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Marcus Tullius Cicero (/ˈsɪkroʊ/; Classical Latin: [ˈkɪkɛroː]; January 3, 106 BC – December 7, 43 BC; sometimes anglicized as Tully) was a Roman philosopher, statesman, lawyer, orator, political theorist, consul and constitutionalist. He came from a wealthy municipal family of the equestrian order, and is widely considered one of Rome's greatest orators and prose stylists.

His influence on the Latin language was so immense that the subsequent history of prose in not only Latin but European languages up to the 19th century was said to be either a reaction against or a return to his style. According to Michael Grant, "the influence of Cicero upon the history of European literature and ideas greatly exceeds that of any other prose writer in any language." Cicero introduced the Romans to the chief schools of Greek philosophy and created a Latin philosophical vocabulary (with neologisms such as *humanitas*, *qualitas*, *quantitas*, and *essentia*) distinguishing himself as a linguist, translator, and philosopher.

Petrarch's rediscovery of Cicero's letters is often credited for initiating the 14th-century Renaissance. According to Polish historian Tadeusz Zieliński, "Renaissance was above all things a revival of Cicero, and only after him and through him of the rest of Classical antiquity." The peak of Cicero's authority and prestige came during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and his impact on leading Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, David Hume, and Montesquieu was substantial. His works rank among the most influential in European culture, and today still constitute one of the most important bodies of primary material for the writing and revision of Roman history, especially the last days of the Roman Republic.

Though he was an accomplished orator and successful lawyer, Cicero believed his political career was his most important achievement. It was during his consulship that the Catiline conspiracy attempted the government overthrow through an attack on the city from outside forces, and Cicero suppressed the revolt by executing five conspirators without due process. During the chaotic latter half of the 1st century BC marked by civil wars and the dictatorship of Gaius Julius Caesar, Cicero championed a return to the traditional republican government. Following Julius Caesar's death Cicero became an enemy of Mark Antony in the ensuing power struggle, attacking him in a series of speeches. He was proscribed as an enemy of the state by the Second Triumvirate and subsequently murdered in 43 BC.

**Personal life**

**Early life**

Cicero was born in 106 BC in Arpinum, a hill town 100 kilometers (62 mi) southeast of Rome. His father was a well-to-do member of the equestrian order with good connections in Rome, though as a semi-invalid, he could not enter public life. He compensated for this by studying extensively. Although little is known about Cicero's mother, Helvia, it was common for the wives of important Roman citizens to be responsible for the management of the household. Cicero's brother Quintus wrote in a letter that she was a thrifty housewife.

Cicero's cognomen, or personal surname, comes from the Latin for chickpea, *cicer*. Plutarch explains that the name was originally given to one of Cicero's ancestors who had a cleft in the tip of his nose resembling a chickpea. However, it is more likely that Cicero's ancestors prospered through the cultivation and sale of chickpeas.

Romans often chose down-to-earth personal surnames: the famous family names of Fabius, Lentulus, and Piso come from the Latin names of beans, lentils, and peas. Plutarch writes that Cicero was urged to change this deprecatory...
name when he entered politics, but refused, saying that he would make Cicero more glorious than Scaurus ("Swollen-ankled") and Catulus ("Puppy").\[14\]

During this period in Roman history, to be considered "cultured" meant being able to speak both Latin and Greek. Cicero, like most of his contemporaries, was therefore educated in the teachings of the ancient Greek philosophers, poets and historians. The most prominent teachers of oratory of that time were themselves Greek.\[15\] Cicero used his knowledge of Greek to translate many of the theoretical concepts of Greek philosophy into Latin, thus translating Greek philosophical works for a larger audience. It was precisely his broad education that tied him to the traditional Roman elite.\[16\]

According to Plutarch, Cicero was an extremely talented student, whose learning attracted attention from all over Rome,\[17\] affording him the opportunity to study Roman law under Quintus Marius Scaevola.\[18\] Cicero's fellow students were Gaius Marius Minor, Servius Sulpicius Rufus (who became a famous lawyer, one of the few whom Cicero considered superior to himself in legal matters), and Titus Pomponius. The latter two became Cicero's friends for life, and Pomponius (who later received the nickname "Atticus") would become Cicero's longtime chief emotional support and adviser.

Cicero wanted to pursue a public career in politics along the steps of the Cursus honorum. In 90 BC–88 BC, he served both Gnaeus Pompeius Strabo and Lucius Cornelius Sulla as they campaigned in the Social War, though he had no taste for military life, being an intellectual first and foremost. Cicero started his career as a lawyer around 83–81 BC. His first major case, of which a written record is still extant, was his 80 BC defense of Sextus Roscius on the charge of patricide.\[19\]. Taking this case was a courageous move for Cicero; patricide was considered an appalling crime, and the people whom Cicero accused of the murder, the most notorious being Chrysogonus, were favorites of Sulla. At this time it would have been easy for Sulla to have the unknown Cicero murdered. Cicero's defense was an indirect challenge to the dictator Sulla, and on the strength of his case, Roscius was acquitted.

In 79 BC, Cicero left for Greece, Asia Minor and Rhodes, perhaps because of the potential wrath of Sulla.\[20\] Cicero traveled to Athens, where he again met Atticus, who had become an honorary citizen of Athens and introduced Cicero to some significant Athenians. In Athens, Cicero visited the sacred sites of the philosophers, but not before he consulted different rhetoricians in order to learn a less physically exhausting style of speech. His chief instructor was the rhetorician Apollonius Molon of Rhodes. He instructed Cicero in a more expansive and less intense form of oratory that would define Cicero's individual style in years to come.

Cicero's interest in philosophy figured heavily in his later career and led to him introducing Greek philosophy to Roman culture, creating a philosophical vocabulary in Latin. In 87 BC, Philo of Larissa, the head of the Academy that was founded by Plato in Athens about 300 years earlier, arrived in Rome. Cicero, "inspired by an extraordinary zeal for philosophy",\[21\] sat enthusiastically at his feet and absorbed Plato's philosophy. He admired especially Plato's moral and political seriousness, but he also respected his breadth of imagination. Cicero nonetheless rejected Plato's theory of Ideas.
**Public career**

**Quaestor**

His first office was as one of the twenty annual Quaestors, a training post for serious public administration in a diversity of areas, but with a traditional emphasis on administration and rigorous accounting of public monies under the guidance of a senior magistrate or provincial commander. Cicero served as quaestor in western Sicily in 75 BC and demonstrated honesty and integrity in his dealings with the inhabitants. As a result, the grateful Sicilians asked Cicero to prosecute Gaius Verres, a governor of Sicily, who had badly plundered Sicily. His prosecution of Gaius Verres was a great forensic success\(^2\) for Cicero. Governor Gaius Verres hired the prominent lawyer of a noble family Quintus Hortensius Hortalus. After a lengthy period on Sicily collecting testimonials, evidence and persuading witnesses to come forth, Cicero returned to Rome and won the case in a series of dramatic court battles. His unique style of oratory setting him apart from the flamboyant Hortalus. Upon the conclusion of this case, Cicero came to be considered the greatest orator in Rome. The view that Cicero may have taken the case for reasons of his own is viable. Quintus Hortensi Hortalus was, at this point, known as the best lawyer in Rome; to beat him would guarantee much success and prestige that Cicero needed to start his career. Cicero's oratorical skill is shown in his character assassination of Verres and various other persuasive techniques used towards the jury. One such example is found in the speech *Against Verres I*, where he states "with you on this bench, gentlemen, with Marcus Acilius Glabrio as your president, I do not understand what Verres can hope to achieve".\(^3\) Oratory was considered a great art in ancient Rome and an important tool for disseminating knowledge and promoting oneself in elections, in part because there were no regular newspapers or mass media at the time. Cicero was neither a patrician nor a plebeian noble; his rise to political office despite his relatively humble origins has traditionally been attributed to his brilliance as an orator.\(^4\)

Cicero grew up in a time of civil unrest and war. Sulla's victory in the first of a series of civil wars led to a new constitutional framework that undermined *libertas* (liberty), the fundamental value of the Roman Republic. Nonetheless, Sulla's reforms strengthened the position of the equestrian class, contributing to that class's growing political power. Cicero was both an Italian *eques* and a *novus homo*, but more importantly he was a Roman constitutionalist. His social class and loyalty to the Republic ensured that he would "command the support and confidence of the people as well as the Italian middle classes." The fact that the *optimates* faction never truly accepted Cicero undermined his efforts to reform the Republic while preserving the constitution. Nevertheless, he was able to successfully ascend the Roman *cursus honorum*, holding each magistracy at or near the youngest possible age: quaestor in 75 BC (age 31), aedile in 69 BC (age 37), and praetor in 66 BC (age 40), where he served as president of the "Reclamation" (or extortion) Court. He was then elected consul at age 43.
Cicero was elected Consul for the year 63 BC. His co-consul for the year, Gaius Antonius Hybrida, played a minor role. During his year in office, he thwarted a conspiracy centered on assassinating him and overthrowing the Roman Republic with the help of foreign armed forces, led by Lucius Sergius Catilina. Cicero procured a Senatus Consultum de Re Publica Defendenda (a declaration of martial law) and drove Catiline from the city with four vehement speeches (the Catiline Orations), which to this day remain outstanding examples of his rhetorical style. The Orations listed Catiline and his followers' debaucheries, and denounced Catiline's senatorial sympathizers as roguish and dissolute debtors clinging to Catiline as a final and desperate hope. Cicero demanded that Catiline and his followers leave the city. At the conclusion of his first speech, Catiline hurriedly left the senate, (which was being held in the Temple of Jupiter Stator). In his following speeches, Cicero did not directly address Catiline. He delivered the second and third orations before the people, and the last one again before the Senate. By these speeches, Cicero wanted to prepare the Senate for the worst possible case; he also delivered more evidence against Catiline.\[25\]

Catiline fled and left behind his followers to start the revolution from within while Catiline assaulted the city with an army of "moral bankrupts and honest fanatics". Catiline had attempted to involve the Allobroges, a tribe of Transalpine Gaul, in their plot, but Cicero, working with the Gauls, was able to seize letters which incriminated the five conspirators and forced them to confess their crimes in front of the Senate.\[26\]

The Senate then deliberated upon the conspirators' punishment. As it was the dominant advisory body to the various legislative assemblies rather than a judicial body, there were limits to its power; however, martial law was in effect, and it was feared that simple house arrest or exile – the standard options – would not remove the threat to the state. At first Decimus Silanus spoke for the "extreme penalty"; many were then swayed by Julius Caesar, who decried the precedent it would set and argued in favor of life imprisonment in various Italian towns. Cato then rose in defence of the death penalty and all the Senate finally agreed on the matter. Cicero had the conspirators taken to the Tullianum, the notorious Roman prison, where they were strangled. Cicero himself accompanied the former consul Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura, one of the conspirators, to the Tullianum. Cicero received the honorific "Pater Patriae" for his efforts to suppress the conspiracy, but lived thereafter in fear of trial or exile for having put Roman citizens to death without trial.
Exile and return

In 60 BC Julius Caesar invited Cicero to be the fourth member of his existing partnership with Pompey and Marcus Licinius Crassus, an assembly that would eventually be called the First Triumvirate. Cicero refused the invitation because he suspected it would undermine the Republic.\[27]\n
In 58 BC, Publius Clodius Pulcher, the tribune of the plebs, introduced a law (the Leges Clodiae) threatening exile to anyone who executed a Roman citizen without a trial. Cicero, having executed members of the Catiline conspiracy four years previously without formal trial, and having had a public falling out with Clodius, was clearly the intended target of the law. Cicero argued that the senatus consultum ultimum indemnified him from punishment, and he attempted to gain the support of the senators and consuls, especially of Pompey. When help was not forthcoming, he went into exile. He arrived at Thessalonica, Greece, on May 23, 58 BC.\[28]\[29]\[30]\n
Cicero's exile caused him to fall into depression. He wrote to Atticus: "Your pleas have prevented me from committing suicide. But what is there to live for? Don't blame me for complaining. My afflictions surpass any you ever heard of earlier."\[31]\n
After the intervention of recently elected tribune Titus Annius Milo, the senate voted in favor of recalling Cicero from exile. Clodius cast a single vote against the decree. Cicero returned to Italy on August 5, 57 BC, landing at Brundisium.\[32]\n
He was greeted by a cheering crowd, and, to his delight, his beloved daughter Tullia.\[33]\n
Cicero tried to reintege himself into politics, but his attack on a bill of Caesar's proved unsuccessful. The conference at Luca in 56 BC forced Cicero to make a recantation and pledge his support to the triumvirate. With this, a cowed Cicero retreated to his literary works. It is uncertain whether he had any direct involvement in politics for the following few years.\[34]\n
He only reluctantly accepted a promagistracy in Cilicia for 51 BC, after a shortage of eligible governors was created by legislation requiring an interval of five years between a consulship or praetorship and a provincial command. He was absent from Italy as proconsul of Cilicia from May 51 to November 50 BC. Accompanied by his brother Quintus as a legate, he was mostly spared from warfare due to internal conflict among the Parthians, yet for storming a mountain fortress he acquired the title of imperator.

