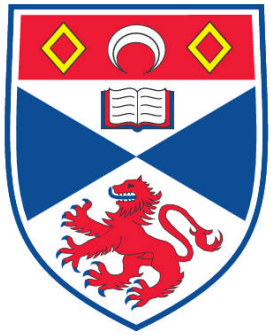
LETTERS TO THE EMPEROR : EPISTOLARITY AND POWER RELATIONS FROM CICERO TO SYMMACHUS

Maggi Creese

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews



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Letters to the Emperor:
Epistolarity and Power Relations from Cicero to Symmachus

by

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Abstract

Traditionally Latin prose letters have been classified in one of two ways: often they are seen as historical documents to be mined for political, historical and social information; otherwise they are viewed as literature, to be read with a consideration of the role of rhetoric and persuasion. These letters are only rarely approached as *letters*, and classical scholars have only just begun to discover the benefits of applying epistolary theory to these texts. My thesis examines epistolary exchange within the context of Roman power relations, offering a new interpretation of the correspondences between the most powerful political figure in a given period and one from among the senatorial class. Cicero, Pliny the Younger, Fronto and Symmachus each conducted an epistolary exchange with a powerful figure with whom he hoped to gain influence, and despite the significant differences between them in terms of political and social circumstances, each uses his letters in similar ways to that end. I approach these texts, never before treated together in a comparative study, with a consideration of epistolarity, 'the use of the letter's formal properties to create meaning', a concept developed by J. G. Altman (1982). These properties are identified and examined by means of detailed stylistic analysis of the Latin text. The act of writing a letter is an act of self-definition; the sender constructs a self defined necessarily in relation to a particular addressee. Thus the letter also affords a sender the opportunity to define the *You*, to whom he addresses himself. In the context of power relations in Roman politics, the letter then becomes a flexible tool of self-fashioning, by which a senator may attempt to influence the emperor.

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations Used

Names of ancient authors and works are abbreviated following the usage of *OLD* and *LSJ*, supplemented wherever necessary from Lewis & Short. Exceptions to this convention and abbreviations of modern works are listed below.

Lewis & Short	Lewis, C. T., and C. Short (1879), *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford).
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., and R. Scott (1843), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Ninth Edition, ed. H. S. Jones (Oxford, 1940).
OLD	Glare, P. G. W. (1982) *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford).
SB	SB numbers refer to to the numeration of Cicero's letters in Shackleton Bailey 1977 and 2001; quotations from Cicero's letters are from 1988a.
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (1900-).

Introduction

Robin Cooper to Charles Kennedy, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, 31 August 1999:[1]

Dear Mr. Kennedy,

You're the man!

I'm writing to you as a keen supporter (of what you do and also stand for).

Let me introduce myself. I am Robin Cooper, designer. I have designed a range of logos which I feel would be perfect for your party. Would you be so kind as to allow me to send them to you?

I look forward to hearing from you, Sir.

Kind regards,

Robin Cooper

Charles Kennedy to Robin Cooper, 13 September 1999:[2]

Dear Mr Cooper

Thank you for your recent letter and your kind congratulations.

I am grateful to you for writing to me on this issue. However, the issue of the party logo really falls under the responsibility of Kate Fox, Communications Officer for the Liberal Democrats and I have therefore copied your letter on to her, for her information.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Kennedy MP
(Dictated by Mr Kennedy and signed in his absence)

[1] Cooper 2004: 67.
[2] Cooper 2004: 68.

This thesis is about epistolary self-fashioning, and the pair of letters above contains elements of the kind of self-fashioning under consideration; likewise the context of the exchange is similar to that in which the collections we shall examine take place. Robin Cooper writes to Charles Kennedy in an attempt to convince the political leader to allow the sender to advise him about how the Liberal Democrats ought to represent themselves to the public. In other words, he has designed an image of the party and attempts to persuade the leader to adopt that image. It is this kind of letter – a letter in which the sender constructs an ideal image of the addressee and attempts to persuade him to adopt it – that we shall examine in the chapters to follow (although in Cooper's case the 'image' is more literally visual than those constructed by our letter writers).

The attempt to persuade also involves the construction of an ideal image of the sender, defined in relation to the addressee. In the first letter above, Robin Cooper quite explicitly sets out to define himself – 'Let me introduce myself'. The sender is defined as a 'designer' and as a 'keen supporter' of the addressee. Charles Kennedy himself is also defined in this letter: in the opening, he is described as 'the man'. So, the sender constructs an ideal Charles Kennedy, who will naturally be anxious to see the logos created by the ideal Robin Cooper, a qualified 'designer' and supporter of the party. In Kennedy's response, the leader likewise creates an image of himself, the most prominent characteristic of which is gratitude; he thanks the addressee directly twice and describes himself as 'grateful' once. The sender is also defined as busy – he did not have the time to either write the letter himself or sign it. This second aspect of the self projected by Kennedy also contributes to a distance between correspondents. By dictating his letter, and by passing Cooper's offer on to a member of staff, the sender puts himself out of the reach of the addressee. Another way to think about it, perhaps, is to say that Kennedy, or even his political aides (can we trust the claim that he 'dictated' the letter?),[3] deflects the image of himself constructed in the previous letter by Cooper.

In this particular exchange, the would-be adviser is out to have a laugh,[4] but the jostle for control of the images of sender and addressee that it displays, along with the attempt of one correspondent to influence the other, is a prominent aspect of the letters discussed in this thesis. Though this kind of fantasy or even epistolary parody is often less blatant than in the

[3] Cf. the debate about whether or not Trajan himself or his staff composed his letters to Pliny in *Letters* 10 (discussed in ch. 3).

[4] Judging from the title of his collection: *The Timewaster Letters*.

