# MODELS FROM THE PAST IN ROMAN CULTURE

Historical examples played a key role in ancient Roman culture, and Matthew Roller's book presents a coherent model for understanding the rhetorical, moral, and historiographical operations of Roman exemplarity. It examines the process of observing, evaluating, and commemorating noteworthy actors or deeds, and then holding those performances up as norms by which to judge subsequent actors or as patterns for them to imitate. The model is fleshed out via detailed case studies of individual exemplary performers, the monuments that commemorate them, and the later contexts – the political arguments and social debates – in which these figures are invoked to support particular positions or agendas. Roller also considers the boundaries of, and ancient alternatives to, exemplary modes of argumentation, morality, and historical thinking. The book will engage anyone interested in how societies, from ancient Rome to today, invoke past performers and their deeds to address contemporary concerns and interests.

MATTHEW B. ROLLER is Professor of Classics at Johns Hopkins University. He is the author of two earlier books: *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocrats and Emperors in Julio-Claudian Rome* (2001) and *Dining Posture in Ancient Rome: Bodies, Values, and Status* (2006). Apart from exemplarity, he is interested in aristocratic competition in the early Roman Empire, and in the younger Seneca's moral philosophy.

# MODELS FROM THE PAST IN ROMAN CULTURE

## *A World of* Exempla

### MATTHEW B. ROLLER

*The Johns Hopkins University*

**CAMBRIDGE**
**UNIVERSITY PRESS**

# CAMBRIDGE
## UNIVERSITY PRESS

*For Sebastian*

# *Contents*

## Contents

*Contents*  ix

# *Illustrations*

## Map

## Figures

# *Acknowledgments*

This book had its beginnings in a seminar on "Tiberian Literature" led by Martin Bloomer, which I attended in (I think) 1990 as a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. Martin's aim being to destabilize his students' received ideas of "golden" and "silver" Latinity – for into what category should "Tiberian literature" be placed? – he led us through extensive readings of authors we scarcely knew existed, whose works had accumulated virtually no scholarly apparatus to provide assistance, and who assuredly did not figure in our PhD Latin reading lists: Seneca the Elder, Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus, and Asconius, for starters. A true intellectual adventure, this seminar awakened in me an enduring interest in the exemplum as a rhetorical device, as an affordance for moral thinking, and as a means of encountering the past.

A project nearly thirty years in the making can be expected to have accumulated some debts. Unfortunately I cannot begin to remember them all, let alone actually to thank all the individuals or audiences who since the 1990s have heard, read, or commented on versions of the arguments presented in this book. Nevertheless, a few debts stand out. The American Council of Learned Societies and the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison granted me fellowships for academic year 2000–1 in which to complete this book. I made some important progress in the delightful environment of the Old Observatory (my little office, overlooking Lake Mendota, was directly under the refractor), but to say that the project didn't quite get done during the fellowship year would be an understatement. It will be a pleasure, eighteen years later, to present this volume to the Institute, and I deeply regret that several colleagues who took a lively interest in my work at the time – notably Paul Boyer, then the Institute's director, and John D'Arms, then ACLS president – did not live to see it completed. Subsequently the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung granted me a research stipend in 2007–8 to complete this book in the warm embrace of the Institut für

Altertumskunde at the University of Cologne. Once again I came up a little short. But my sponsor, Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp, along with the phalanx of creative, imaginative ancient historians in Germany to whom he introduced me, fundamentally reshaped the questions I posed and altered my approach to addressing them. The large quantity of recent German scholarship cited in this book's notes and bibliography offers some testimony to these scholars' impact. In this case, I will at least be able to present the completed volume to Karl before he retires. Supporting my scholarly and teaching needs for the last two decades in the Sheridan Libraries of Johns Hopkins University is Donald Juedes. He has worked with me to acquire or access literally thousands of volumes and other resources, without which I could never have completed this book. In the last eighteen months I received bracing feedback from anonymous referees for Cambridge University Press (expertly tapped by Michael Sharp and his editorial machine), first on the project proposal and then on the near-final manuscript. One of these, Christina Kraus, deserves thanks by name not only for her anonymous refereeing but for her engagement, support, and numerous suggestions regarding this project over many years.