Julius Caesar's civil war

The struggle between Pompey and Julius Caesar grew more intense in 50 BC. Cicero chose to favour Pompey as he was in defence of the senate and Republican tradition, but at the same time he prudently avoided openly alienating Caesar. When Caesar invaded Italy in 49 BC, Cicero fled Rome. Caesar, seeking the legitimacy an endorsement by a senior senator would provide, courted Cicero's favour, but even so Cicero slipped out of Italy and traveled to Dyrrachium (Epidamnos), Illyria, where Pompey's staff was situated.\[35]\n
Cicero traveled with the Pompeian forces to Pharsalus in 48 BC,\[36]\n
though he was quickly losing faith in the competence and righteousness of the Pompeian lot. Eventually, he provoked the hostility of his fellow senator Cato, who told him that he would have been of more use to the cause of the optimates if he had stayed in Rome. After Caesar's victory at Pharsalus, Cicero returned to Rome only very cautiously. Caesar pardoned him and Cicero tried to adjust to the situation and maintain his political work, hoping that Caesar might revive the Republic and its institutions.

In a letter to Varro on c. April 20, 46 BC, Cicero outlined his strategy under Caesar's dictatorship. Cicero, however, was taken completely by surprise when the Liberatores assassinated Caesar on the ides of March, 44 BC. Cicero was not included in the conspiracy, even though the conspirators were sure of his sympathy. Marcus Junius Brutus called out Cicero's name, asking him to restore the republic when he lifted the bloodstained dagger after the assassination.\[37]\n
A letter Cicero wrote in February 43 BC to Trebonius, one of the conspirators, began, "How I could wish that you had invited me to that most glorious banquet on the Ides of March"!\[38]\n
Cicero became a popular leader during the period of instability following the assassination. He had no respect for Mark Antony, who was scheming to take revenge upon Caesar's murderers. In exchange for amnesty for the assassins, he arranged for the Senate to agree not to declare Caesar to have been a tyrant, which allowed the Caesarians to have lawful support and kept Caesar's reforms and policies intact.\[39]
Opposition to Mark Antony and death

Cicero and Antony then became the two leading men in Rome; Cicero as spokesman for the Senate and Antony as consul, leader of the Caesarian faction, and unofficial executor of Caesar's public will. The two men had never been on friendly terms and their relationship worsened after Cicero made it clear that he felt Antony to be taking unfair liberties in interpreting Caesar's wishes and intentions. When Octavian, Caesar's heir and adopted son, arrived in Italy in April, Cicero formed a plan to play him against Antony. In September he began attacking Antony in a series of speeches he called the Philippics, after Demosthenes's denunciations of Philip II of Macedon. Praising Octavian, he said that the young man only desired honor and would not make the same mistake as his adoptive father. During this time, Cicero's popularity as a public figure was unrivalled.[40]

Cicero supported Decimus Junius Brutus Albinus as governor of Cisalpine Gaul (Gallia Cisalpina) and urged the Senate to name Antony an enemy of the state. The speech of Lucius Piso, Caesar's father-in-law, delayed proceedings against Antony. Antony was later declared an enemy of the state when he refused to lift the siege of Mutina, which was in the hands of Decimus Brutus. Cicero’s plan to drive out Antony failed. Antony and Octavian reconciled and allied with Lepidus to form the Second Triumvirate after the successive battles of Forum Gallorum and Mutina. The Triumvirate began proscribing their enemies and potential rivals immediately after legislating the alliance into official existence for a term of five years with consular imperium. Cicero and all of his contacts and supporters were numbered among the enemies of the state, and reportedly, Octavian argued for two days against Cicero being added to the list.[41]

Cicero was one of the most viciously and doggedly hunted among the proscribed. He was viewed with sympathy by a large segment of the public and many people refused to report that they had seen him. He was caught December 7, 43 BC leaving his villa in Formiae in a litter going to the seaside where he hoped to embark on a ship destined for Macedonia.[42] When his killers – Herennius (a centurion) and Popilius (a tribune) – arrived, Cicero's own slaves said they had not seen him, but he was given away by Philologus, a freed slave of his brother Quintus Cicero.[42]

Cicero's last words are said to have been, "There is nothing proper about what you are doing, soldier, but do try to kill me properly." He bowed to his captors, leaning his head out of the litter in a gladiatorial gesture to ease the task. By baring his neck and throat to the soldiers, he was indicating that he wouldn't resist. According to Plutarch, Herennius first slew him, then cut off his head. On Antony's instructions his hands, which had penned the Philippics against Antony, were cut off as well; these were nailed along with his head on the Rostra in the Forum Romanum according to the tradition of Marius and Sulla, both of whom had displayed the heads of their enemies in the Forum. Cicero was the only victim of the proscriptions to be displayed in that manner. According to Cassius Dio (in a story often mistakenly attributed to Plutarch),[43] Antony's wife Fulvia took Cicero's head, pulled out his tongue, and jabbed it repeatedly with her hairpin in final revenge against Cicero's power of speech.[44]

Cicero's son, Marcus Tullius Cicero Minor, during his year as a consul in 30 BC, avenged his father's death, to a certain extent, when he announced to the Senate Mark Antony's naval defeat at Actium in 31 BC by Octavian and his capable commander-in-chief, Agrippa.

Octavian (or Augustus, as he was later called) is reported to have praised Cicero as a patriot and a scholar of meaning in later times, within the circle of his family.[45] However, it was the acquiescence of Augustus that allowed Cicero's assassination, as Cicero was proscribed by the new Triumvirate.
However, his career as a statesman was marked by inconsistencies and a tendency to shift his position in response to changes in the political climate. His indecision may be attributed to his sensitive and impressionable personality; he was prone to overreaction in the face of political and private change. "Would that he had been able to endure prosperity with greater self control, and adversity with more fortitude!" wrote C. Asinius Pollio, a contemporary Roman statesman and historian. [46][47]

**Family**

Cicero married Terentia probably at the age of 27, in 79 BC. According to the upper class mores of the day it was a marriage of convenience, but endured harmoniously for some 30 years. Terentia's family was wealthy, probably the plebeian noble house of Terenti Varrones, thus meeting the needs of Cicero's political ambitions in both economic and social terms. She had a half sister (or perhaps first cousin) named Fabia, who as a child had become a Vestal Virgin, a very great honour. Terentia was a strong willed woman and (citing Plutarch) "she took more interest in her husband's political career than she allowed him to take in household affairs." [48]

In the 50s BC, Cicero's letters to Terentia became shorter and colder. He complained to his friends that Terentia had betrayed him but did not specify in which sense. Perhaps the marriage simply could not outlast the strain of the political upheaval in Rome, Cicero's involvement in it, and various other disputes between the two. The divorce appears to have taken place in 51 BC or shortly before.[49] In 46 or 45 BC,[50] Cicero married a young girl, Publilia, who had been his ward. It is thought that Cicero needed her money, particularly after having to repay the dowry of Terentia, who came from a wealthy family.[51] This marriage did not last long.

Although his marriage to Terentia was one of convenience, it is commonly known that Cicero held great love for his daughter Tullia.[52] When she suddenly became ill in February 45 BC and died after having seemingly recovered from giving birth to a son in January, Cicero was stunned. "I have lost the one thing that bound me to life" he wrote to Atticus.[53] Atticus told him to come for a visit during the first weeks of his bereavement, so that he could comfort him when his pain was at its greatest. In Atticus's large library, Cicero read everything that the Greek philosophers had written about overcoming grief, "but my sorrow defeats all consolation."[54] Caesar and Brutus as well as Servius Sulpicius Rufus sent him letters of condolence.[55][56]

Cicero hoped that his son Marcus would become a philosopher like him, but Marcus himself wished for a military career. He joined the army of Pompey in 49 BC and after Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus 48 BC, he was pardoned by Caesar. Cicero sent him to Athens to study as a disciple of the peripatetic philosopher Kratippos in 48 BC, but he used this absence from "his father's vigilant eye" to "eat, drink and be merry."[57] After Cicero's murder he joined the army of the Liberatores but was later pardoned by Augustus. Augustus' bad conscience for not having objected to Cicero's being put on the proscription list during the Second Triumvirate led him to aid considerably Marcus Minor's career. He became an augur, and was nominated consul in 30 BC together with Augustus. As such, he was responsible for revoking the honors of Mark Antony, who was responsible for the proscription, and could in this way take revenge. Later he was appointed proconsul of Syria and the province of Asia.[58]
Legacy

Cicero has been traditionally considered the master of Latin prose, with Quintilian declaring Cicero was "not the name of a man, but of eloquence itself." He is credited with transforming Latin from a modest utilitarian language into a versatile literary medium capable of expressing abstract and complicated thoughts with clarity. Julius Caesar praised Cicero's achievement by saying "it is more important to have greatly extended the frontiers of the Roman spirit than the frontiers of the Roman empire." According to John William Mackail, "Cicero's unique and imperishable glory is that he created the language of the civilized world, and used that language to create a style which nineteen centuries have not replaced, and in some respects have hardly altered." Cicero was also an energetic writer with an interest in a wide variety of subjects in keeping with the Hellenistic philosophical and rhetorical traditions in which he was trained. The quality and ready accessibility of Ciceronian texts favored very wide distribution and inclusion in teaching curricula as suggested by an amusing graffiti at Pompeii admonishing "you will like Cicero, or you will be whipped." Cicero was greatly admired by influential Latin Church Fathers such as Augustine of Hippo, who credited Cicero's lost Hortensius for his eventual conversion to Christianity and St. Jerome, who had a feverish vision in which he was accused of being "follower of Cicero and not of Christ" before the judgment seat. This influence further increased after the Dark Ages in Europe, from which more of his writings survived than any other Latin author. Medieval philosophers were influenced by Cicero's writings on natural law and innate rights. Petrarch's rediscovery of Cicero's letters provided impetus for searches for ancient Greek and Latin writings scattered throughout European monasteries, and the subsequent rediscovery of Classical Antiquity led to the Renaissance. Subsequently, Cicero came to be regarded synonymous with classical Latin that many humanist scholars held that no Latin word or phrase was to be used unless it could be found in Cicero's works to the extent that Erasmus felt compelled to criticize such extremism in his treatise Ciceronianus. His voluminous correspondence, much of it addressed to his friend Atticus, has been especially influential, introducing the art of refined letter writing to European culture. Cornelius Nepos, the 1st century BC biographer of Atticus, remarked that Cicero's letters contained such a wealth of detail "concerning the inclinations of leading men, the faults of the generals, and the revolutions in the government" that their reader had little need for a history of the period. Among Cicero's admirers were Desiderius Erasmus, Martin Luther, and John Locke. Following the invention of the printing press, De Officiis was the second book to be printed - second only to the Gutenberg Bible. Scholars note Cicero's influence on the rebirth of religious toleration in the 17th century.