Cooper-Kennedy exchange, it is never entirely absent either, and at times it is even exploited.[5] We shall be examining epistolary exchange within the context of Roman power relations, specifically between the most powerful political figure in a given period and one from among the senatorial class. Cicero, Pliny the Younger, Fronto and Symmachus each conducted an epistolary exchange with a powerful figure with whom he hoped to gain influence, and despite the significant differences between them in terms of political and social circumstances, each uses his letters in similar ways to that end. I do not intend, however, to argue that the similarities found between these letter collections necessarily stem from one author reading the other, or that there is a direct line of influence from Cicero to Symmachus. This is not to say that some of these authors were not reading others (e.g. both Pliny and Fronto tell us that they read Cicero's letters), but, as I hope to illustrate, the tensions that arise in these collections between confidence and tentativeness, playfulness and coerciveness within the broad cultural setting of Roman politics are to be explained through a consideration of certain aspects of the letter form itself.

Aside from an epistolary exchange with a powerful figure, what these men have in common is oratory, and each expresses concern about the status of the orator in Roman society. The *oratio* was an important element of public discourse, especially during the late Republic, and an important venue within Roman society for self-fashioning. For Cicero, oratory was the primary means by which he gained for himself status and *auctoritas*. But once Julius Caesar became an absolute ruler, the means to political advancement among the senatorial class was significantly changed. And oratory changed too; the panegyric, a form of display rhetoric, surpassed forensic and deliberative oratory in importance during the early Empire. The panegyric provided a setting in which the speaker may attempt to influence the emperor. The panegyricist sets out a programme of behaviour for the emperor, and creates an ideal imperial self in relation to his subjects.

Political letters and epistolarity

As the exchange between Cooper and Kennedy above illustrates, letters may also be used in order to influence political leaders, and I would argue that letters serve a similar or in some cases complementary role to that of oratory within the context of Roman power relations. At times these practices intersect; as we shall see, the letter writer may even transform the

[5] e.g. Cicero's 'recommendation' of Precilius addresed to Caesar (discussed in ch. 2); or Marcus Aurelius' epistolary 'indictment' of sleep addressed to Fronto (discussed in ch. 4).

epistolary space into a venue for the delivery of a speech, fashioning himself as orator addressing his audience/judge/opponent.[6] Just as the orator attempts to fashion for himself a persuasive *persona* in relation to his (imperial) audience, so the letter writer attempts to fashion for himself an influential *persona* in relation to his powerful addressee.

One might then be tempted to conclude that a letter written by an orator for the purposes of persuasion is in effect no different from a speech. But there are aspects of epsitolary writing which are unique to that form, and it is from the perspective of epistolarity that I shall approach these letter collections. J. G. Altman defines epistolarity as 'the use of the letter's formal properties to create meaning';[7] while Altman develops the concept of epistolarity, which is primarily a framework for reading, in relation to the epistolary novel, the application of her framework to the letter collections of Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and Symmachus opens up new lines of interpretation in texts usually treated either as historical documents or as literary pieces, but only rarely as letters. Altman discusses a set of six key aspects of the epistolary genre, chosen because each is able 'to emblemize a number of the letter's properties and to ground readings of a variety of works'.[8] Each is treated as an independent approach to epistolary literature.

While each of these key aspects will be touched upon in the chapters to follow, there is a core set, which will be central to my argument. The first of these is the nature of epistolary discourse. The *I* of a letter always has as its implicit and explicit partner a specific *You*, who is in unique relationship with the *I*. According to Altman, the most distinctive aspect of epistolary discourse is that it is coloured by not only one but two persons and the relationship between them. Works perceived as most 'epistolary' are those in which the *I*-*You* relationship shapes the language used, and in which the *I* becomes defined relative to the *You* whom he addresses.[9] For example, if we return for a moment to the exchange which opened this introduction, the sender (*I*) Robin Cooper, is defined as designer and supporter in relation to the addressee (*You*) Charles Kennedy, 'the man'.

The remaining aspects of epistolarity which will be especially important as the thesis proceeds all arise from the distance between correspondents. One of these is epistolary

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[6] ch. 1, pp. 30-43; ch. 4, pp. 123-127 and 139-143; ch. 5, pp. 200-208.
[7] Altman 1982: 4.
[8] Altman 1982: 10.
[9] Altman 1982: 118-119. Though Altman gives examples of the author of an epistolary novel addressing his wider external reading audience, by generalizing the address so as to blend internal and external addressees (discussed in ch. 5), it is not clear how she would account for letters explicitly addressed to large groups (e.g. an emperor addressing an entire province or a political leader addressing his party).

mediation, that is, the letter's role as a bridge between correspondents with which the sender attempts to make the addressee present and bridge the gap between them. This involves conjuring up an image of the addressee so as to make him present, and, furthermore, the letter itself may stand in for the sender himself, being sent to the addressee. In the exchange above, Robin Cooper attempts to bridge the gap between himself and Charles Kennedy, and his attempt is quite explict; as Altman explains, to send a letter is to attempt to draw the *You* into becoming the *I* of another statement,[10] and Cooper makes this invitation a prominent element of his letter: 'I look forward to hearing from you, Sir'. The letter can be a means to bridging a distance otherwise insurmountable; Cooper and Kennedy are both located in London, but Cooper chooses the letter rather than the telephone or a visit to Kennedy's office as a means of access to the politician. The letter allows him to shape the self presented to the addressee, as well as the self of the addressee, as we saw above. Therefore, an epistolary exchange involves the creation of an image of the sender (*I*) and of the addressee (*You*) to whom he addresses himself.[11] And it is this image making which will be the focus of our attention, as our letter writers construct ideal images of the sender and imperial addressee: the ideal adviser, governor, tutor and prefect addressing the ideal statesman, dictator and emperor.