As we have still not figured out how to credit scholars for building and collaborating on digital projects (see Hutton 2014 for reflections on this matter), I would like to express my gratitude to those who have created the constellation of electronic resources – ever expanding and increasingly indispensible – on which my work in this project (and beyond) depends. Almost every page of this book has been touched by the Packard Humanities Institute database of Latin texts, digitized in the 1980s and currently browsable and searchable via Peter Heslin's excellent Diogenes tool (among other interfaces). Almost equally indispensible are the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae database of Greek texts, conceived by Marianne McDonald and long developed by Maria Pantelia and her team; the Clauss/Slaby searchable and browsable database of Latin inscriptions; and the GreekKeys polytonic typing system, created and maintained over many years by George Walsh, Jeffrey Rusten, and Donald Mastronarde. The Perseus Project team digitized (and formatted!) Lewis and Short's *Latin Dictionary* and the Liddell-Scott-Jones *Greek-English Lexicon* many years ago, changing forever the way I work with lexica. Other digital resources I have exploited for this project include the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* and *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* online, the Suda On Line, *Brill's New Jacoby*, and *Brill's New Pauly*. This list is far from exhaustive. I thank all the scholars, most of whose names I do not know, who contributed their learning, labor, and skill to creating and maintaining these resources.

*Acknowledgments*          xiii

Portions of this work have appeared previously, in earlier stages of development and tailored for other purposes. The introduction and first two chapters contain material from "Exemplarity in Roman Culture: The Cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia," *Classical Philology* 99 (2004): 1–56 (© 2004, The University of Chicago). Part of chapter 3 appeared in "The Politics of Aristocratic Competition: Innovation in Livy and Augustan Rome," in W. Dominik et al., eds., *Writing Politics in Imperial Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 153–72. Parts of chapter 4 appeared in "The Exemplary Past in Roman Historiography and Culture," in A. Feldherr, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 214–30, and in "On the Intersignification of Monuments in Augustan Rome," *American Journal of Philology* 134 (2013): 119–31 (© 2013, The Johns Hopkins University Press). Chapter 5 is substantially similar to "The Consul(ar) as *exemplum*: Fabius *Cunctator's* Paradoxical Glory," in H. Beck et al., eds., *Consuls and Res Publica: Holding High Office in the Roman Republic* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 182–210. Chapter 7 includes material from "Demolished Houses, Monumentality, and Memory in Roman Culture," *Classical Antiquity* 29 (2010): 117–80 (© 2010, The University of California Press), and portions of the conclusion appeared in "Precept(or) and Example in Seneca," in G. Williams and K. Volk, eds., *Roman Reflections: Studies in Latin Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 129–56. I thank all these presses for granting me permission to re-present these materials in this format. Thanks also to David Gilman Romano for granting permission to reproduce and modify a portion of the *Mapping Augustan Rome* 1:3000 map for use in this book. All translations are my own.

As we shall see, Romans were partial to the view that certain kinds of performances run in families. Cicero seemed to imagine that, by addressing his dialogue "On moral duties" (*De Officiis*) to his son Marcus, he would socially replicate himself. Presumably he deemed this a good thing. But as this book is no *De Officiis* and I am no Cicero, it is with a more nuanced conception of exemplarity in mind that I dedicate this book to my son Sebastian. If he reads it one day, I hope he will grasp the important conclusion that the deeds of one's father may provide not only models for imitation (at least occasionally, one hopes), but also, and perhaps more importantly, models for avoidance – such as shying away from projects with three-decade timelines.