While Cicero the humanist deeply influenced the culture of the Renaissance, Cicero the republican inspired the Founding Fathers of the United States and the revolutionaries of the French Revolution. John Adams said of him "As all the ages of the world have not produced a greater statesman and philosopher united than Cicero, his authority should have great weight." Jefferson names Cicero as one of a handful of major figures who contributed to a tradition "of public right" that informed his draft of the Declaration of Independence and shaped American understandings of "the common sense" basis for the right of revolution. Camille Desmoulins said of the French republicans in 1789 that they were "mostly young people who, nourished by the reading of Cicero at school, had become passionate enthusiasts for liberty." Jim Powell starts his book on the history of liberty with the sentence: "Marcus Tullius Cicero expressed principles that became the bedrock of liberty in the modern world." Legitimate government protects liberty and justice according to "natural law." "Murray N. Rothbard praised Cicero as 'the great
Cicero was a transmitter of Stoic ideas from Greece to Rome. ... Stoic natural law doctrines ... helped shape the great structures of Roman law which became pervasive in Western Civilization.” Government’s purpose was the protection of private property.[73]

Likewise, no other antique personality has inspired venomous dislike as Cicero especially in more modern times.[74] Friedrich Engels referred to him as "the most contemptible scoundrel in history" for upholding republican "democracy”, while at the same time denouncing land and class reforms.[75] Cicero has faced criticism for exaggerating the democratic qualities of republican Rome, and for defending the Roman oligarchy against the popular reforms of Caesar. Michael Parenti admits Cicero's abilities as an orator, but finds him a vain, pompous and hypocritical personality who, when it suited him, could show public support for popular causes that he privately despised. Parenti presents Cicero's prosecution of the Catiline conspiracy as legally flawed at least, and possibly unlawful.[76]

Cicero also had an influence on modern astronomy. Nicolaus Copernicus, searching for ancient views on earth motion, say that he "first ... found in Cicero that Hicetas supposed the earth to move."[77]

**Works**

Cicero was declared a "righteous pagan" by the early Catholic Church, and therefore many of his works were deemed worthy of preservation. Subsequent Roman writers quoted liberally from his works *De Re Publica* (On The Republic) and *De Legibus* (On The Laws), and much of his work has been recreated from these surviving fragments. Cicero also articulated an early, abstract conceptualization of rights, based on ancient law and custom. Of Cicero's books, six on rhetoric have survived, as well as parts of eight on philosophy. Of his speeches, 88 were recorded, but only 58 survive.

**Speeches**

- (80 BC) *Pro Roscio Amerino* (In Defense of Sextus Roscius of Ameria)
- (70 BC) *In Verrem* (Against Gaius Verres, or The Verrine Orations)
- (66 BC) *Pro Cluentio* (On behalf of Aulus Cluentius)
- (63 BC) *In Catilinam I-IV* (Catiline Orations or Against Catiline) Archived[78] March 2, 2005 at the Wayback Machine
- (63 BC) *Pro Murena* (In Defense of Lucius Licinius Murena, in the court for electoral bribery)
- (62 BC) *Pro Archia Poeta* (In Defense of Aulus Licinius Archias the poet)
- (56 BC) *Pro Caelio* (In Defense of Marcus Caelius Rufus): English translation
- (52 BC) *Pro Milone* (In Defense of Titus Annius Milo)
- (44 BC) *Philippicae* (the 14 philippics, *Philippica I–XIV*, against Mark Antony)[79]
- "De Imperio Gnaei Pompei" ("On the Command of Gnaeus Pompey", in support of Pompey's appointment to command the Roman forces against Mithridates V)

**Rhetoric & Philosophy**

- (55 BC) *De Oratore ad Quintum fratem libri tres* (On the Orator, three books for his brother Quintus)
- (51 BC) *De Re Publica* (On the Republic)
- (?? BC) *De Legibus* (On the Laws)
- (46 BC) *Bratus* (Bratus)
- (46 BC) *Orator* (Orator)
- (45 BC) *Academica* (On Academic Skepticism)
- (45 BC) *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* (On The Ends of Good and Bad Things) - a book on ethics.[80] Source of Lorem ipsum. Title also translated as "On Moral Ends"[81]
- (45 BC) *Tusculanae Quaestiones* (Tusculan Disputations)
- (45 BC) *Hortensius* - an exhortation to philosophy, now lost.
- (45 BC) *De Natura Deorum* (On the Nature of the Gods)
• (44 BC) De Divinatione (On Divination)
• (44 BC) De Fato (On Fate)
• (44 BC) Cato Maior de Senectute (Cato the Elder On Old Age)
• (44 BC) Laelius de Amicitia (Laelius On Friendship)
• (44 BC) De Gloria (On Glory) - now lost.
• (44 BC) De Officiis (On Duties)

Letters
More than 900 letters by Cicero to others have survived, and over 100 letters from others to him.
• (68–43 BC) Epistulae ad Atticum (Letters to Atticus)
• (59–54 BC) Epistulae ad Quintum Fratrem (Letters to his brother Quintus)
• (43 BC) Epistulae ad Brutum (Letters to Brutus)
• (62–43 BC) Epistulae ad Familiares (Letters to his friends)

Notable fictional portrayals
Ben Jonson dramatised the Catiline conspiracy in his play Catiline His Conspiracy, featuring Cicero as a character. Cicero also appears as a minor character in William Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar.

Cicero was portrayed on the motion picture screen by British actor Alan Napier in the 1953 film Julius Caesar, based on Shakespeare's play. He has also been played by such noted actors as Michael Hordern (in Cleopatra), and Andre Morell (in the 1970 Julius Caesar). Most recently, Cicero was portrayed by David Bamber in the HBO series Rome (2005–2007) and appeared in both seasons.

In her series of historical novels "Masters of Rome" Colleen McCullough presents an unflattering depiction of Cicero's career, showing him struggling with an inferiority complex and vanity, morally flexible and fatally indiscreet, while his rival Julius Caesar is shown in a more approving light. Cicero is portrayed as a hero in the novel A Pillar of Iron by Taylor Caldwell (1965). Robert Harris' novels Imperium and Lustrum (Conspirata in the U.S.) are the first two parts of a planned trilogy of novels based upon the life of Cicero. In these novels Cicero's character is depicted in a more balanced way than in those of McCullough, with his positive traits equaling or outweighing his weaknesses (while conversely Caesar is depicted as more sinister than in McCullough). Cicero is a major recurring character in the Roma Sub Rosa series of mystery novels by Steven Saylor. He also appears several times as a peripheral character in John Maddox Roberts's SPQR series. Roberts's protagonist, Decius Metellus, admires Cicero for his erudition, but is disappointed by his lack of real opposition to Caesar, as well as puzzled by his relentless fawning on the Optimates, who secretly despise Cicero as a parvenu. In Spartacus: Swords and Ashes (2012) by Jonathan Clements, a young Cicero clashes with Verres shortly before the latter becomes the governor of Sicily, establishing another motive for their later antagonism.

Notes
[3] Haskell, H.J.: This was Cicero (1964)p.300–301
Retrieved 10 August 2011.


[20] Haskell, H.J.: “This was Cicero” (1940) p.83


[27] Rawson, E.: *Cicero* 1984 106

[28] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero*, 1964 200

[29] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero*, 1964 p.201


[31] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero* (1964) p.201


[33] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero*, p.204

[34] Grant, M: *"Cicero: Selected Works*”, p67


[37] Cicero, *Second Philippic Against Antony*

[38] Cicero, *Ad Familiaris* 10.28 (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Cic.+Fam.+10.28)


[42] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero* (1964) p.293


[46] Haskell, H.J.: *This was Cicero* (1964) p.296


[50] Treggiari, op. cit., p. 133

[51] Rawson, E.: *Cicero* p.225

[52] Haskell H.J.: *This was Cicero*, p.95

[53] Haskell, H.J.: "This was Cicero" (1964) p.249


[56] Cicero, *Samtliga brev/Collected letters*

[57] Haskell, H.J (1964). *This was Cicero*, pp. 103–104.

[58] Paavo Castren & L. Pietilä-Castren: *Anttiikin käsikirja* /Encyclopedia of the Ancient World

[59] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.1 12


[61] Pliny, *Natural History*, 7.117

[62] Cicero, *Seven orations*, 1912


[64] Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, 3:4
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- Cicero, Marcus Tullius, Selected Political Speeches, Penguin Books Ltd, Great Britain, 1969
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- Stockton, David: *Cicero: A Political Biography* (Oxford University Press, 1971)

**Further reading**


**External links**

**General**

- Quotes with Cicero's teachings on oratory (http://www.qfrases.com/english/cicero.php)
- Links to Cicero resources (http://cicero.missouristate.edu/cicero.htm)
- University of Texas Cicero Homepage (http://www.utexas.edu/depts/classics/documents/Cic.html)
- Works by or about Cicero (http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n79-32166) in libraries (WorldCat catalog)
- Works by Cicero on Open Library at the Internet Archive

**Philosophy**

- “Cicero” (http://www.iep.utm.edu/cicero/) article by Edward Clayton in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- Logic and Rhetoric in the Philosophical Works of Cicero (http://www.ontology.co/cicero-philosophy.htm)

Works by Cicero
• List of online translations of Cicero's works (http://www.attalus.org/info/sources.html#Cic)
  • Ethical Writings of Cicero: De Officiis (On Moral Duties); De Senectute (On Old Age); De Amicitia (On Friendship), and Scipio's Dream (http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/540), trans. Andrew P. Peabody (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1887). 3 volumes in 1. See original text in The Online Library of Liberty (http://oll.libertyfund.org/).
  • Works by Cicero (http://www.gutenberg.org/author/Marcus%2BTullius%2BCicero) at Project Gutenberg
  • Perseus Project (Latin and English): Classics Collection (see: M. Tullius Cicero) (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cache/perscoll_Greco-Roman.html)
  • The Latin Library (Latin): Works of Cicero (http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cic.html)
  • De Officiis (http://www.constitution.org/rom/de_officiis.htm), translated by Walter Miller
  • Cicero's works (http://www.intratext.com/Catalogo/Autori/AUT76.HTM): text, concordances and frequency list
  • SORGLL: Cicero, In Catilinam I; I,1-3, read by Robert Sonkowsky (http://www.rhapsodes.fll.vt.edu/cicero.htm)

Biographies and descriptions of Cicero's time

• At Project Gutenberg
  • Plutarch's biography of Cicero contained in the Parallel Lives (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/674)
  • Life of Cicero by Anthony Trollope, Volume I (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/8945) ~ Volume II
  • Cicero by Rev. W. Lucas Collins (Ancient Classics for English Readers) (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/11448)
  • Roman life in the days of Cicero by Rev. Alfred J. Church (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/13481)
  • Social life at Rome in the Age of Cicero (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/11256) by W. Warde Fowler
• At Heraklia website (http://web.archive.org/web/20060114090741/www.heraklia.fws1.com/contemporaries/cicero/)
• Dryden's translation of Cicero from Plutarch's Parallel Lives (http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/cicero.html)
• At Middlebury College website (http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/LatinAuthors/Cicero.html)
Selected Works

**De Inventione**

The *De Inventione* is a handbook for orators that M. Tullius Cicero composed when he was still a young man. Quintillian tells us that Cicero considered the work rendered obsolete by his later writings.[1] Originally four books in all, only two have survived into modern times.