However, as much as a letter writer may emphasize presence, the letter itself remains a product of absence, and as such the sender may chose to emphasize the distance between sender and addressee.[12] Charles Kennedy is drawn into becoming the *I* of a statment in reply to Cooper, but he uses his letter as a barrier between himself and his addressee, deflecting the image created by Cooper and selecting a mediator through whom Cooper will have to communicate with Kennedy in the future. As we shall see, the imperial addressee may use this strategy in response to the attempt to influence him.[13]

In any case, the distance between correspondents creates the possibility that communication will fail. Altman asserts that the letter's mediatory role derives from its position as a halfway point: 'As an instrument of communication between sender and receiver, the letter straddles the gulf between presence and absence; the two persons who "meet" through the letter are neither totally separated nor totally united. The letter lies halfway between the possibility of total communication and the risk of no communication at

[10] Altman 1982: 117 and 121.
[11] For a general discussion of the strategies employed to conjure up the addressee, see ch. 1, p. 25 and nn. 71-75.
[12] Altman 1982: 13-15.
[13] See ch. 4 especially.

all'.[14] As a result of this, epistolary self-fashioning is necessarily provisional; aside from the risk of total failure of communication (e.g. because the letter is 'lost in the mail'),[15] the images created by the sender are always up for grabs.

This provisionality makes the letter a flexible tool of self-fashioning, but it also places limits on epistolary self-fashioning. Throughout his letter collection, Robin Cooper adjusts his identity to suit each addressee, as is revealed at the beginning of his book: 'Who is Robin Cooper? Spoon collector, wasp expert, professional fish fryer and inventor of the peanut suit, Robin Cooper is all of these things, it just depends to whom he's writing ... Robin Cooper might also be the pseudonym for Robert Popper'.[16] As we shall see, our senders fashion and refashion their identites as it suits their changing political agenda and circumstances. At the same time, there is no guarantee that a sender's images will succeed. In subsequent letters Robin Cooper is invited by Kate Fox to send along his logos, and he does, but they are not passed on to Charles Kennedy, nor are they to become the new image of the Liberal Democrats; instead, Ms Fox assures Cooper that she will file his designs for future reference.[17] Likewise, our senders are not always able to fashion themselves or their addressees as they please, and, as we shall see, there are times when those images are challenged in response.

Literary survey

The letter collections of Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and Symmachus have never been treated together in a comparative study, and the secondary material relevant to the individual collections will be discussed in each chapter. But, as mentioned above, classical non-fictional letters have only rarely been treated as *letters*. Traditionally these texts have been viewed as historical documents, and in some cases as texts which reveal the personality of their authors.[18] Recently, scholars have come to view the letters of some of these authors as

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[14] Altman 1982: 43.
[15] On failed letters due to interception, see Altman 1982: 24, 25-26, 104.
[16] Cooper 2004: 2.
[17] Cooper 2004: 69-72.
[18] e.g. Hooper and Schwartz 1991: 12: 'The simple fact is that we come to know the Romans by reading their letters'; the focus of their project, a survey of Roman history as told through letters, 'goes beyond generalities to what the Romans themselves had to say'; Dorey 1965: 27 claims that Cicero's correspondence, 'a "camera with the shutter open", exposes his whole personality so devastatingly before our eyes ...'; Radice 1963: 27: '... Pliny is consciously and unconsciously revealed in his letters until he emerges in the round'; Radice 1963: 11: '... the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his tutor, M. Cornelius Fronto, wrote almost daily letters to each other which are personal and wholly unselfconscious'; O'Donnell 1979: 69 of Symmachus: 'Rarely do we get

containing a projection of self rather than reflection of 'reality'; the greatest strides in this direction have been made in Plinian scholarship, in which Pliny's modelling of self has received much attention.[19] In his 1999 book, S. E. Hoffer examines rhetoric in Book 1 of Pliny's *Letters* by means of a stylistic approach to the text. Along similar lines, G. O. Hutchinson's 1998 literary survey of Cicero's letters emphasizes the importance of (self-) persuasion in the correspondence and warns against accepting Cicero's accounts of events as accurate.[20] These works have opened the door to a stylistic approach to epistolary self-fashioning.

A small number of scholars have advocated an approach to these texts which recognizes the importance of the letter form itself.[21] For example, M. Wilson examines three theoretical reclassifications of Seneca's letters as something other than letters. Wilson concludes that although 'epistolary' is an inexact and slippery critical category, it is a vastly superior starting point to the 'essay', the 'hortatory' or the 'pedagogical' for trying to understand the nature of Seneca's *Epistles*.[22] A. de Pretis' reading of Pliny's letters to Calpurnia, which is indebted to Altman's formulation of epistolarity, demonstrates the interpretive benefits of approaching epistolary writing from this perspective.[23] My own approach is grounded in Altman's concept of epistolarity, and I have identified the significant features of epistolarity in the texts by means of stylistic analysis.

Survey of chapters to follow

In chapters one and two, we shall examine Cicero's epistolary relationships with Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar respectively, and the ways in which the sender uses the epistolary form in order to fashion for himself an ideal position in relation to his addressee. In both instances, Cicero is in a position from which his *auctoritas* has been damaged, because, in the case of the *post reditum* period he has suffered a loss of *dignitas* after his exile, and, in the case of the period following the civil war, Caesar has become dictator. Therefore, in order to remain politically relevant he must attach himself to a powerful figure, and in relation to each

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so comprehensive a literary portrait surviving from antiquity of so thoroughly wearisome, fatuous and pompous an individual'.

[19] See ch. 3, pp. 89-90.

[20] See ch. 1, p. 13.

[21] Freisenbruch 2004; de Pretis 2003; Wilson 2001.

[22] Wilson 2001: 186.

[23] de Pretis 2003. Ovid's *Heriodes* and Horace's *Epistles* have also been approached from the starting point of epistolarity; see Kennedy 1984 and 2002; de Pretis 2002.

man he fashions himself (*I*) as ideal adviser addressing (*You*) the ideal statesmen. The provisionality of Cicero's self-portrayal reflects the uncertainty of his political situation, but it also allows him flexibility: in relation to Pompey, he is able to back away from their relationship when it suits him; in relation to Caesar, he is able to construct a self-identity which is difficult to pin down.