**Baltimore, Maryland**

# *Abbreviations*

For authors and works cited in the notes or parenthetically in the main text, standard Anglosphere abbreviations are used, sometimes slightly expanded or compressed. For these see the *Oxford Latin Dictionary,* 1st ed., Oxford, 1982, ix–xxiii, or 2nd ed., 2012, xviii–xxx; or the *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 4th ed., eds. S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow, Oxford, 2012, xxvii–liii. All dates are BCE unless otherwise indicated. I use the following abbreviations for scholarly journals or reference collections:

| | |
|---|---|
| *BNJ* | *Brill's New Jacoby* (ed. I. Worthington, Leiden, 2006–; referenceworks.brillonline.com) |
| *CA* | *Classical Antiquity* |
| *CIL* | *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin, 1862–) |
| *CP* | *Classical Philology* |
| *CQ* | *Classical Quarterly* |
| *FGrH* | *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (ed. F. Jacoby, Leiden, 1923–59) |
| *ILLRP* | *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae* (ed. A. Degrassi, Florence, 1957) |
| *ILS* | *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (ed. H. Dessau, Berlin, 1892–1916) |
| *InscrIt* | *Inscriptiones Italiae* (Rome, 1931–63) |
| *JRS* | *Journal of Roman Studies* |
| *LTUR* | *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (ed. E. Steinby, Rome, 1993–2000) |
| *MAAR* | *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* |
| *MDAI(R)* | *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung* |
| *OLD*[1] | *Oxford Latin Dictionary,* 1st ed. (ed. P. Glare, Oxford, 1968–82) |

## *List of Abbreviations* xv

| | |
|---|---|
| ORF² | *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta,* 2nd ed. (ed. E. Malcovati, Turin, 1955) |
| RE | *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (eds. A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, Stuttgart, 1894–1978) |
| REL | *Revue des études latines* |
| SCI | *Scripta Classica Israelica* |
| TAPA | *Transactions of the American Philological Association* |
| TLL | *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Leipzig, 1900–) |

# *Map of the Principal Monuments and Sites Discussed in This Book*

The following map uses the *Mapping Augustan Rome* (*MAR*) Central Area 1:3000 scale map as its basis. To reduce visual clutter I have removed indications of many sites and monuments found on the *MAR* map that do not pertain to my discussion. I have also added indications of certain sites and monuments not found on the *MAR* map that do pertain to my discussion. For monuments included in *MAR* that I discuss, I retain *MAR* numbering for ease of reference. Sites and monuments that I have added to the map are labeled with capital letters. I follow the *MAR* practice of indicating approximate locations with circles (or freehand shapes) containing numbers (or letters). All dates are BCE.

- 32: Porticus Metelli, from ca. 140; renovated ca. 30 as the porticus Octaviae
- 32a: Temple of Iuno Regina (ad circum Flaminium), from 179
- 32b: Temple of Iuppiter Stator (ad circum Flaminium), from ca. 140 and contemporary with the porticus Metelli
- 33: Temple of Apollo Medicus, supposedly from 431; known as "Sosianus" from ca. 30
- 34: Temple of Bellona, erected after 296
- 109: Forum of Augustus, in use perhaps from ca. 10. The line of small stars along the southeastern enclosure wall indicates the gallery of *summi viri* who are not Iulian ancestors
- 109a: Temple of Mars Ultor, from 2
- 119: Curia Iulia, from 29
- 120: Augustan or west rostra (speaker's platform), initiated 42 and achieving the form shown here by 12
- 149: Temple of Iuno Moneta and *domus* of Marcus Manlius Capitolinus (approximate), supposing that the house stood on the *arx* where the temple would later stand

xvi

*Map of the Principal Monuments and Sites Discussed in This Book*  xvii

152:  Tarpeian rock (approximate)

158:  Temple of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, from the late sixth century

163:  *Aequimaelium* (approximate)

168:  Temple of Ianus (apud Forum Holitorium), erected after 260

198:  Porta Carmentalis (approximate)

199:  Porta Triumphalis (approximate)

