Cicero tend to strike modern readers as two of the most viscerally personal characters of Roman literary history.[5] There are few undergraduate classics majors who have not spent a wine-soaked hour or two contemplating the eternal truths of c. 85,[6] and few junior faculty who have not found themselves suddenly sympathetic to Cicero's anguished contortions over manuscript revision and dedicatory form as expressed in the letters to Atticus (cf. *Ep. Att.* 13.12, etc.). But the arguably deceptive intimacy with which these two are viewed is not restricted to those given over to study them – either for a year or a lifetime. In spite of the maddeningly opaque translations with which Catullus is often saddled (I have had more than one confused American undergraduate ask, "So, what does 'I'll bugger you and stuff your gobs' *mean*?"[7]), his youthful lust and social irreverence require no especial background in the classics to be savored. Cicero, conversely, is noteworthy for being the only classical author of whom I am aware who arouses such easy loathing even in those who seem to know little more than his name: "Cicero? I *hate* Cicero!"[8] Whether we adore or detest them, we feel strangely secure in our belief that we know them.

The striking emotional accessibility these authors elicit suggests that what might first appear to be a weakness in our pool of evidence is in fact a hidden strength. For as much as the operative conditions of Catullus' and Cicero's textual production – the "what and wherefore" of each man's

[4] Thus although Wiseman 1974a includes a chapter dealing with a few of Cicero's letters (pp. 146–157), his focus is on the content of the letters (most specifically as they relate to the Clodius affair) rather than their function as "literary" creations. Beard and Crawford 1985, Bloomer 1997, Fantham 1996, and Habinek 1998 bring both poetry and prose into their discussions, but only rarely in terms of interconnecting phenomena.

[5] In an article that takes the traditional position of setting Catullus and Cicero into aesthetic and social opposition, Collins 1952: 11 writes of the "dream" that Catullus and Cicero were familiar friends, "[this] does not reckon with the *actual personalities of the two men as we know them.*"

[6] A student recently told me he had read most of Catullus in the original; I asked him which class he had taken, and he said, "It wasn't in a class – it's just because I *like* him!"

[7] This quote is not apocryphal (translation is Lee 1990). The resultant facial expression, when I have rendered the Latin in terms understandable to an American undergraduate, is a sweet, sweet balm for the soul.

[8] This quote is also not apocryphal. It was spoken to me at a bar one evening, when someone had made the mistake of asking what I was working on (this book).

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decision to write what he did – are undeniably asymmetrical, there are places in which the tonality of their texts speaks to a mutually recognizable textual and social aesthetic. These men knew each other; they ran in the same elite circles; they shared friends and enemies; it is not terribly difficult to imagine that they may have run into each other at the sorts of textually interested convivia mentioned by each author and examined in detail in Part II. And – if for different reasons and in different ways – they both wrote urgently and frequently about the social, textual, and political world they inhabited. Our story of the late Republican textual world will not be a complete one until we find a way to consider these men in the concert in which they lived rather than the opposition in which they have been placed. And for that, I suggest, we must locate points of intersection in the work they produced.

In *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance*, Brian Krostenko argues persuasively for several linguistic intersections in the descriptive language of performance and display used by each author and, in so doing, increases considerably our understanding of late Republican linguistic code. In this study, I argue for two further intersections in their texts: intersections distinct from those offered by Krostenko, but conceptually compatible with the late Republican worldview he sets forth. These intersections, as explained below, are those of terminological and social code, and rhetoric and sociopractical function; they are indicative of *textual* rather than linguistic praxis, and allow traditionally opposed authors and traditionally opposed spheres of discourse to be brought to bear on each other in ways that will broaden what we can say about "how people wrote" in a period in which there was indeed a great deal of writing going on.

In order to get at "how people wrote" in the late Republic, however, we must start by looking at what Catullus and Cicero wrote, and by plotting each man's writings against those of the other. We know these men are different; is there a way in which they are similar?

The result of such a plotting is difficult to overestimate in its implications. For in considering the literary endeavors of Catullus (polymetric love and invective; mythologically informed "learned" verse; witty social and political epigram) against those of Cicero (self-promoting *oratio*; a cycle of intellectually interested technical treatises – called in this study the *technica*; an ongoing run of epistles), what comes to light is not an incompatible tangle of warring aesthetics so much as a telling intersection in precisely those texts each author wrote *for* and dedicated *to* other members of his social group (by "dedicated" I mean "addressed to a named

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individual" – by analogy with the artistic "response piece," I take the Catullan invectives as "dedicated" texts – and by "group" and "Society" I mean not a card-carrying "club" of any sort, but "an informal network of overlapping circles of textual production"). If Catullus and Cicero diverge in terms of the sort of texts they wrote, they converge at the point of what they did with many of these texts and, more significantly, how they did it.