In chapter three, we move into the imperial period and examine Pliny's official correspondence with the Emperor Trajan. Book 10 projects the image of an idealized relationship, similar to the one constructed in the *Panegyricus*, and Pliny fashions himself (*I*) as the ideal governor conducting an exchange with (*You*) the ideal emperor. Provisionality is reflected in Pliny's cautious approach to his image making, but this also ensures its success, as he incorporates a prominent tentativeness into his self-portrayal and defines himself entirely in relation to the emperor. In this exchange, we have Trajan's replies and are able to observe his responses to Pliny's ideal images. Unlike Kennedy in the exchange above, Trajan is an active participant in the exchange and often (but by no means always) confirms Pliny's images.

In chapter four, we turn to the exchange between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius, in which Fronto fashions himself (*I*) as the ideal *magister* and his addressee (*You*) as ideal student and orator-emperor in an attempt to maintain influence with his imperial student and patron. In this correspondence we see an imperial addressee who deflects the images constructed by his fellow correspondent. Like Kennedy, Marcus puts up barriers between himself and Fronto at times, and in any case, he regularly refashions the selves constructed by his (former) tutor in his replies. In this exchange, provisionality is reflected in the caution with which correspondents construct their images, but it also obscures a struggle for control of the images of sender and addressee.

Finally, in chapter five, we shall examine Symmachus' *Relationes*, his official correspondence with the Western Emperor Valentinian II during his tenure as urban prefect of Rome in AD 384. Symmachus fashions himself (*I*) as ideal prefect addressing (*You*) the ideal emperor. Provisionality is reflected in a self-portrayal even more tentative than that of Pliny; for Symmachus depends upon another for his identity entirely, fashioning himself through the eyes of 'old' Rome and its inhabitants and citing that community as the source of his images of the emperor. Thus Symmachus is cautious in his image making, both in constructing images of himself and of the emperor. At the same time, the provisionality of Symmachus'

self-identity strengthens his position, because as the emperor is absent (at the imperial court in Milan), he is not able to ascertain the accuracy of the sender's representation of himself as one among a large and united group.

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Letters to Pompey

Pompey was, of course, not an emperor. However, Cicero's relationship with and treatment of Pompey, in oratory and letters, serves as a prototype of the imperial relationships with which I am primarily concerned. The *de Lege Manilia*, Cicero's first *contio* as praetor in 66,[1] in which he argued that Pompey should be given command over the campaign against Mithridates, is seen as a forerunner to the imperial prose panegyrics.[2] Most of the speech is taken up with an exposition on the 'unique and extraordinary qualities of Pompey',[3] identified as his theme in the opening (*Man*. 3). The focus is naturally on Pompey's military abilities, with emphasis on his being the only man for the job: 'Cicero singles Pompey out in terms which make him a proto-*princeps* and which consequently lay the groundwork for later imperial panegyrics'.[4] But the speech also laid the groundwork for Cicero's epistolary treatment of Pompey in the periods following his consulship and following his recall from exile, and in turn, Cicero's epistolary Pompey prefigures later epistolary emperors.

After his tenure as consul, Cicero had no further to go up the political ladder, but used the *auctoritas* he had gained to defend his clients and to attempt to establish his legacy. During the *post reditum* period, Cicero was recovering from the personal loss of influence after his exile, and in order to regain *auctoritas* had to attach himself to someone with established power.[5] He chose Pompey, who had supported Cicero's recall to Rome. In the forensic speeches,[6] it seems as if Cicero is as much on trial as his client; he takes the opportunity to praise those who supported his recall and make *apologiae* for himself, identifying himself with his clients and with the state.[7] These themes are echoed in the letters, and as in the *de Lege Manilia*, Cicero creates an ideal Pompey, exhorting him to take on that ideal, and an ideal Cicero in relation to that Pompey.

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1 All dates in this chapter are BC unless otherwise noted.
2 See Braund 1998: 74-75; May 1988: 47; Leeman 1963: 108.
3 For an analysis of Cicero's epideictic praise of Pompey's character, see Steel 2001: 130f.
4 Braund 1998: 75.
5 For a consideration of Cicero's position and of the state of Roman senatorial government in the *post reditum* period, setting the scene for the composition of the *de Oratore*, see Fantham 2004: 1-15 and for useful bibliography 1 n. 1.
6 *pro Sestio*; *in Vatinium*; *pro Caelio*; *pro Balbo* (from 56); *in Pisonem* (from 55); *pro Plancio*; *pro Rabirio Postumo*; *pro Scauro* (from 54).
7 May 1981; Dugan 2001; cf. Riggsby 2002: 190; see also Craig 2001 on the *pro Sestio*, where he argues that the speech does represent a genuine treatment of the charges against Cicero's client.

Recent scholarship on Roman history has shown a renewed interest in the role of oratory in Republican Roman politics and the practical power of rhetoric.[8] This renewal of interest signals a shift from Syme's view that 'Roman history, Republican or Imperial, is the history of the governing class',[9] to an examination of the role of the *contio* (a speech given before the people) as an important political institution and the role of the masses in the Roman Republic.[10] As Cicero is our primary source for Roman Republican oratory, the focus of this scholarship has been on his forensic and political speeches, as well as his rhetorical treatises. In addition to providing material for the study of how Republican politicians mobilized public opinion through *contiones* and interacted with other politicians in speeches to the Senate, Cicero's body of work also provides a case-study of the political career of a *novus homo*. Recent studies have demonstrated the variety of ways in which Cicero used rhetoric and oratory to further (or in later years revive) his political career, constructing (and reconstructing) a persuasive *persona*, endowed with *auctoritas* and *dignitas*, over the years.[11] Closely tied to these examinations is an awareness of the emphasis placed on *ethos*, character (*mores* in Cicero), by the Romans.[12]

The scholars concerned with Cicero's self-fashioning within the context of oratory make reference to the passages within the letters that concern these speeches and the events surrounding them. However, the orator's bid to acquire, maintain and re-acquire political *auctoritas* has not been explored within the letters themselves. In the first two chapters I shall be considering Cicero's epistolary collection as one part of his larger political agenda, as

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[8] e.g. Fantham 2004; Morstein-Marx 2004; Powell 2004; May 2002; Wooten 2001.