226:  Temple of Iuppiter Stator (approximate), according to legend dedicated by Romulus. The statue of Cloelia stood near this temple

A:  Curia Hostilia, before ca. 50

B:  Republican *comitium,* shown in the circular form it manifested from the third to first centuries (as reconstructed by Coarelli). The statue of Horatius Cocles stood in or near the *comitium*

C:  Republican rostra (speaker's platform), on the southern flank of the *comitium,* before ca. 29

D:  General area within which the *columna Maenia* (erected after 318), *columna Duilia* (after 260), and the Naulochos column (after 36) probably stood

E1:  Area in which Cicero's house and neighboring properties may have stood, supposing that they were located on the northeast slope of the Palatine facing the Velia

E2:  Area in which Cicero's house and neighboring properties may have stood, supposing that they were located on the northwest heights of the Palatine facing the Capitoline hill

F:  *Domus* of Marcus Manlius Capitolinus (approximate), supposing that it stood in the saddle between the two summits of the Capitoline hill

xviii *Map of the Principal Monuments and Sites Discussed in This Book*
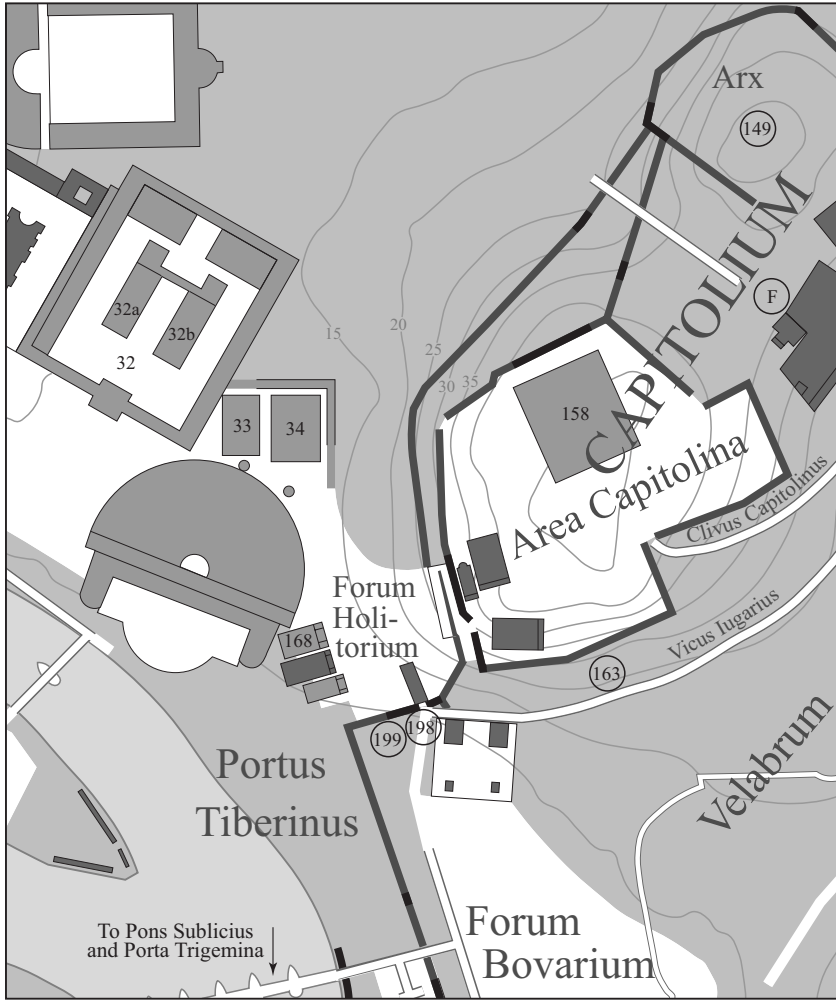


Map 1 Map of central Rome, including monuments and sites ranging from the middle
Republic to the early imperial age

*Map of the Principal Monuments and Sites Discussed in This Book*   xix



   