Catullus and Cicero meet, in other words, at the level of the dedicated text. Whether it is a poem dedicated to Calvus or a dialogue dedicated to Brutus,[9] a versified celebration of extra-forensic textual life or a dialogic complaint of the situations that have made such a life necessary, the varied dedications of Catullus and Cicero suggest not only a textual praxis that could be adapted to vastly different sociopolitical situations, but one in which a large number of men – their dedicatees, and those from whom they received texts in return – engaged. As a sociocultural artifact, then, the dedicated text provides not only an intersection of the textual practices of Catullus and Cicero; it provides a valuable inroad into the textual world of the late Republic, a world in which dedicated texts are a locus not only for artistic and intellectual expression, but also for the "contestation and negotiation of societal dynamics."[10]

In reading these texts against each other, and in spite of all their apparent distinctions (issues of chronology and operative condition are discussed in the last section of this Introduction), two commonalities arise – two intersections not only of "what," but also of "how." The first, and one that will be usefully informed by texts outside of the dedicatory corpus, is that of terminological and social code: when these men discuss the social and textual world in which they participate, they tend to use the same terms of operation and figures of social interaction. This intersection is the focus of Part I. The second intersection is that of rhetorical and sociopractical expression, which, by drawing on the terminological work of Part I, provides the focus for Parts II and III, each of which examines a distinct expression of this intersection. Part II locates in the dedicated texts a recurrent engagement with issues of elite performance and the judgment thereof, and suggests that each man, in his own way (and the distinction in these "ways" broadens our narrative), uses his dedicated texts to contain,

[9] Dugan 2005: 266 notes the similarities between Cicero's *Orator* and Cat. 50; in footnote 42 on the same page, Dugan suggests that *Ep. Att.* 9.10.1 similarly resembles the tone of c. 50.

[10] Tatum 1997: 483. Tatum specifies such texts as "literary," and his focus is on Catullus; although I find his generally "hierarchical" take on Catullus unconvincing, he offers a useful formation to the social function of dedicated texts.

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critique, and in some cases improve upon "real world" opportunities for elite performance. As a likely outgrowth of the instinct to "house" elite performance in the pages of a dedicated poem or book, our authors – building on an earlier tradition but, in the case of Cicero at least, taking it to new heights – also tend to imbue their dedicated texts with a sense of materiality, and the compelling various textual materialisms of Catullus and Cicero form the focus of Part III. Fuller details of these intersections will be given in the last section of this introduction.

Because Catullus and Cicero meet at their dedicated texts, a return to such texts will not only help us reconstruct their personal approach to – and perhaps opinion of – the process and social function of textual dedication; it will also enable us to plot several points on the broader continuum of textual practice in the late Republic. Whatever else each may have written, it is in the dedicated text that each created the literary work and the literary *persona* that would prove the most broadly influential to the textual practice of later periods.[11] It is through these texts that we find our most fertile approach to the textual society in which Catullus and Cicero created themselves as distinctly textual beings, and I will argue that it is through these texts that the story of the textual world of the final decades of the Republic may begin to be told.

WHY A "SOCIETY OF PATRONS"? WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT – AND IS – ABOUT

Not about

It is awkward – if not dangerously precious – to include in the Introduction to a work any lengthy discussion of what that work is *not*. And yet in light of both the nature of the present study and the tenor of recent investigations into Latin literary and intellectual culture (and indeed the ways in which the former intersects with, and diverges from, the latter), it will be useful to say a few words on what might appear to be omissions in this study, and offer some explanation of why they are there (or rather, why they are not).

[11] *Pace* Conte 1994: 203, who claims that both Cicero and "his contemporaries" viewed him(self) as more of a politician than a "writer and thinker," writers of the Empire and later periods – from Seneca, Pliny *minor*, and Tacitus to Petrarch and de la Vergne – seem to have found rather greater inspiration in his dedicated dialogues and epistolographic habits than they did in his oratory. Tac. *Dial.* 32.6 includes a quotation from *Orator* in his summary of Cicero's impact: *et Cicero his ut opinor uerbis refert, quidquid in eloquentia effecerit, id se non rhetorum <officinis>, sed Academiae spatiis consecutum*. The quotation is from *Orator* 12.