[9] Syme 1939: 7; see Morstein-Marx 2004: 4.

[10] Morstein-Marx 2004 (see especially pp. 6-7 and nn. 26-29) gives a summary in his introduction of the history of this shift in the scholarship, as well as recent bibliography on the *contio* and new views on Roman Republican politics.

[11] e.g. on the dynamic Cicero wishes to establish with Caesar and the techniques used to that end in the Caesarian orations, Gotoff 2002; on Cicero's treatment of his exile, recall and relationship with the so-called First Triumvirate, Riggsby 2002; on Cicero's techniques of self-fashioning through the epideictic elements of the *pro Archia* (from 62) and *in Pisonem*, Dugan 2001; on the development of Cicero's *ethos* in his forensic speeches over the course of his political career, May 1988; on Cicero's avoidance of retirement in the *Brutus*, Steel 2003; on Cicero's defence of his own oratorical style in the *Orator*, Narducci 2002 and Winterbottom 1989.

[12] See *de Orat*. 2.182-184; on the definition of the Greek word *ethos* (ἦθος), of Cicero's usage and of the modern term, see May and Wisse 2001: 34-35 and 34, n. 42. Cicero's *ethos* is concerned with the image of the speaker's character and making his audience favourable toward him. For a helpful summary of the Romans' view of *ethos* and its importance in Republican Roman society and oratory, see May 1988: 1-12, ch. 1, 'Ethos and Ciceronian Oratory'; cf. Steel 2001: 162-189, ch. 4, 'Portrait of the orator as a great man: Cicero on Cicero', for a similar treatment of speeches not considered by May.

already identified in the speeches and rhetorical treatises.[13] The letters were another venue for self-fashioning and persuasion, at times the only venue available to Cicero when away from Rome, the forum and the Senate house.

This is not to say that the political content of Cicero's correspondence has been neglected. On the contrary, it has naturally been viewed as a rich resource for historical, political, and social information about the late Roman Republic, and has been utilized by historians accordingly.[14] It is a common misconception, however, that an epistolary collection offers a sort of window into the soul of the sender. Often studies claim to seek the 'true' or 'genuine' self of a correspondent,[15] and an accurate record of his feelings or opinions about his own actions,[16] historical events[17] or other historical figures, including Pompey.[18]

The correspondence has also received stylistic and literary attention. M. von Albrecht has recently provided a comprehensive study of Cicero's style,[19] and though focussed on the orations, he dedicates shorter sections to the epistolary collection. To the letters he assigns two main categories – private and formal – and within those broad categories places them on a scale of most to least private or most to least formal.[20] In his treatment of rhetoric in the collection, he recognizes its deliberate use in the more elaborate 'formal' letters, those intended for publication or with literary claims, citing *ad Familiares* 15.4 (SB 110) as a 'small oration',[21] and those intended to persuade.[22] However, in the 'private' letters he argues

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[13] On the letter as a political tool in Republican Rome, see Gratwick 1982b: 144-149. Greek authors had developed the custom of addressing works to a patron or friend, giving the work the appearance of a private didactic letter, though a larger audience was in mind; in Latin literature examples are found from the late second century (see Gratwick 1982b: 145-149 for examples), and ostensibly private letters were sometimes circulated as a sort of political pamphlet (see Gratwick 1982b: 146-147).

[14] See, e.g. on the relationship between private and public spheres in Roman society, Burckhardt 2002; on the dissemination of literary works, Murphy 1998; on the Roman concept of friendship, Konstan 1997: 122-148; on the workings of the Roman postal service, Nicholson 1994-95; on dowry and property laws, Dixon 1984.

[15] e.g. Wilkinson 1959: 24-29. In his introduction to a translation of selected letters from Cicero's collection, Wilkinson describes Cicero's personality as we find him in the letters: 'Whatever his faults, he was good company, he was on the side of conciliation, he was liberal and humane: - indeed he nearly humanised the Church before theology became aware of the danger'; he goes on to provide a few examples of the detail, public and private, which 'enlivens the political developments' in the correspondence.

[16] Boes 1990 uses the philosophical allusions in the letters to argue that Cicero's actions and decisions were guided by philosophy; cf. Yavetz 2002.

[17] e.g. Hooper and Schwartz 1991.

[18] Holliday 1969 undertook to arrive at a clearer, more accurate understanding of Gnaeus Pompey by tracing the attitudes toward him in Cicero's correspondence and Lucan's *Civil War*. She considers Cicero's correspondence a 'quasi-diary', providing a clearer picture of Cicero's 'real attitude' towards Pompey than his speeches (1969: 9-10).

[19] See Albrecht 2003: 1-7 for a survey of stylistic studies; as he points out, his is the first comprehensive study of Cicero's style for many years.

[20] Albrecht 2003: 68-71.

[21] Albrecht 2003: 66, 94; cf. Wistrand 1979: 16-18, where the letter is treated as a forensic speech.

that rhetoric is unintentional, and that an educated man like Cicero could express emotion spontaneously in ways that reflect his rhetorical training.[23]

In his literary survey of the correspondence, G. O. Hutchinson warns against approaching the letters as a source of unadulterated sentiment on the part of Cicero, emphasizing the important role played by persuasion in the text. While the letters may stand closer to reality than Cicero's other works, it would be misguided to assume that they accurately reproduce the external realities they describe, or even those realities as perceived by Cicero.[24] Hutchinson emphasizes the importance of a literary approach in the study of history and vice versa, and though he touches on aspects of the letters which are particular to the letter form, the concepts of epistolarity as theorized in modern literary-theoretical approaches are not incorporated into his methodology. As noted in the introduction, classical letters have been approached as letters only rarely, and Cicero's correspondence is no exception.[25]