**References**


**External links**

- Translation (http://classicpersuasion.org/pw/cicero/dnv1-1.htm) by C.D. Yonge
- Latin Text (http://scrineum.unipv.it/wight/invs1.htm)

**De Oratore**

*De Oratore* ("On the Orator") is a dialogue written by Cicero in 55 BCE. It is set in 91 BCE, when Lucius Licinius Crassus dies, just before the Social War and the civil war between Marius and Sulla, during which Marcus Antonius Orator, the other great orator of this dialogue, dies. During this year, the author faces a difficult political situation: after his return from exile in Dyrrachium (modern Albania), his house was destroyed by the gangs of Clodius in a time when violence was common. This was intertwined with the street politics of Rome.[1]

Amidst the moral and political decadence of the state, Cicero wrote *De Oratore* to describe the ideal orator and imagine him as a moral guide of the state. He did not intend *De Oratore* as merely a treatise on rhetoric, but went beyond mere technique to make several references to philosophical principles. Cicero understood that the power of persuasion—the ability to verbally manipulate opinion in crucial political decisions—was a key issue. The power of words in the hands of a man without scruples or principles would endanger the whole community.

As a consequence, moral principles can be taken either by the examples of noble men of the past or by the great Greek philosophers, who provided ethical ways to be followed in their teaching and their works. The perfect orator shall be not merely a skilled speaker without moral principles, but both an expert of rhetorical technique and a man of wide knowledge in law, history, and ethical principles. *De Oratore* is an exposition of issues, techniques, and divisions in rhetoric; it is
also a parade of examples for several of them and it makes continuous references to philosophical concepts to be merged for a perfect result.

**Choice of the historical background of the dialogue**

At that time as much as when Cicero writes the dialogue, the crisis of the state is obsessing everyone and clashes deliberately with the pleasant and quiet atmosphere of the villa in Tusculum. Cicero tries to reproduce the feeling of the last days of peace in the old Roman republic.

Despite *De Oratore* ("On the Orator") is a discourse on rhetoric, Cicero has the original idea of inspiring himself to Plato's Dialogues, replacing the streets and squares of Athens with a nice garden of a country villa of a noble Roman aristocrat. With this fanciful device, he avoided the arid explanation of rhetoric rules and devices. The work contains the second known description of the method of loci, a mnemonic technique (after the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*).

**Book I**

- The first of three books addressed to Cicero's brother Quintus.

**Introduction**

- Cicero begins his book by addressing this as a conversation to his brother. He continues on reflecting about so little time left in his life to be dedicated to noble studies.
  
  Unfortunately, the deep crisis of the state (the civil war between Marius and Sulla, the conjuration of Catilina and the first triumvirate, that excluded him from the active political life) has wasted away his best years.[2]

**Education of the orator**

- Cicero explains that he wants to write something more refined and mature than what he had previously published in his younger and more immature days in his treaty *De Inventione*.[3]

**Several eminent men in all fields, except oratory**

- Cicero questions why, despite the fact that many people have exceptional abilities, there are so few exceptional orators.
  
  Many are the examples of war leaders, and will continue to be throughout history, but only a handful of great orators.

- Countless men have become eminent in philosophy, because they have studied the matter thoroughly, either by scientific investigation or using dialectic methods.
  
  Each philosopher has become excellent in his individual field, which includes oratory.
  
  Nevertheless, the study of oratory has attracted the smallest number of distinguished men, even less than poetry. Cicero finds this amazing, as the other arts are usually found in hidden or remote sources; on the contrary, all of oratory is public and in plain view to mankind, making it easier to learn.[4]
**Oratory is an attractive but difficult study**

- Cicero claims that in Athens, “where the supreme power of oratory was both invented and perfected,” no other art study has a more vigorous life than the art of speaking.

After Roman peace had been established, it seemed as though everyone wanted to begin learning the eloquence of oral rhetoric.

After first trying rhetoric without training or rules, using only natural skill, young orators listened and learned from Greek orators and teachers, and soon were much more enthusiastic for eloquence. Young orators learned, through practice, the importance of variety and frequency of speech. In the end, orators were awarded with popularity, wealth, and reputation.

- But Cicero warns that oratory fits into more arts and areas of study than people might think. This is the reason why this particular subject is such a difficult one to pursue.

- Students of oratory must have a knowledge of many matters to have successful rhetoric.
- They must also form a certain style through word choice and arrangement. Students must also learn to understand human emotion so as to appeal to their audience.

This means that the student must, through his style, bring in humor and charm—as well as the readiness to deliver and respond to an attack.

- Moreover, a student must have a significant capacity for memory—they must remember complete histories of the past, as well as of the law.
- Cicero reminds us of another difficult skill required for a good orator: a speaker must deliver with control—using gestures, playing and expressing with features, and changing the intonation of the voice.

In summary, oratory is a combination of many things, and to succeed in maintaining all of these qualities is a great achievement. This section marks Cicero’s standard canons for the rhetorical composing process.\[^5\]

**Responsibility of the orator; argument of the work**

- Orators must have a knowledge in all important subjects and arts. Without this, his speech would be empty, without beauty and fullness.

  The term "orator" in itself holds a responsibility for the person to profess eloquence, in such a way that he should be able to treat every subject with distinction and knowledge.

  Cicero acknowledges that this is a practically impossible task, nevertheless it is at least a moral duty for the orator.

The Greeks, after dividing the arts, paid more attention to the portion of oratory that is concerned with the law, courts, and debate, and therefore left these subjects for orators in Rome.

- Cicero announces that he will not expose a series of prescriptions but some principles, that he learnt to have been discussed once by excellent Roman orators.

Indeed, all that the Greeks have written in their treaties of eloquence or taught by the masters thereof, but Cicero prefers to report the moral authority of these Roman orators.

Cicero announces that he will not expose a series of prescriptions but some principles, that he learnt to have been discussed once by excellent Roman orators.\[^6\]
De Oratore

Date, scene, and persons

Cicero exposes a dialogue, reported to him by Cotta, among a group of excellent political men and orators, who came together to discuss the crisis and general decline of politics. They met in the garden of Lucius Licinius Crassus' villa in Tusculum, during the tribunate of Marcus Livius Drusus (91 BCE). Thereto also gathered Lucius Licinius Crassus, Quintus Mucius Scaevola, Marcus Antonius Orator, Gaius Aurelius Cotta and Publius Sulpicius Rufus. One member, Scaevola, wants to imitate Socrates as he appears in Plato's Phaedrus. Crassus replies that, instead, they will find a better solution, and calls for cushions so that this group can discuss it more comfortably.[7]

Thesis: the importance of oratory to society and the state

Crassus states that oratory is one of the greatest accomplishments that a nation can have. He extols the power that oratory can give to a person- including the ability to maintain personal rights, words to defend oneself, and the ability to revenge oneself on a wicked person. The ability to converse is what gives mankind our advantage over other animals and nature. It is what creates civilization. Since speech is so important, why should we not use it to the benefit of oneself, other individuals, and even the entire State?

- Thesis challenged

Scaevola agrees with Crassus's points except for two. Scaevola does not feel that orators are what created social communities and he questions the superiority of the orator if there were no assemblies, courts, etc. It was good decision making and laws that formed society, not eloquence. Was Romulus an orator? Scaevola says that there are more examples of damage done by orators than good, and he could cite many instances. There are other factors of civilization that are more important than orator: ancient ordinances, traditions, augery, religious rites and laws, private individual laws.

Had Scaevola not been in Crassus's domain, Scaevola would take Crassus to court and argue over his assertions, a place where oratory belongs. Courts, assemblies and the Senate are where oratory should remain, and Crassus should not extend the scope of oratory beyond these places. That is too sweeping for the profession of oratory.

- Reply to challenge

Crassus replies that he has heard Scaevola's views before, in many works including Plato's Gorgias. However, he does not agree with their viewpoint. In respects to Gorgias, Crassus reminds that, while Plato was making fun of orators, Plato himself was the ultimate orator. If the orator was nothing more than a speaker without the knowledge of oratory, how is it possible that the most revered people are skilled orators? The best speakers are those who have a certain "style", which is lost, if the speaker does not comprehend the subject matter on which he is speaking.[8]

Rhetoric is a science

Crassus says he does not borrow from Aristotle or Theophrastus their theories regarding the orator. For while the schools of Philosophy claim that rhetoric and other arts belong to them, the science of oratory which adds "style," belong to its own science. Lycurgus, Solon were certainly more qualified about laws, war, peace, allies, taxes, civil right than Hyperides or Demosthenes, greater in the art of speaking in public. Similarly in Rome, the decemviri legibus scribundis were more expert in right than Servius Galba and Gaius Lelius, excellent Roman orators. Nevertheless, Crassus maintains his opinion that "oratorem plenum atque perfectum esse eum, qui de omnibus rebus possit copiose varieque dicere". (the complete and perfect orator is who can speak in public about every subject with richness of arguments and variety of tunes and images).
The orator must know the facts

To speak effectively, the orator must have some knowledge of the subject.
Can an advocate for or against war speak on the subject without knowing the art of war? Can an advocate speak on legislation if he does not know law or how the administration process works?

Even though others will disagree, Crassus states that an expert of the natural science also must use oratory style to give an effective speech on his subject.

For example, Asclepiades, a well-known physician, was popular not just because of his medical expertise, but because he could share it with eloquence.[9]

The orator can have technical skills, but must be versed in moral science

Anyone who can speak with knowledge upon a subject, can be called an orator as long as he does so with knowledge, charm, memory and has a certain style.

Philosophy is divided into three branches: natural studies, dialectic and knowledge of human conduct (in vitam atque mores). To truly be a great orator, one must master the third branch: this is what distinguishes the great orator.[10]

The orator, like the poet, needs a wide education

Cicero mentions Aratos of Soli, not expert in astronomy, and yet he wrote a marvellous poem (Phaenomena). So did Nicander of Colophon, who wrote excellent poems on agriculture (Georgika).

An orator is very much like the poet. The poet is more encumbered by rhythm than the orator, but richer in word choice and similar in ornamentation.

Crassus then replies to Scaevola's remark: he would not have claimed that orators should be experts in all subjects, should he himself be the person he is describing.

Nevertheless, everyone can easily understand, in the speeches before assemblies, courts or before the Senate, if a speaker has good exercise in the art of speaking in public or if he is also well educated in eloquence and all the liberal arts.[11]

Scaevola, Crassus and Antonius debate on the orator

• Scaevola says he will debate with Crassus no longer, because he was able to twist some of what he has said to his own benefit.

  Scaevola appreciates that Crassus, unlike some others, did not jeer at philosophy and the other arts; instead, he gave them credit and put them under the category of oratory.

  Scaevola cannot deny that a man who had mastered all the arts, and was also a powerful speaker, would indeed be a remarkable man. And if there ever were such a man, it would be Crassus.

• Crassus again denies that he is this kind of man: he is talking about an ideal orator.

  However, if others think so, what then would they think of a person who will show greater skills and will be really an orator?

• Antonius approves all what Crassus said. But to become a great orator by Crassus's definition would be difficult.

  First, how would a person get knowledge of every subject? Second, it would be hard for this person to stay strictly true to traditional oratory and not be led astray into advocacy. Antonius ran into this himself while delayed in Athens. Rumor got out that he was a "learned man", and he was approached by many people to discuss with him, according to each one's capabilities, on the duties and the method of the orator.[12]
A reported debate at Athens

Antonius tells of the debate that occurred in Athens regarding this very subject.

- Menedemus said that there is a science of the fundamentals of foundation and government of the state.
- On the other side, Charmadas replied that this is found in philosophy.
  