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Patronage

First, although this is a book about "patrons" – or more specifically, the textual habits of two patronal-class men and the degree to which they may speak of a more pervasive cultural praxis – it is not a book about patronage, either literary or social, either in the late Republic or any time before or after. The topic of Roman patronage, from the middle Republic through to the height of the Empire, is an interesting and complex one, and has been the subject of many thoroughgoing and excellent investigations, especially those dealing with the Principate and early Empire.[12] And if we are to understand such patronage in terms of a strongly socially hierarchical system through which textual "goods" (the currency of the nominally socially inferior member of the relationship: the so-called "client") are exchanged for material or social ones (the currency of the nominally socially superior one: the "patron"), then it is safe to say that some form of such a system – though one that would have differed greatly in form and function from the system as described by Tatum, White, and others – was in place from the mid third century BCE down through the early first. Indeed, most of our evidence from this period points to a fairly large number of precisely such hierarchical patronage relationships, in which the – usually poetic and performative – work of a social "inferior" (so Livius Andronicus, Cnaeius Naevius, Titus Maccius Plautus, Caecilius Statius, Quintus Ennius, Terence, Marcus Pacuvius, and Accius[13]) was written at the behest of, and dedicated to, a social "superior" (M. Fulvius Nobilior, D. Iunius Brutus, the Metelli, and so on) who then remunerates the poet for his product, by variously economic or social means.[14]

[12] Saller 1989 (cf. Saller 1982): 49 offers what seems to me, *pace* Badian and others, a good foundational definition of patronage: "First, [patronage] involves the *reciprocal* exchange of goods and services. Secondly, to distinguish it from a commercial transaction in the marketplace, the relationship must be a personal one of some duration. Thirdly, it must be asymmetrical, in the sense that the two parties are of unequal status and offer different kinds of goods and services in exchange – a quality which sets patronage off from friendship between equals." Contra Saller, see Badian 1982 and Brunt 1982. Among the numerous examples of excellent work on the topic, and in addition to those just noted, I would include among the most widely influential Brunt 1965, Deniaux 1993, Dixon 1993, Gold 1982 (note especially the contributions of White, Williams, Wiseman and Zetzel) and 1987, Tatum 1997, White 1978 and 1993, and the edited collection of Wallace-Hadrill 1989. Johnson and Dandeker's essay in Wallace-Hadrill (1989: 219–242), although it addresses social and political patronage rather than the literary sort, and although its focus lies in the post-Republican period, nevertheless makes the important point that we should never expect patronage to have been a monolithic or static system.

[13] Accius is placed in this group because of his known association with a patron, D. Iunius Brutus Callaecus. He is, however, something of an unusual case, as we know he also wrote *Didascalica* in mixed prose and verse, and was the dedicatee – late in life, unless this was a dedication made post-mortem – of Varro's early *de Antiquitate Litterarum*.

[14] On this see also Clarke 1978: 46–47, who notes that the client in literary patronage might hope to gain money (so Mart. *Ep.* 10.9; cf. Pliny *Ep.* 3.21), government post (so perhaps the case with

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We have virtually no evidence for either how this remuneration worked or the forms it may have taken, but we might imagine return gifts of money, social favors, sought-after invitations to convivia, or private audiences, and more importantly – if the poem is a fine one, and the *patronus* does his job – a general increase in status and renown. The return gift received by the *cliens* will represent, at least ideally, an equitable token of exchange. But the complex reciprocal system of these non-commodities, in which the tangible tokens of text and dinner stand in for the (more highly valued) intangible increases in status and influence, requires that as much as these social "goods" should be theoretically equitable in value – it is to be a "fair trade" – they are never to be identical in substance. A literary *cliens* receives money (favors, invitations, etc.); a literary *patronus* – and we shall return to this point below – receives texts.

Yet a hierarchically based scenario of patronage is insufficient as a model for what we see in the late Republic, because it accounts for neither the turbulent political world of these years nor the large quantity of prose production of this and earlier periods. And indeed the middle Republic, as we shall see, offers evidence of an altogether different sort as well. It is that of a group of learned men who produced and circulated texts outside of a hierarchical patronage model; men who avoided the lexical tags – *patronus, cliens* – with which we commonly associate hierarchical textual exchange, and indeed the very men who serve as the conceptual ancestors of the late Republican practice with which we are concerned.