The Cicero we find in his correspondence has been carefully constructed. Though the *ad Familiares* was not published within Cicero's lifetime, it was edited and compiled by his secretary Tiro,[26] who would have taken a pro-Cicero slant; we have no way of knowing what has been left out, and the line between private and public content is difficult to discern. Cicero himself may have had a hand in deciding which letters were saved or not saved. Thus this chapter does not represent an attempt to find the 'real' Cicero or Pompey, or Cicero's 'real' opinion of Pompey, but rather, to explore the ways in which Cicero uses the epistolary form in order to fashion for himself an ideal identity in relation to Pompey in the period following his return from exile. This would have been a time of uncertainty for Cicero, when he was attempting to re-establish his political footing. And the letter is perhaps an especially appropriate genre to self-fashioning under such circumstances. As discussed in the introduction, provisionality is built into epistolary communication.[27] As we shall see, Cicero acknowledges the provisionality of his self-imaging in the letters to and about

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[22] Albrecht 2003: 67-71.

[23] Albrecht 2003: 66; cf. Wilkinson 1982: 249: 'But the great collection of letters to Atticus is wholly spontaneous, with only so much of rhetoric as Cicero had in his blood'; but see Steel 2001: 201: 'And while the letters to Atticus may have no other *readers* than Atticus, it would be a mistake to assume that Atticus was someone to whom Cicero could pour out his heart without restraint' (original emphasis).

[24] Hutchinson 1998: 23; cf. Steel 2001: 192; Rose 1995: 372-373; for a similar warning concerning Cicero's Caesarian correspondence specifically, see Gotoff 2002; ch. 2, p. 49 and n. 6.

[25] See Introduction, pp. 6-7.

[26] See Klauck 2003: 134-135.

[27] See Introduction, pp. 4-6.

Pompey. This, I shall argue, is an important element of Cicero's self-fashioning strategy, as it allows him to back away from or even deliberately undermine his own images of himself and of Pompey when it suits his political circumstances.

Gnaeus Pompeius: Mirror Mirror on the Wall

In order to determine what the letters contribute to Cicero's fashioning of Pompey, the ideal statesman and general, and himself, the ideal orator-statesman, an obvious starting point is to examine the letters in the collection addressed to Pompey. Unfortunately only two such letters are extant. I shall focus on the one sent at the end of Cicero's consulship (the other will, however, get a brief discussion later),[28] as it reflects the character Cicero envisioned for Pompey and for their relationship with each other, an ideal which would become central to Cicero's political agenda in the *post reditum* period. Even before his exile, it was necessary for Cicero to attach himself to a powerful figure in order to remain politically relevant, and he chose Pompey.[29] Having finished his term as consul, Cicero was barred from standing for the office again for ten years. It is clear from *ad Familiares* 5.7 that Cicero conceived of the kind of ideal orator-statesman relationship developed in his *de Republica*, long before the composition of that text, and that he fashioned himself and Pompey according to that model.

I shall supplement this picture with letters addressed to two other correspondents in the *ad Familiares*, in which Pompey figures prominently. In the letters to Lentulus Spinther (from 56) Cicero uses his relationship with the addressee to rebuild his connection with Pompey, and he represents his *auctoritas* as increasing within the Senate, as he achieves a greater intimacy with Pompey. In the letters to Appius Pulcher (from 50) he uses his connection with Pompey, presented as a reflection of his early Republican *exemplum*, to negotiate his relationship with the addressee.

Ad Fam. V.7 (SB 3), April 62 BC

The ostensible reason for this letter is to respond to two pieces of correspondence from Pompey: a public dispatch addressed to the people and Senate and a personal letter sent to Cicero himself.[30] It is in this letter that Cicero creates an ideal, or fiction, for himself and

[28] *Att*. 8.11D (SB 161D) from 49; see p. 46 and n. 173.
[29] Gotoff 1993: xix; see below, p. 17; cf. Holliday 1969: 18; *Att*. 1.17.10 (SB 17).
[30] Albrecht 2003: 70 categorizes the letters addressed to Pompey among the political letters, written in the formal style, which explain Cicero's patriotic attitude in his attempts to win over men of influence.

Pompey, and his treatment of time is central to its creation. The letter is constructed as a tricolon auctum, and each segment, introduced by *scito*, deals with a different space in time: past, present and future. Within each, Cicero holds up a mirror to Pompey and presents an image of the selves of sender and addressee, re-shaping them as they move through time.[31]

Because of the temporal gap between sender and addressee, epistolary time is necessarily polyvalent. The sender (*I*) can only address an addressee (*You*) who is an image remembered from the past, and the *You* who receives the letter exists in yet another time, which was future to the *I* sending the letter.[32] Therefore, the meaning of an epistolary verb is determined in relation to two or more times, and this polyvalence allows for much individual organization of time by the sender: the lags between the time of the event described, the time that it is written down and the times that the letter is mailed, received, read and reread may or may not be emphasized.[33] Cicero plays with this temporal ambiguity, using his memory of the past to fashion an ideal future for himself and Pompey.[34]

The first segment of the tricolon, signalled by *scito*, deals with the past of sender and addressee. Specifically, Cicero presents a picture of their actions surrounding the Mithridatic War, in order to claim that the ideal Pompey constructed in the *de Lege Manilia* has become reality (5.7.1.2-6): *Ex litteris tuis quas publicae misisti cepi una cum omnibus incredibilem voluptatem; tantam enim spem oti ostendisti qua<nta>m ego semper omnibus te uno fretus pollicebar.*[35] *Sed hoc scito, tuos veteres hostis, novos amicos,*[36] *vehementer litteris perculsos atque ex magna spe deturbatos iacere*. The focus on sender and addressee is emphasized in several ways: through the limit on finite verbs to first and second person singular (even when describing the public reaction to Pompey's dispatch – *cepi* is juxtaposed with *misisti*); through the *ego* and *te* in the second half of the first sentence; and through two occurrences of *unus,* each in reference to one of them. At the beginning of the letter there is a distinct emphasis on Cicero (*I*) and Pompey (*You*) as individuals.