  He thought that the books of rhetoric do not teach knowledge of the gods, the education of young people, justice, tenacity and self-control, moderation in every situation.
  
  Without all those things, no state can exist nor be well ordered.
  
  By the way, he wondered why the masters of rhetoric, in their books, did not write a single word on the constitution of the states, on how to write a law, about equality, about justice, loyalty, on retaining desires or the building of human character.
  
  They have built up with their art such a plenty of very important arguments, with books full of proemiums, epiloguses and similar trivial things - he used exactly this term.
  
  Because of this, Charmadas was used to mock their teachings, saying that they were not only the competence they claimed, but also they did not know the method of eloquence.

Indeed, he stated that a good orator must shine of a good light himself, that is by his dignity of life, about which nothing is said by those masters of rhetoric.

Moreover, the audience is directed into the mood, in which the orator drives them. But this can not happen, if he does not know in how many and in which ways he can drive the feelings of the men. This is because these secrets are hidden in the deepest heart of philosophy and the rhetors have never even touched it in its surface.

- Menedemus rebutted Charmadas by quoting passages from the speeches of Demosthenes. And he gave examples of how speeches given from the knowledge of law and politics can compel the audience.
- Charmadas agrees that Demosthenes was a good orator, but questions whether this was a natural ability or because of his studies of Plato.
  
  Demosthenes often said that there was no art to eloquence—but there is a natural aptitude, that makes us able to blandish and beg someone, to threaten rivals, to expose a fact and reinforce our thesis with arguments, refuting the other's ones.

In a nutshell, Antonius thought Demosthenes appeared to be arguing that there was no "craft" of oratory and no one could speak well unless he had mastered philosophical teaching.

- Charmadas, finally stated that Antonius was a very docile listener, Crassus was a fighting debater.\[13\]

Difference between disertus and eloquens

Antonius, convinced by those arguments, says he wrote a pamphlet about them.

He names disertus (easy-speaking), a person who can speak with sufficient clearness and smartness, before people of medium level, about whichever subject;

on the other hand he names eloquens (eloquent) a person, who is able to speak in public, using nobler and more adorned language on whichever subject, so that he can embrace all sources of the art of eloquence with his mind and memory.

Someday, somewhere a man will come along who will not just claim to be eloquent, but will actually be truly eloquent. And if this man is not Crassus, then he can only be only a little bit better than Crassus.

Sulpicius is gleeful that, as he and Cotta had hoped, someone would mention Antonius and Crassus in their conversations so that they could get some glimmer of knowledge from these two respected individuals. Since Crassus started the discussion, Sulpicius asks him to give his views on oratory first. Crassus replies that he would rather have Antonius speak first as he himself tends to shy away from any discourse on this subject. Cotta is pleased that Crassus has responded in any way because it is usually so difficult to get him to respond in any manner about these matters. Crassus agrees to answer any questions from Cotta or Sulpicius, as long as they are within his
knowledge or power.\footnote{\ref{footnote-number}}

\section*{Is there a science of rhetoric?}

Sulpicius asks, "is there an 'art' of oratory?" Crassus responds with some contempt. Do they think he is some idle talkative Greekling? Do they think that he just answers any question that is posed to him? It was Gorgias that started this practice—which was great when he did it—but is so overused today that there is no topic, however grand, that some people claim they cannot respond to. Had he known this was what Sulpius and Cotta wanted, he would have brought a simple Greek with him to respond—which he still can do if they want him to.

Mucius chides Crassus. Crassus agreed to answer the young men's questions, not to bring in some unpracticed Greek or another to respond. Crassus has been known for being a kind person, and it would be becoming for him to respect their question, to answer it, and not run away from responding.

Crassus agrees to answer their question. No, he says. There is no art of speaking, and if there is an art to it, it is a very thin one, as this is just a word. As Antonius had previously explained, an Art is something that has been thoroughly looked at, examined and understood. It is something that is not an opinion, but is an exact fact. Oratory cannot possibly fit into this category. However, if the practices of oratory and how oratory is conducted is studied, put into terms and classification, this could then—possibly—be considered to be an art.\footnote{\ref{footnote-number}}

\section*{Crassus and Antonius debate on the orator's natural talent}

- Crassus says that natural talent and mind are the key factors to be a good orator.
- Using Antonius's example earlier, these people didn't lack the knowledge of oratory, they lacked the innate ability.
- The orator shall have by nature not only heart and mind, but also speedy moves both to find brilliant arguments and to enrich them with development and ornate, constant and tight to keep them in memory.
- Does anybody think really that these abilities can be gained by an art?
- No, they are gifts of nature, that is the ability to invent, richness in talking, strong lungs, certain voice tones, particular body physique as well as a pleasant looking face.
- Crassus does not deny that rhetoric technique can improve the qualities of orators; on the other hand, there are people with so deep lacks in the just cited qualities, that, despite every effort, they will not succeed.
- It is a really heavy task to be the very one man speaking, on the most important issues and in a crowded assembly, while everyone keeps silent and pays more attention to the defects than the merits of the speaker himself.
- Should he say something unpleasant, this would cancel also all the pleasant he said.
- Anyway, this is not intended to make the young people go away from the interest in oratory, provided that they have natural gifts for it: everyone can see the good example of Gaius Celius and Quintus Varius, who gained the people's favour by their natural ability in oratory.
- However, since the objective is to look for The Perfect Orator, we must imagine one who has all the necessary traits without any flaws. Ironically, since there is such a variety of lawsuits in the courts, people will listen to even the worst lawyer's speeches, something we would not put up with in the theatre.
- And now, Crassus states, he will finally speak about that which he has always kept silent. The better the orator is, the more shame, nervous and doubtful he will feel about his speeches. Those orators that are shameless should be punished. Crassus himself declares that he is scared to death before every speech.

Because of his modesty in this speech, the others in the group elevate Crassus in status even higher.

- Antonius replies that he has noticed this sacredness in Crassus and other really good orators.
- This is because really good orators know that, sometimes, the speech does not have the intended effect, that the speaker wished it to have.
- Also, orators tend be judged harsher than others, as they are required to know so much about so many topics.
An orator is easily set-up by the very nature of what he does to be labeled ignorant.

• Antonius completely agrees that an orator must natural gifts and no master can teach him them. He appreciates Apollonius of Alabanda, a great master of rhetoric, who refused to continue teaching to those pupils he did not find able to become great orators.

If one studies other disciplines, he simply needs to be an ordinary man.

• But for an orator, there are so many requirements such as the subtility of a logician, the mind of a philosopher, the language of a poet, the memory of a lawyer, the voice of a tragic actor and the gesture of the most skilled actor.

• Crassus finally considers how little attention is paid in learning the art of oratory versus other arts.

Roscius, a famous actor, often complained that he hadn't found a pupil who deserved his approval. There were many with good qualities, but he could not tolerate any fault in them. If we consider this actor, we can see that he makes no gesture of absolute perfection, of highest grace, exactly to give the public emotion and pleasure. In so many years, he reached such a level of perfection, that everyone, who distinguishes himself in a particular art, is called a Roscius in his field. The man who does not have the natural ability for oratory, he should instead try to achieve something that is more within his grasp.[16]

**Crassus replies to some objections by Cotta and Sulpicius**

Sulpicius asks Crassus if he is advising Cotta and him to give up with oratory and rather to study civil right or to follow a military career. Crassus explains that his words are addressed to other young people, who have not the natural talent for oratory, rather than discourage Sulpicius and Cotta, who have great talent and passion for it.

Cotta replies that, given that Crassus stimulates them to dedicate themselves to oratory, now it is time to reveal the secret of his excellence in oratory. Moreover, Cotta wishes to know which other talents they have still to reach, apart those natural, which they have—according to Crassus.

Crassus says that this is quite an easy task, since he asks him to tell about his own oratory ability, and not about the art of oratory in general. Therefore he will expose his usual method, which he used once when he was young, not anything strange or mysterious nor difficult neither solemn.

Sulpicius exults: "At last the day we desired so much, Cotta, has come! We will be able to listen from his very words the way he elaborates and prepares his speeches".[17]

**Fundamentals of rhetoric**

"I will not tell you anything really mysterious", Crassus says the two listeners. First is a liberal education and follow the lessons that are taught in these classes. The main task of an orator is to get speak in a proper way to persuade the audience; second, each speech can be on a general matter, without citing persons and dates, or a specific one, regarding particular persons and circumstances. In both cases, it is usual to ask:

• if the fact has happened and, if so,
• which is its nature
• how can it be defined
• if it is legal or not.

There are three kind of speeches: first, those in the courts, those in public assemblies, and those that praise or blame someone.

There are also some topics (loci) to be used in trials, whose aim is justice; other ones to be used in assemblies, whose aim is give opinions; other ones to be used in laudatory speeches, whose aim is to celebrate the cited person.

All energy and ability of the orator must apply to five steps:

• find the arguments (inventio)
• dispose them in logical order, by importance and opportunity (dispositio)
ornate the speech with devices of the rhetoric style (elocutio)
retain them in memory (memoria)
expose the speech with art of grace, dignity, gesture, modulation of voice and face (actio).

Before pronouncing the speech, it is necessary to gain the goodwill of the audience; then expose the argument; after, establish the dispute; subsequently, show evidence of one's own thesis; then, rebate the other party's arguments; finally, remark our strong positions and weaken the other's.\[18\]

As regards the ornaments of style, first one is taught to speak with pure and Latin language (ut pure et Latine loquamur); second to express oneself clearly; third to speak with elegance and corresponding to the dignity of the arguments and conveniently. The rhetors' rules are useful means for the orator. The fact is, however, that these rules came out by the observation of some people on the natural gift of others. That is, it is not the eloquence that is born from rhetoric, but the rhetoric is born by eloquence. I do not refuse rhetoric, although I believe it is not indispensable for the orator.

Then Sulpicius says: "That is what we want to better know! The rhetoric rules that you mentioned, even if they are not so now for us. But this later; now we want your opinion about exercises".\[19\]

The exercise (exercitatio)

Crassus approves the practice of speaking, imaging to be treating a trial in a court. However, this has the limit of exercising the voice, not yet with art, or its power, increasing the speed of speaking and the richness of vocabulary; therefore, one is illused to have learnt to speak in public.

- On the contrary, the most important exercise, that we usually avoid because it is the most tiring, it is to write speeches as much as possible.

*Stilus optimus et praestantissimus dicendi effector ac magister* (The pen is the best and most efficient creator and master of speaking). Like an improvised speech is lower than a well thought one, so this one is, compared to a well prepared and built writing. All arguments, either those of rhetoric and from one's nature and experience, come out by themselves. But the most striking thoughts and expressions come one after the other by the style; so the harmonic placing and disposing words is acquired by writing with oratory and not poetic rhythm (*non poetico sed quodam oratorio numero et modo*).

- The approval towards an orator can be gained only after having written speeches very long and much; this is much more important than physical exercise with the greatest effort.

In addition, the orator, who is used to write speeches, reaches the aim that, even in an improvised speech, he seems to speak so similar to a written text.\[20\]

Crassus remembers some of his exercises when he was younger, he began to read and then imitate poetry or solemn speeches. This was a used exercise of his main adversary, Gaius Carbo. But after a while, he found that this was an error, because he did not gain benefit imitating the verses of Ennius or the speeches of Gracchus.