Two of the most renowned and influential literary producers of the middle Republic are Cato and Lucilius – with each of whom, it is worth noting, Cicero explicitly identifies, and with the latter of whom the fourth-century CE grammarian Diomedes would associate Catullus.[15] Although we have little detail of the dissemination and circulation of Cato's texts during his lifetime,[16] we know that he dedicated at least one of his treatises to his son – the *Praecepta ad Filium* – and so according to a structure that would have had nothing to do with the traditionally extra-familial hierarchical patronage of the period. Of Lucilius' practice we know even less. He had a close friendship with P. Cornelius Scipio, but there is no evidence of any form of patronage between the two;[17] the fact that he was

Horace?) or other benefits. The patron, in turn, might receive administrative assistance from the client in any number of ways, but the main token of repayment is of course fame.

[15] Diom. GLK I 485: *iambus est carmen maledictum . . . cuius carminis praecipui scriptores . . . apud Romanos Lucilius et Catullus et Horatius et Bibaculus.*

[16] For much of what we do know, see Sciarrino 2004.

[17] Cf. Gruen 1992: 280: "the evidence [for their friendship] betokens a relationship in which difference of status played little role. It possesses the flavor more of equality than of patronage and clientage." The whole of the seventh chapter of Gruen 1992 (pp. 272–317) does much to correctly reposition

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the named dedicatee of others' works would suggest likely participation in what we might imagine to have been a textually productive group of learned social equals.[18] Even if Lucilius did not affix specific dedications to his books of satires or epigrams – the works are too fragmentary to tell us this; if Juvenal may be used as a valid comparison I suspect he did not – he stands as our first example of a member of the educated upper classes who chose the life of the poet over that of the politician and, standing coolly outside the world of the forum, criticized it actively.[19]

Although Cato and Lucilius differ in a great many ways, their paths intersect in their social status and production of literature.[20] Both men wrote and shared their texts with men of patronal class, and what we know of the middle Republic suggests they were not alone in this. As early as the late third and early second centuries, we have attested what was doubtless a Hellenistically influenced upper-class[21] engagement with the antiquarian, grammatical, and philological prose treatise outside of any identifiable (or even likely) system of patronage. The earliest of such authors included Fulvius Nobilior and Iunius Gracchanus (both authors of antiquarian texts); somewhat later came Lucius Aelius Stilo Praeconinus, Caius Octavius Lampadio, and Vettius Philocomus.[22] From the mid second century BCE onward, and at about the same time as the first *commentarii* began to appear (those of Aemilius Scaurus, Rutilius Rufus, Lutatius Catulus, and both Sulla – in Greek, and dedicated to Lucullus[23] –

Lucilius, and other writers of the period, vis-à-vis the so-called Scipionic circle – a "group" now recognized to have been an almost exclusively Cicero-influenced fiction.

[18] In the end it is unclear to what degree Lucilius (himself the dedicatee of Stilo, Antipater, and Clitomachus) dedicated his satires to others – either to make or deny the claim begs the very question of what a "dedication" meant at this time – but his (possibly epistolary) poems certainly engage in direct address and speak to a lively textual culture (on which cf. Habinek 1998: 117). Cicero praises Lucilius' *sal et uenustas* early in the *de Finibus*, and seems to identify himself with the poet (de *Fin.* 1.3.7), although he remarks that whereas Lucilius would have restricted his audience, he himself eagerly seeks the learned reader.

[19] Cf. e.g. vv. 1145–1151 of the fragments of Lucilius.

[20] The bibliographies on Cato and Lucilius are vast, and there is no need to duplicate them here. On the literary activity of Lucilius, perhaps the most helpful work is Gruen 1992: 272–317, as noted above; on Cato's literary interests in the *Origines*, see recently Sciarrino 2004.

[21] Suet. *Gramm.* 2 identifies Crates of Mallos as the first to introduce grammatical study (*studium grammaticae*) to Rome, but says later that the early proponents of "grammatical study" belonged to the equestrian class (*Gramm.* 3). The majority of later *grammatici* were freedmen or lower-born freemen, and functioned primarily as teachers (even if they gained great wealth and fame from such). Habinek 1998: 34–68 provides an excellent and wide-ranging analysis of the period that saw the "invention" of Latin literature.

[22] Praeconinus wrote commentaries on the hymns of the Salii and, possibly, the Twelve Tables; Lampadio divided Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* into seven books; Philocomus appears to have prepared an edition of Lucilius' satires.

[23] Plut. *Sulla* 6.

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