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[31] Fronto uses time in a similar way to fashion Marcus' ideal oratorical self in *Ant.* 1.2; see ch. 4, pp. 159-168; cf. Pliny's use of epistolary time to fashion his own ideal identity as governor in *Ep. Tra.* 10.17a; see ch. 3, pp. 102-104.

[32] Altman 1982: 132.

[33] Altman 1982: 129-130; Hutchinson 1998: 40: '… categories of time are more fluid in the letters than one might suppose. In some ways, the gaps between past, present, and future are inescapable, and bitterly felt; but the actual distances in time are small, and there is much room for individual organization'.

[34] On the sender as narrator and focalizer, i.e. the way in which the sender may focalize the text through his past self, see Bray 2003: 18.

[35] Cf. *Man.* 69.

[36] The identity of the *amici* has been disputed but are likely Crassus, Caesar and victims of Sulla's proscriptions and followers of Catiline; see Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 280-281.

When Cicero turns his attention to the private letter he received from Pompey, the two individuals are gradually brought closer together and, united, are moved into the future. Two shifts are accomplished rapidly: (1) from past to future; and (2) from a relationship in which there is an imbalance of goodwill between sender and addressee to a close mutual friendship (5.7.2.1-8):

Ad me autem litteras quas misisti, quamquam exiguam significationem tuae erga me voluntatis habebant, tamen mihi scito iucundas fuisse. nulla enim re tam laetari soleo quam meorum officiorum conscientia; quibus si quando non mutue respondetur, apud me plus offici residere facillime patior. illud non dubito, quin, si te mea summa erga te studia parum mihi adiunxerint,[37] *res publica nos inter nos conciliatura coniuncturaque sit.*

The second occurrence of *scito* echoes its usage above, where it introduced a description of the reaction to Pompey's dispatch, but this time refers to Cicero's reaction to his private correspondence. In the second sentence the tense shifts from perfect and imperfect to the present, and the third sentence completes the shift to the future tense. Thus far in the letter, Cicero and Pompey have been referred to as separate entities, in singular pronouns; by the second half of this sentence, they have become joined *nos inter nos*. These are the first occurrences of first person plural words in the letter,[38] and the repetition of the *nos* emphasizes the strength of the connection Cicero envisages. This unit stands out in its clause, as it is surrounded by words ending in *–a*, and followed by two future participles in alliteration.

The culmination of the tricolon auctum is in the closing of the letter, where sender and addressee are launched into the future together (5.7.3.6-11):

sed scito ea quae nos pro salute patriae gessimus orbis terrae iudicio ac testimonio comprobari; quae, cum veneris, tanto consilio tantaque animi magnitudine[39] *a me gesta esse cognosces ut tibi multo maiori quam Africanus fuit [a] me non multo minore<m> quam Laelium facile et in re publica et in amicitia adiunctum esse patiare.*

The third occurrence of *scito* treats Cicero's consulship in much grander terms than Pompey's recent victories. Whereas the earlier occurrences are followed by reactions to Pompey's correspondence by the Roman people and the individual Cicero, this one refers to the

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[37] This verb is used elsewhere of Cicero's connections with both Pompey and Crassus; see *Fam*. 1.8.2 (SB 19); *Att*. 1.14.4 (SB 14); cf. *Fam*. 8.4.2 (SB 81); *Phil*. 5.44; *Clu*. 135; *S. Rosc*. 116.

[38] There are two subsequent occurrences of the first person plural possessive adjective: *nostra amicitia* (3.1-2), cited as one reason why Cicero felt compelled to express disappointment at Pompey's letter, and *nostrae necessitudinis* (3.2-6), cited as one reason why Cicero expected congratulations from Pompey on the former's handling of the Catilinarian conspiracy.

[39] Cf. *Fam*. I.7.9 (SB 18), where Cicero praises Lentulus for the same thing (see below, p. 29) and 3.10.7 (SB 73) where he again assigns this quality to himself (see below, p. 41).

universal positive reaction to Cicero's actions regarding the Catilinarian conspiracy. In the *de Lege Manilia* Cicero uses the phrase *in orbe terrarum* within the context of the universal fame of Pompey's name and deeds.[40] Cicero has fashioned himself Pompey's equal.[41] The last clause in the sentence contains an echo of the language used earlier in the letter of Cicero's acceptance of the present imbalance of goodwill, *facile…adiunctum esse patiare*, here in reference to the future intimacy that Pompey will accept between the two of them. In the end Cicero and Pompey are standing side by side before the mirror, and the future selves reflected back, are, paradoxically, from the distant past.

Historical *exempla* abound in the letters, usually narrated without adornment, some of them only alluded to.[42] Here Cicero includes such an allusion in the form of an analogy: Cicero will be the Laelius to Pompey's Scipio Aemilianus Africanus.[43] Scipio was renowned equally for his military and political skills;[44] Laelius was given the cognomen *Sapiens* for his wisdom and judgment and was Scipio's closest friend.[45] These historical figures appear in Cicero's dialogues: their oratorical skills are mentioned occasionally in the *de Oratore*,[46] and Laelius is one of the minor speakers in the *Cato Maior*, but they figure more prominently in the *de Republica* and in the *de Amicitia*. In the *de Republica* Cicero develops the notion of the ideal statesman-orator, who is, in the ideal state, the ideal adviser to the great public leaders, as he imagines Laelius had guided Scipio Africanus;[47] in the *de Amicitia* Laelius

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[40] *Man*. 43: *Quod igitur nomen umquam in orbe terrarum clarius fuit? cuius res gestae pares? de quo homine vos,--id quod maxime facit auctoritatem,--tanta et tam praeclara iudicia fecistis?*

[41] See Dugan 2001: 66-67 on Cicero's (in)famous phrase *cedant arma togae* in his *Consulatus suus*, by which he attempted to link his *imperator togatus* to Pompey's *imperator armatus*; cf. Steel 2001: 169.