- So he began to translate Greek speeches into Latin. This led to finding better words to use in his speeches as well as providing new neologisms that would appeal to the audience.
- As for the proper voice control, one should study good actors, not just orators.
- Train one's memory by learning as many written works as possible (*ediscendum ad verbum*).
- One should also read the poets, know the history, read and study authors of all disciplines, criticize and refute all opiniond, taking all likely arguments.
- It is necessary to study the civil right, know the laws and the past, that is rules and traditions of the state, the constitution, the rights of the allies and the treaties.
- Finally, as an added measure, shed a bit of fine humor on the speech, like the salt on the food.\[21\]

Everyone is silent. Then Scaevola asks if Cotta or Sulpicius have any more questions for Crassus.\[22\]
Debating on Crassus’ opinions

Cotta replies that Crassus’ speech was so raging that he could not catch his content completely. It was like he entered in a rich house, full of rich carpets and treasures, but piled in disorder and not in full view or hidden. “Why do not you ask Crassus,” Scaevola says to Cotta, “to place his treasures in order and in full view?” Cotta hesitates, but Mucius asks again Crassus to expose in detail his opinion about the perfect orator.[23]

Crassus gives examples of orators not expert in civil right

Crassus first hesitates, saying that he does not know some disciplines as much as a master. Scaevola then encourages him to expose his notions, so fundamental for the perfect orator: on the nature of men, on their attitudes, on the methods by which one excites or calms their souls; notions of history, of antiquities, of State administration and of civil right. Scaevola knows well that Crassus has a wise knowledge of all these matters and he is also an excellent orator.

Crassus begins his speech underlining the importance of studying civil right. He quotes the case of two orators, Ipseus and Cneus Octavius, which brought a lawsuit with great eloquence, but lacking of any knowledge of civil right. They committed great gaffes, proposing requests in favour of their client, which could not fit the rules of civil right.[24]

Another case was the one of Quintus Pompeius, who, asking damages for a client of his, committed a formal, little error, but such that it endangered all his court action. Finally Crassus quotes positively Marcus Porcius Cato, who was at the top of eloquence, at his times, and also was the best expert in civil right, although he said he despised it.[25]

As regards Antonius, Crassus says he has such a talent for oratory, so unique and incredible, that he can defend himself with all his devices, gained by his experience, although he lacks of knowledge of civil right. On the contrary, Crassus condemns all the others, because they are lazy in studying civil right, and yet they are so insolent, pretending to have a wide culture; instead, they fall miserably in private trials of little importance, because they have no experience in detailed parts of civil right.[26]

Studying civil right is important

Crassus continues his speech, blaming those orators who are lazy in studying civil right. Even if the study of law is wide and difficult, the advantages that it gives deserve this effort. Notwithstanding the formulae of Roman civil right have been published by Gneus Flavius, no one has still disposed them in systematic order.[27]

Even in other disciplines, the knowledge has been systematically organised; even oratory made the division on a speech into inventio, elocutio, dispositio, memoria and actio. In civil right there is need to keep justice based on law and tradition. Then it is necessary to depart the genders and reduce them to a reduce number, and so on: division in species and definitions.[28]

Gaius Aculeo has a secure knowledge of civil right in such a way that only Scaevola is better than he is. Civil right is so important that - Crassus says - even politics is contained in the XII Tabulae and even philosophy has its sources in civil right. Indeed, only laws teach that everyone must, first of all, seek good reputation by the others (dignitas), virtue and right and honest labour are decked of honours (honoribus, praemiis, splendore). Laws are fit to dominate greed and to protect property.[29]

Crassus then believes that the libellus XII Tabularum has more auctoritas and utilitas than all others works of philosophers, for those who study sources and principles of laws. If we have to love our country, we must first know its spirit (mens), traditions (mos), constitution (disciplines), because our country is the mother of all of us; this is why it was so wise in writing laws as much as building an empire of such a great power. The Roman right is well more advanced than that of other people, including the Greek.[30]
Crassus' final praise of studying civil right

Crassus once more remarks how much honour gives the knowledge of civil right. Indeed, unlike the Greek orators, who need the assistance of some expert of right, called pragmatikoi, the Roman have so many persons who gained high reputation and prestige on giving their advice on legal questions. Which more honourable refuge can be imagined for the older age than dedicating oneself to the study of right and enrich it by this? The house of the expert of right (iuris consultus) is the oracle of the entire community: this is confirmed by Quintus Mucius, who, despite his fragile health and very old age, is consulted every day by a large number of citizens and by the most influential and important persons in Rome.[31]

Given that—Crassus continues—there is no need to further explain how much important is for the orator to know public right, which relates to government of the state and of the empire, historical documents and glorious facts of the past. We are not seeking a person who simply shouts before a court, but a devoted to this divine art, who can face the hits of the enemies, whose word is able to raise the citizens' hate against a crime and the criminal, hold them tight with the fear of punishment and save the innocent persons by conviction. Again, he shall wake up tired, degenerated people and raise them to honour, divert them from the error or fire them against evil persons, calm them when they attack honest persons. If anyone believes that all this has been treated in a book of rhetoric, I disagree and I add that he neither realises that his opinion is completely wrong. All I tried to do, is to guide you to the sources of your desire of knowledge and on the right way.[32]

Mucius praises Crassus and tells he did even too much to cope with their enthusiasm. Sulpicius agrees but adds that they want to know something more about the rules of the art of rhetoric; if Crassus tells more deeply about them, they will be fully satisfied. The young pupils there are eager to know the methods to apply.

What about—Crassus replies—if we ask Antonius now to expose what he keeps inside him and has not yet shown to us? He told that he regretted to let him escape a little handbook on the eloquence. The others agree and Crassus asks Antonius to expose his point of view.[33]

Views of Antonius, gained from his experience

Antonius offers his perspective, pointing out that he will not speak about any art of oratory, that he never learnt, but on his own practical use in the law courts and from a brief treaty that he wrote. He decides to begin his case the same way he would in court, which is to state clearly the subject for discussion. In this way, the speaker cannot wander dispersedly and the issue is not understood by the disputants. For example, if the subject were to decide what exactly is the art of being a general, then he would have to decide what a general does, determine who is a General and what that person does. Then he would give examples of generals, such as Scipio and Fabius Maximus and also Epaminondas and Hannibal.

And if he were defining what a statesman is, he would give a different definition, characteristics of men who fit this definition, and specific examples of men who are statesmen, he would mention Publius Lentulus, Tiberius Gracchus, Quintus Cecilius Metellus, Publius Cornelius Scipio, Gaius Lelius and many others, both Romans and foreign persons.

If he were defining an expert of laws and traditions (iuris consultus), he would mention Sextus Aelius, Manius Manilius and Publius Mucius.[34]

The same would be done with musicians, poets, and those of lesser arts. The philosopher pretends to know everything about everything, but, nevertheless, he gives himself a definition of a person trying to understand the essence of all human and divine things, their nature and causes; to know and respect all practices of right living.[35]
Definition of orator, according to Antonius

Antonius disagrees with Crassus' definition of orator, because the last one claims that an orator should have a knowledge of all matters and disciplines. On the contrary, Antonius believes that an orator is a person, who is able to use graceful words to be listened to and proper arguments to generate persuasion in the ordinary court proceedings. He asks the orator to have a vigorous voice, a gentle gesture and a kind attitude. In Antonius' opinion, Crassus gave an improper field to the orator, even an unlimited scope of action: not the space of a court, but even the government of a state! And it seemed so strange that Scæveola approved that, despite he obtained consensus by the Senate, although having spoken in a very synthetic and poor way. A good senator does not become automatically a good orator and vice versa. These roles and skills are very far each from the other, independent and separate. Marcus Cato, Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Quintus Metellus, Gaius Lelius, all eloquent persons, used very different means to ornate their speeches and the dignity of the state. Neither nature nor any law or tradition prohibit that a man is skilled in more than one discipline. Therefore, if Pericles was, at the same time, the most eloquent and the most powerful politician in Athens, we cannot conclude that both these distincte qualities are necessary to the same person. If Publius Crassus was, at the same time, an excellent orator and an expert of right, not for this we can conclude that the knowledge of right is inside the abilities of the oratory. Indeed, when a person has a reputation in one art and then he learns well another, he seems that the second one is part of his first excellence. One could call poets those who are called Physikoi by the Greeks, just because the Empedocles, the physicist, wrote an excellent poem. But the philosophers themselves, although claiming that they study everything, dare to say that geometry and music belong to the philosopher, just because Plato has been unanimously acknowledged excellent in these disciplines.

In conclusion, if we want to put all the disciplines as a necessary knowledge for the orator, Antonius disagrees, and prefers simply to say that the oratory needs not to be nude and without ornate; on the contrary, it needs to be flavoured and moved by a graceful and changing variety. A good orator needs to have listened a lot, watched a lot, reflecting a lot, thinking and reading, without claiming to possess notions, but just taking honourable inspiration by others' creations. Antonius finally acknowledges that an orator must be smart in discussing a court action and never appear as an inexperienced soldier nor a foreign person in an unknown territory.

Difference between an orator and a philosopher

Antonius disagrees with Crassus' opinion: an orator does not need to have enquired deeply the human soul, behaviour and motions—that is, study philosophy—to excite or calm the souls of the audience. Antonius admires those who dedicated their time to study philosophy nor despites them, the width of their culture and the importance of this discipline. Yet, he believes that it is enough for the Roman orator to have a general knowledge of human habits and not to speak about things that clash with their traditions. Which orator, to put the judge against his adversary, has been ever in trouble to ignore anger and other passions, and, instead, used the philosophers' arguments? Some of these latest ones claim that one's soul must be kept away from passions and say it is a crime to excite them in the judges' souls. Other philosophers, more tolerant and more practical, say that passions should be moderate and smooth. On the contrary! The orator picks all these passions of every day life and amplifies them, making them greater and stronger. At the same time he praises and gives appeal to what is commonly pleasant and desirable. He does not want to appear the wise among the stupids: by that, he would seem unable and a Greek with a poor art; otherwise they would hate to be treated as stupid persons. Instead, he works on every feeling and thought, driving them so that he need not to discuss philosophers' questions. We need a very different kind of man, Crassus, we need an intelligent, smart man by his nature and experience, skilled in catching thoughts, feelings, opinions, hopes of his citizens and of those who want to persuade with his speech. The orator shall feel the people pulse, whatever their kind, age, social class, investigate the feelings of those who is going to speak to. Let him keep the books of the philosophers for his relax or free time; the ideal state of Plato had concepts and ideals of justice very far from the common life. Would you claim, Crassus, that the virtue (virtus)
become slave of the precept of these philosophers? No, it shall alway be anyway free, even if the body is captured. Then, the Senate not only can but shall serve the people; and which philosopher would approve to serve the people, if the people themselves gave him the power to govern and guide them? [39]

Episodes of the past: Rutilius Rufus, Servius Galba, Cato and Crassus

Antonius then reports a past episode: Publius Rutilius Rufus blamed Crassus before the Senate spoke not only parum commodo (in few adequate way), but also turpiter et flagitiose (shamefully and in scandalous way). Rutilius Rufus himself blamed also Servius Galba, because he used pathetical devices to excite compassion of the audience, when Lucius Scribonius sued him in a trial. In the same proceeding, Marcus Cato, his bitter and dogged enemy, made a hard speech against him, that after inserted in his Origines. He would be convicted, if he would not have used his sons to rise compassion. Rutilius strongly blamed such devices and, when he was sued in court, chose not to be defended by a great orator like Crassus. Rather, he preferred to expose simply the truth and he faced the cruel feeling of the judges without the protection of the oratory of Crassus.

