CAMBRIDGE GREEK AND LATIN CLASSICS

General Editors

P. E. Easterling
Regius Professor Emeritus of Greek, University of Cambridge

Philip Hardie
Senior Research Fellow, Trinity College, Cambridge

Richard Hunter
Regius Professor of Greek, University of Cambridge

E. J. Kenney
Kennedy Professor Emeritus of Latin, University of Cambridge

S. P. Oakley
Kennedy Professor of Latin, University of Cambridge
TO JANIS
CONTENTS

Preface page ix
Abbreviations x
Map 1 The Roman world in 80 BC xii
Map 2 Rome in the late Republic xiv
Chronological table xv
Introduction 1
1 The charge 1
2 The court 2
3 The proscriptions 2
4 The date of the trial 4
5 The principal characters 5
6 The advocate’s rôle 10
7 Language and style 12
8 Cicero’s achievement 17
9 The afterlife of the speech 19
10 The text 20
M. TVLLI CICERONIS 23
ORATIO PRO SEXTO ROSCIO
Commentary 56
Appendix: Prose rhythm 210
References 212
Indexes 223
1 Latin words 223
2 Greek words 234
3 General 234
PREFACE

When young Cicero rose to plead the case of Sextus Roscius, the prosecutor was visibly relieved that this unknown was his opponent and not one of the established advocates (§60). Once the trial was concluded, there was no case to which he was thought unequal (Brut. 312). This career-making speech contains an almost fully formed approach to juror persuasion and to the psychology of criminality. It is also a risky speech in which the young C. excoriates a favorite of the powerful Sulla besides taking rhetorical risks, especially the purple passage about the parricide’s punishment that embarrassed him in later years (Orat. 107). If, like Desmoulins’ teacher at the Collège Louis-le-Grand, one is put off by the domineering figure of C. the senior statesman,¹ this speech shows instead a modest and struggling young orator of great appeal. It deserves to be widely read.

Conditions for anglophone readers of the speech have not been ideal. G. Landgraf’s detailed German commentary (1914) is a masterpiece of philological erudition but is more for scholars than for students and shows its age; there is also a recent edition with French translation and notes (Hinard and Benferhat 2006).² Most English students, however, have probably made the acquaintance of this text in the company of a reprint of E. H. Donkin’s 1916 school edition based upon K. Halm’s commented edition (1877) updated in consultation with A. C. Clark. The study of the text, of Roman institutions and law and of the historical actors has, however, moved considerably forward in the intervening ninety-odd years; the whole approach has had to be rethought with reference to the needs and questions posed by today’s students and other readers.

It is my happy task to thank those persons and institutions who have made this work possible. I begin with the Editors E. J. Kenney, Philip Hardie and Stephen Oakley for their support for this project and meticulous attention to improving my drafts; I must add Michael Sharp and his staff for their unfailing patience and helpfulness during the production process. My greatest debt is indicated in the dedication.

¹ Highet 1949: 393; Parker 1937: 32.
² Cf. Dyck 2009.
ABBREVIATIONS

CITED EDITIONS

K. Halm. Berlin, 1877

STANDARD WORKS

A–G

Berger, A.

CAH

Ernout and Meillet

G–L

H–S

K–S

Lausberg, H.

LIMC

LSJ

LTUR

MRR
## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHI</td>
<td>Database of Latin authors to AD 200: cd rom 5.3 produced by Packard Humanities Institute. Palo Alto, Calif. (source of statements about nos. of attestations and the like).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLL</td>
<td><em>Thesaurus linguae Latinae</em>. Leipzig 1900–.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLRR</td>
<td>Alexander, M. C. <em>Trials in the late Roman Republic, 149 BC to 50 BC</em>. Toronto 1990.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 1 (cont.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Birth of Cicero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91–87</td>
<td>Social War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Dispute over enfranchisement of new citizens; Sulla marches on Rome; his enemies outlawed; he takes up Eastern command against Mithridates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Cinna and Marius attack Rome; bloodbath of their opponents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Scaevola wounded by Fimbria at Marius' funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Fimbria, under siege at Thyatira, commits suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Scaevola killed on orders from younger Marius; Sulla returns, defeats Marians at Sacriportus, regains control of Rome; appointed dictator by lex Valeria; beginning of proscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>June 1: end of proscriptions; Sextus Roscius senior killed at Rome “some months” later; Roscius junior dispossessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Sulla consul together with Metellus Pius; trial of Roscius junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Death of Sulla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79–77</td>
<td>Cicero’s study trip to Greece</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>