The example of Socrates

Rutilius, a Roman and a consularis, wanted to imitate Socrates. He chose to speak himself for his defence, when he was on trial and convicted to death. He preferred not to ask mercy or to be an accused, but a teacher for his judges and even a master of them. When Lysias, an excellent orator, brought him a written speech to learn by heart, he read it and found it very good but added: "You seem to have brought to me elegant shoes from Sicyon, but they are not suited for a man": he meant that the written speech was brilliant and excellent for an orator, but not strong and suited for a man. After the judges condemned him, they asked him which punishment he would have believed suited for him and he replied to receive the highest honour and live for the rest of his life in the Pritaneus, at the state expenses. This increased the anger of the judges, who condemned him to death. Therefore, if this was the end of Socrates, how can we ask the philosophers the rules of eloquence?. I do not question whether philosophy is better or worse than oratory; I only consider that philosophy is different by eloquence and this last one can reach the perfection by itself.[40]

Antonius: the orator need not a wide knowledge of right

Antonius understands that Crassus has made a passionate mention to the civil right, a grateful gift to Scaevola, who deserves it. As Crassus saw this discipline poor, he enriched it with ornate. Antonius acknowledges his opinion and respect it, that is to give great relevance to the study of civil right, because it is important, it had always a very high honour and it is studied by the most eminent citizens of Rome. But pay attention, Antonius says, not to give the right an ornate that is not its own. If you said that an expert of right (iuris consultus) is also an orator and, equally, an orator is also an expert of right, you would put at the same level and dignity two very bright disciplines. Nevertheless, at the same time, you admit that an expert of right can be a person without the eloquence we are discussing on, and, the more, you acknowledge that there were many like this. On the contrary, you claim that an orator cannot exist without having learnt civil right. Therefore, in your opinion, an expert of right is no more than a skilled and smart handler of right; but given that an orator often deals with right during a legal action, you have placed the science of right nearby the eloquence, as a simple handmaiden that follows her proprietress. [41]

You blame—Antonius continues—those advocates, who, although ignoring the fundamentals of right face legal proceedings, I can defend them, because they used a smart eloquence. But I ask you, Antonius, which benefit would the orator have given to the science of right in these trials, given that the expert of right would have won, not thanks to his specific ability, but to another's, thanks to the eloquence. I was told that Publius Crassus, when was candidate for Aedilis and Servius Galba, was a supporter of him, he was
approached by a peasant for a consult. After having a talk with Publius Crassus, the peasant had an opinion closer to the truth than to his interests. Galba saw the peasant going away very sad and asked him why. After having known what he listened by Crassus, he blamed him; then Crassus replied that he was sure of his opinion by his competence on right. And yet, Galba insisted with a kind but smart eloquence and Crassus could not face him: in conclusion, Crassus demonstrated that his opinion was well founded on the books of his brother Publius Micius and in the commentaries of Sextus Aelius, but at last he admitted that Galba's thesis looked acceptable and close to the truth.

There are several kinds of trials, in which the orator can ignore civil right or parts of it, on the contrary, there are others, in which he can easily find a man, who is expert of right and can support him. In my opinion, says Antonius to Crassus, you deserved well your votes by your sense of humour and graceful speaking, with your jokes, or mocking many examples from laws, consults of the Senate and from everyday speeches. You raised fun and happiness in the audience: I cannot see what has civil right to do with that. You used your extraordinary power of eloquence, with your great sense of humour and grace.

**Antonius further criticises Crassus**

Considering the allegation that the young do not learn oratory, despite, in your opinion, it is so easy, and watching those who boast to be a master of oratory, claiming that it is very difficult,

- you are contradictory, because you say it is an easy discipline, while you admit it is still not this way, but it will become such one day.
- Second, you say it is full of satisfaction: on the contrary everyone will let to you this pleasure and prefer to learn by heart the *Teucer* of Pacuvius than the leges Maniliana.
- Third, as for your love for the country, do not you realise that the ancient laws are lapsed by themselves for oldness or repealed by new ones?
- Fourth, you claim that, thanks to the civil right, honest men can be educated, because laws promise prices to virtues and punishments to crimes. I have always thought that, instead, virtue can be communicated to men, by education and persuasion and not by threatens, violence or terror.
- As for me, Crassus, let me treat trials, without having learnt civil right: I have never felt such a failure in the civil action, that I brought before the courts.

For ordinary and everyday situations, cannot we have a generic knowledge? Cannot we be taught about civil right, in so far as we feel not stranger in our country?

- Should a court action deal with a practical case, then we would obliged to learn a discipline so difficult and complicate; likewise, we should act in the same way, should we have a skilled knowledge of laws or opinions of experts of laws, provided that we have not already studied them by young.

**Fundamentals of rhetorics according to Antonius**

Shall I conclude that the knowledge of civil right is not at all useful for the orator?

- Absolutely not: no discipline is useless, particularly for who has to use arguments of eloquence with abundance.

But the notions that an orator needs are so many, that I am afraid he would be lost, wasting his energy in too many studies.

- Who can deny that an orator needs the gesture and the elegance of Roscius, when acting in the court? Nonetheless, nobody would advice the young who study oratory to act like an actor.

- Is there anything more important for an orator than his voice? Nonetheless, no practising orator would be advised by me to care about this voice like the Greek and the tragic actors, who repeat for years exercise of declamation, while seating; then, every day, they lay down and lift their voice steadily and, after having made their speech, they sit down and they recall it by the most sharp tone to the
lowest, like they were entering again into themselves.

- But of all this gesture, we can learn a summary knowledge, without a systematic method and, apart gesture and voice that cannot be improvised nor taken by others in a moment, any notion of right can be gained by experts or by the books.

- Thus, in Greece, the most excellent orators, as they are not skilled in right, are helped by expert of right, the pragmatikoi.

The Romans behave much better, claiming that law and right were guaranteed by persons of authority and fame.\[45\]

**Old age does not require study of law**

As for the old age, that you claim relieved by loneliness, thanks to the knowledge of civil right, who knows that a large sum of money will relieve it as well? Roscius loves to repeat that the more he will go on with the age the more he will slow down the accompaniment of a flute-player and will make more moderate his chanted parts. If he, who is bound by rhythm and meter, finds out a device to allow himself a bit of a rest in the old age, the easier will be for us not only to slow down the rhythm, but to change it completely. You, Crassus, certainly know how many and how various are the way of speaking. Nonetheless, your present quietness and solemn eloquence is not at all less pleasant than your powerful energy and tension of your past. Many orators, such as Scipio and Laelius, which gained all results with a single tone, just a little bit elevated, without forcing their lungs or screaming like Servius Galba. Do you fear that you home will no longer be frequented by citizens? On the contrary I am waiting the loneliness of the old age like a quiet harbour: I think that free time is the sweetest comfort of the old age\[46\]

**General culture is sufficient**

As regards the rest, I mean history, knowledge of public right, ancient traditions and samples, they are useful. If the young pupils wish to follow your invitation to read everything, to listen to everything and learn all liberal disciplines and reach a high cultural level, I will not stop them at all. I have only the feeling that they have not enough time to practice all that and it seems to me, Crassus, that you have put on these young men a heavy burden, even if maybe necessary to reach their objective. Indeed, both the exercises on some court topics and a deep and accurate reflexion, and your *stilus* (pen), that properly you defined the best teacher of eloquence, need much effort. Even comparing one’s oration to another’s and improvise a discussion on another’s script, either to praise or to criticize it, to strengthen it or to refute it, need much effort both on memory and on imitation. This heavy requirements can discourage more than encourage persons and should more properly be applied to actors than to orators. Indeed the audience listens to us, the orators, the most of the times, even if we are hoarse, because the subject and the lawsuit captures the audience; on the contrary, if Roscius has a little bit of hoarse voice, he is booed. Eloquence has many devices, not only the hearing to keep the interest high and the pleasure and the appreciation.\[47\]

**Practical exercise is fundamental**

Antonius agrees with Crassus for an orator, who is able to speak in such a way to persuade the audience, provided that he limits himself to the daily life and the to the court, renouncing to other studies, although noble and honourable. Let him imitate Demosthenes, who compensated his handicaps by a strong passion, deditio and obstinate application to oratory. He was indeed stuttering, but through his exercise, he became able to speak much more clearly than anyone else. Besides, having a short breath, he trained himself to retain the breath, so that he could pronounce two elevations and two remissions of voice in the same sentence.

We shall incite the young to use all their efforts, but the other things that you put before, are not part of the duties and of the tasks of the orator. Crassus replied: "You believe that the orator, Antonius, is a simple man of the art; on the contrary, I believe that he, especially in our State, shall not be lacking of any equipment, I was imaging something greater. On the other hand, you restricted all the task of the orator within borders such limited and restricted, that you can more easily expose us the results of your studies on the orator's duties and on the precepts of
his art. But I believe that you will do it tomorrow: this is enough for today and Scaevola too, who decided to go to his villa in Tusculum, will have a bit of a rest. Let us take care of our health as well”. All agreed and they decided to adjourn the debate. [48]

**Book II**

De Oratore Book II is the second part of De Oratore by Cicero. Much of Book II is dominated by Marcus Antonius. He shares with Lucius Crassus, Quintus Catulus, Gaius Julius Caesar, and Sulpicius his opinion on oratory as an art, eloquence, the orator’s subject matter, invention, arrangement, and memory.

**Oratory as an art**

Antonius surmises "that oratory is no more than average when viewed as an art". [49] Oratory cannot be fully considered an art because art operates through knowledge. In contrast, oratory is based upon opinions. Antonius asserts that oratory is "a subject that relies on falsehood, that seldom reaches the level of real knowledge, that is out to take advantage of people's opinions and often their delusions" (Cicero, 132). Still, oratory belongs in the realm of art to some extent because it requires a certain kind of knowledge to "manipulate human feelings” and "capture people's goodwill”.

**Eloquence**

Antonius believes that nothing can surpass the perfect orator. Other arts do not require eloquence, but the art of oratory cannot function without it. Additionally, if those who perform any other type of art happen to be skilled in speaking it is because of the orator. But, the orator cannot obtain his oratorical skills from any other source.

**The orator’s subject matter**

In this portion of Book II Antonius offers a detailed description of what tasks should be assigned to an orator. He revisits Crassus’ understanding of the two issues that eloquence, and thus the orator, deals with. The first issue is indefinite while the other is specific. The indefinite issue pertains to general questions while the specific issue addresses particular persons and matters. Antonius begrudgingly adds a third genre of laudatory speeches. Within laudatory speeches it is necessary include the presence of "descent, money, relatives, friends, power, health, beauty, strength, intelligence, and everything else that is either a matter of the body or external” (Cicero, 136). If any of these qualities are absent then the orator should include how the person managed to succeed without them or how the person bore their loss with humility. Antonius also maintains that history is one of the greatest tasks for the orator because it requires a remarkable "fluency of diction and variety”. Finally, an orator must master “everything that is relevant to the practices of citizens and the ways human behave” and be able to utilize this understanding of his people in his cases.

**Invention**

Antonius begins the section on invention by proclaiming the importance of an orator having a thorough understanding of his case. He faults those who do not obtain enough information about their cases, thereby making themselves look foolish. Antonius continues by discussing the steps that he takes after accepting a case. He considers two elements: "the first one recommends us or those for whom we are pleading, the second is aimed at moving the minds of our audience in the direction we want” (Cicero, 153). He then lists the three means of persuasion that are used in the art of oratory: "proving that our contentions are true, winning over our audience, and inducing their minds to feel any emotion the case may demand” (Cicero, 153). He discerns that determining what to say and then how to say it requires a talented orator. Also, Antonius introduces ethos and pathos as two other means of persuasion. Antonius believes that an audience can often be persuaded by the prestige or the reputation of a man. Furthermore, within the art of oratory it is critical that the orator appeal to the emotion of his audience. He insists
that the orator will not move his audience unless he himself is moved. In his conclusion on invention Antonius shares his personal practices as an orator. He tells Sulpicius that when speaking his ultimate goal is to do good and if he is unable to procure some kind of good then he hopes to refrain from inflicting harm.

**Arrangement**

Antonius offers two principles for an orator when arranging material. The first principle is inherent in the case while the second principle is contingent on the judgment of the orator.

**Memory**

Antonius shares the story of Simonides of Ceos the man who he credits with introducing the art of memory. He then declares that memory is important to the orator because "only those with a powerful memory know what they are going to say, how far they will pursue it, how they will say it, which points they have already answered and which still remain" (Cicero, 220).

**Notes**


**References**


**Footnotes**

[1] s:1911 Encyclopedia Britannica/Cicero#endnote 3
[5] De Orat. I,4-6
[8] De Orat. I,8-12
[15] De Orat. I,22 (102-104) - 23 (105-106)
[16] De Orat. I,23 (107-109) - 28
[18] De Orat. I,31
[19] De Orat. I,32
[20] De Orat. I,33
[21] De Orat. I,34
[22] De Orat. I,35
[23] De Orat.I,35 (161)
[26] De Orat.I,38
[27] De Orat.I,41
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De Oratore in Google Books (http://books.google.it/books?id=5sk-3igwPU4C)

Critical editions
"L'Orateur - Du meilleur genre d'orateurs". Collection des universités de France Série latine. Latin text with translation in French.
Publication Year: June 2008

Editions with a commentary

Translations
Further reading


**Brutus (Cicero)**

Cicero's *Brutus* is a history of Roman oratory. It is written in the form of a dialogue, in which Brutus and Atticus ask Cicero to describe the qualities of all the leading Roman orators up to their time. It was composed in 46 BC.

Further reading

- G. V. Sumner (1973) *The Orators in Cicero's Brutus: Prosopography and Chronology*

External links

- English translation at [attalus.org](http://www.attalus.org/old/brutus1.html)
- Latin text at [thelatinlibrary](http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/brut.shtml)
- Text at [Gutenberg](http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext06/8cbho10.txt)

References

De Optimo Genere Oratorum

De Optimo Genere Oratorum, which literally translates as "the Best Kind of Orator", is a work from Marcus Tullius Cicero written in 46 BCE between two of his other works, Brutus and the Orator ad M. Brutum. Cicero attempts to explain why his view of oratorical style reflects true Atticism and is better than that of the Roman Atticists "who would confine the orator to the simplicity and artlessness of the early Attic orators."[1]

This short treatise professes to be the introduction to a translation of a speech by Demosthenes called On the Crown, and a speech of his rival, Aeschines, called Against Ctesiphon. Cicero was an advocate of free translation: "The essence of successful oratory, he insists, is that it should 'instruct, delight, and move the minds of his audience', this being achievable in translation only by conserving the 'force and flavour of the passage', not by translating 'word for word'."[2] The actual translation of the two speeches was never published, and De Optimo Genere Oratorum was not published in Cicero's lifetime.

Many believe that the final treatise is a compilation of two drafts that Cicero wrote. In his critique of this piece, Hendrickson argues how the "brevity of mere jottings and suggestions, to omissions of words (which modern editors have supplied), to suppressed sequences of thought, to evidence of double treatment" all give evidence of the uncompleted state of De Optimo Genere Oratorum.[3]

Dispute Over Placement of the Text

Brutus is a work by Cicero that explains the history of Roman oratory, and Orator highlights the basic requirements needed to be the best orator. This is important because it helps scholars best estimate when De Optimo Genere Oratorum was written in accordance with these two texts. Writing De Optimo Genere Oratorum after Brutus allowed Cicero to use the historical information from Brutus to support his own views on stylistic propriety. The Orator then takes the views of De Optimo Genere Oratorum, and develops them into a more conclusive statement of the perfect orator.

Summary of the Seven Parts of De Optimo Genere Oratorum

Part 1

Cicero starts off talking about different kinds of poets and how every genre of poetry has its own individuality. He then contrasts this to describing different kinds of orators, whom you can distinguish from one another, but ultimately still miss information about the art of oratory. "There is only one kind of orator...the one whose speech instructs, delights, and moves the minds of his audience." Although there are other great orators, the difference is "in degree, not in kind."

Part 2

Cicero says that the orator must attend to style, structure, arrangement, memory, and delivery. Using these criteria he develops a way of judging the best orator.
Part 3
Cicero feels that the Attic writers of Athens exemplified such criteria and strove to be better than the best in their oratory. He argues that these are the ones that need to followed, unlike those practitioners of the Asiatic style “whose opulent style is full of faults; Asia produced this latter sort in abundance.”

Part 4
Cicero uses the example of Lysias, who was able to abstract his style from his writing and write in the tone of someone else. He then makes a distinction between and addresses two groups, those who think they speak in an Attic manner and those who say no Roman does. To Cicero, the best orators were those who lived in Athens, Demosthenes being the best, so “speaking in the Attic fashion means speaking well.”

Part 5
To prove his point he explains that he has translated a debate between the two best Attic orators, Aeschines and Demosthenes.

Part 6
He argues that in presenting this translation of a debate, the characteristics of the best orator will be made evident. He also criticizes any objections to his Latin translation of the text.

Part 7
He then presents the case that Aeschines and Demosthenes were debating over. In Athens there were laws against crowning certain citizens and another against when and where to reward someone. In a charitable fashion, Demosthenes repaired the city walls and caught the attention Ctesiphon who wanted him crowned, although this was contrary to the law. Aeschines then brought charges against Ctesiphon stating the laws that had not been followed and questioning the genuine and kind nature of Demosthenes’s actions. Aeschines himself, however, was using this instance to truly attack Ctesiphon.

The charges were brought up during the reign of Philip of Macedon but were not addressed until that of Alexander. All came to hear the two great orators, and Cicero finishes the introduction by stating his sincere intention to reflect the true spirit of the debate.

References
A Dialogue Concerning Oratorical Partitions

A Dialogue Concerning Oratorical Partitions also called *De Partitione Oratoria Dialogus*, *Partitiones Oratoriae*, or *De Partitionibus Oratoriae*, translated to be "On the subdivisions of oratory" – is a rhetorical treatise, written by Cicero. According to the method of the Middle Academy, the treatise is sometimes described as a "catechism of rhetoric," for it is presented in the form of questions and answers. Cicero wrote it as a handbook for his young son, Marcus, and structured the text as a dialogue between the two of them.

Historical reception of the text

Scholars debate exactly when the text was written, presumably in 54 BCE or in 46 BCE. Around 54 BCE, Cicero was extremely interested in his son Marcus’ education, and he was not satisfied with the boy’s teacher. He expressed interest in teaching Marcus himself. At this time, Marcus was eleven years of age; the simple structure of the treatise of questions and answers would have been very appropriate for this age. Furthermore, Cicero relates in his letters at this earlier point that he is very interested in Marcus’ education. However, some scholars believe boys of this age were too young to be taught rhetoric. Thus, the treatise would have been written in 46 BCE, just before then 19-year-old Marcus left for Athens to study rhetoric. By this time in his life (from the year 56 onwards), Cicero could no longer voice his political principles without the risk of exile. “He had lost his freedom of speech and speech was his life.” A Dialogue Concerning Oratorical Partitions would thus be one of Cicero’s treatises in this period of his life, written after his most famous dialogue on rhetoric, De oratore.

Summary of the text

The treatise begins when Cicero’s son asks his father, "I wish…to hear the rules concerning the principles of speaking…Into how many parts is the whole system of speaking divided?" His father replies, "Is there anything, my Cicero, which I can be more desirous of than that you should be as learned as possible?" Cicero then undertakes a systematic discussion of eloquence. He says rhetoric is arranged under three headings – “first of all, the power of the orator; Secondly, the speech; Thirdly, the subject of the speech.” The power of the orator consists of ideas and words, which must be "discovered and arranged." "To discover" applies mostly to ideas and "to be eloquent" applies more to language. There are five "companions of eloquence" - “voice, gesture, expression of countenance,…action,…and memory.” There are four parts of a speech: two of them explain a subject – “narration” and “confirmation;” two of them excite the minds of the hearers – “the opening” and “the peroration” (the conclusion). The narration and confirmation add credibility to the speech while the opening and conclusion should produce feelings.

He then goes on to say the “cause” or subject of a speech is “divided according to the divisions of hearers.” There are three kinds of subjects: embellishment, aimed to give pleasure; judicial, aimed to either make a judge punish or forgive; and deliberation, aimed to persuade the assembly to either hope or fear (see Aristotle on rhetorical genre). Of these causes, Cicero goes deepest into judicial oratory, therefore emphasizing “the desirableness of maintaining the laws, and the danger with which all public and private affairs are threatened.” Cicero ends his treatise with a humanistic view of rhetoric that praises expansive education.

“And without a knowledge of these most important arts how can an orator have either energy or variety in his discourse, so as to speak properly of things good or bad, just or unjust, useful or useless, honourable or base?”
Significance

The text may show the first sign of Cicero’s mature view of rhetoric, later expanded in De Oratore. In De Inventione, Cicero had outlined a technical idea of rhetoric based on the handbooks of his era. But as he aged, his view changed to an “all-encompassing” ideal modeled on Philo’s rhetorical teachings. Previous to and during Cicero’s lifetime, there was a quarrel between rhetoricians and philosophers over whether rhetoric was restricted to only the forensic and technical sphere, or if it included the abstract and philosophical realm. “Specifically, Cicero suggest[s] ascending from the [restrictive] to the [general] in a speech.” [16] This work thus merges rhetoric as a more simplistic, teachable art with the themes of De Oratore, praising the ideal orator who appreciates and utilizes expansive education and training.

References


External links

Appendix

Rhetorica ad Herennium

The Rhetorica ad Herennium [English: ’Rhetoric: For Herennius’], formerly attributed to Cicero but of unknown authorship, is the oldest surviving Latin book on rhetoric, dating from the 90s BC, and is still used today as a textbook on the structure and uses of rhetoric and persuasion.

Overview

It was the most popular book on rhetoric during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It was commonly used, along with Cicero’s De Inventione, to teach rhetoric, and its popularity is evidenced by the large number of surviving manuscripts — over one hundred are extant. It was also copied extensively into European vernacular languages, and served as the standard schoolbook text on rhetoric during the Renaissance. The work focuses on the practical applications and examples of rhetoric. It is also the first book to teach rhetoric in a very highly structured and disciplined form.

Its discussion of elocutio (style) is the oldest surviving systematic treatment of Latin style, and many of the examples are of contemporary Roman events. This new style, which flowered in the century following this work's writing, promoted revolutionary advances in Roman literature and oratory. However, according to some analysts, teaching oratory in Latin was controversial because oratory was seen as a political tool which had to be kept in the hands of the Greek-speaking upper class.[1] The Rhetorica ad Herennium can be seen as part of a liberal populist movement, along with those like Plotius Gallus who began teaching in Latin. The work contains the first known description of the method of loci, a mnemonic technique. Ad Herennium also provides the first complete treatment of memoria (memorization of speeches).

According to the work, there are three types of causes that a speaker would address:
• Demonstrativum, where there is praise or condemnation of a particular person
• Deliberativum, where policy is discussed
• Iudiciale, where legal controversies are addressed

The Rhetorica ad Herennium suggests that in a standard format for argument (widely followed today in any five part essay) there were six steps.
• Exordium, in which the writer uses relevant generalities, anecdotes, quotes, or analogies to capture attention and then connects them to the specific topic.
• Narratio, in which the author succinctly states what will be the argument, thesis or point that is to be proven
• Divisio, in which the author outlines the main points, or reviews the debate to clarify what needs to be discussed further
• Confirmatio, which sets out the arguments (often three) for the thesis that the author supports as well as evidence supporting them
• Confutatio, which sets out and refutes the opposing arguments
• Conclusio, which is a summary of the argument, describing the urgency of the viewpoint and actions that could be taken
Notes


References

- Kroll, Wilhelm. *Der Text des Cornificius*, *Philologus* 89 (1934). 63-84
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External links

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