[42] Albrecht 2003: 67. Though some have suggested that Cicero makes historical allusions to show off his education, Albrecht argues that Cicero would only have used allusions familiar to himself and his addressees, and that consequently they give us insight into the way of thinking of the educated class in the first century. For a similar approach to the philosophical references in Cicero's correspondence, see Griffin 1995.

[43] In the *de Lege Manilia* Cicero mentions Scipio twice: *Man*. 47, where Pompey's good luck is compared to that of Scipio and three other generals, and *Man*. 60, where Scipio's having destroyed both Carthage and Numantia is cited as a precedent for giving one man exceptional commands in times of war. Fronto uses historical models for his emperor; see ch. 4, pp. 165-168.

[44] Zetzel 1995: 9; cf. Hor. *S*. 2.1.72; Cic. *Ver*. 3.209; Quint. *Inst*. 12.10.10; Gel.17.5.1.

[45] Zetzel 1995: 9; cf. Cic. *Tusc*. 1.110; *N.D*. 2.14; *Off*. 1.108; Mart. 4.14.5; for a discussion of rhetoric in the so-called 'Scipionic Circle', see Kennedy 1972: 60-71; cf. Powell 1990: 8-12.

[46] *de Orat*. 1.35, 1.58, 1.215, 1.255, 2.106, 2.253, 2.258, 2.267, 2.268, 2.270, 2.272, 2.286, 2.341, 3.28, 3.45, 3.56, 3.154; there are also references to their breadth of knowledge: 1.211, 2.154, 3.87, to their friendship: 2.22, and to the use of Scipio's death as an abstract commonplace: 2.170, 3.164.

[47] See Gotoff 1993: xix-xx: 'This must have occurred to Cicero on a practical level much earlier. Pompey was his choice, but may be judged to have been an unfortunate one'; see Zetzel 1995: 3-13 for background on the characters in the dialogue. It has been suggested that Cicero had Pompey in mind for monarchical rule when he composed the dialogue, but see Fantham 2004: 314-319.

mourns the death of Scipio and considers the nature of true friendship.[48] Cicero consistently presents the age of Scipio and Laelius as the ideal period of the Roman Republic.

Claiming for himself and Pompey status as the next Laelius and Scipio is making a very grand claim indeed, and it has elicited a strong negative reaction from some scholars. J. Carcopino characterizes the comparison as 'both naïve and wounding', coming from a 'swollen-headed' Cicero, and asserts that Pompey, at the height of his victorious career, would not 'accept Cicero at his own valuation'.[49] V. L. Holliday, while she acknowledges that the comparison of Cicero and Pompey to Laelius and Scipio may be considered 'artless and distasteful', and that the charge that Cicero was guilty of excessive pride is justifiable,[50] argues that Carpocino's characterization of him is overstated. She focusses on Cicero's complaint at *ad Familiares* 5.7.2 that Pompey did not congratulate him on his consulship, arguing that Cicero suspected Pompey of jealousy and pointing out that while he called Pompey a greater man than Scipio, he characterized himself as inferior to Laelius.[51]

Both Carcopino and Holliday take what they find in *ad Familiares* 5.7 at face value. Certainly, Cicero does scold Pompey for not commending his consular achievements, but mildly. The clause *tamen mihi scito iucundas fuisse* softens the force of his disappointment, and by paragraph's end sender and addressee are *nos inter nos*. As for the charge of vanity, when Cicero's grand claim is considered in light of the letter-form, it is perhaps not so outrageous. His use of *patiare* reflects the provisionality of epistolary image-making and the limits of epistolary communication; because the letter is a substitute for face-to-face conversation, Pompey is not there in person to confirm Cicero's image of their relationship. And by ending his letter with an acknowledgment that Pompey must accept Cicero's suggestion before it might become a reality – we will be like Laelius and Scipio, *if you accept it* – the sender recognizes the extravagence of the comparison, and undermines it himself quite deliberately. And this kind of tentativeness, as we shall see, becomes more pronounced in Cicero's imaging of Pompey in the letters sent after his exile and recall to Rome.

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[48] The *Amic*. was written in 44 after the assassination of Caesar. The obituary of Scipio (11-14) is reminiscent of *Phil*. I and may conjure up the memory of Caesar, and the reader may suspect that Cicero put a lot of himself into his portrait of Laelius; see Powell 1990: 7, 16, 82.

[49] Carcopino 1951: 327.

[50] Holliday 1969: 19-20.

[51] Holliday 1969: 20; she cites *Att*. 1.14.3-4 (SB 14) (13 February 61) where Cicero reports that Crassus scored some points in the Senate by praising Cicero's deeds as consul, by which Pompey was very put out, either because he had not earned the credit himself or because he had not realized that Cicero's achievements were of such magnitude as to be willingly heard in the Senate.

Cicero's vision for the future is the idealized past, in which his ideal statesmen and orator worked together for the Republic. Blending past, present and future is a technique he would continue to use, in his correspondence and speeches, to fashion his and Rome's ideal future.[52] The fiction that Cicero has created in this letter represents his alternative to retirement from public life.[53] Cicero enjoys consular *auctoritas*, but needs a powerful figure through whom he can deploy it in practical ways. Four years later Cicero was exiled, and Pompey did not intervene to stop it. He did, however, support Cicero's recall in 57, and in the period following his return to Rome Cicero's connection with Pompey became even more essential for his political relevance.

In the period between Cicero's recall and the beginning of the civil war there are no letters addressed to Pompey included in the correspondence as we have it. However, in his letters to others Cicero does continue to fashion an ideal self for Pompey and creates a picture of their relationship, modelled on the Laelius-Scipio *exemplum*. In the letter examined above, this ideal orator-statesman relationship from the past is evoked; and as in the *de Lege Manilia*, Cicero has exhorted his addressee to behave in a particular way.[54] But there is no indication of how the picture he presents would work in practical terms. In the letters of the *post reditum* period, this picture (cautiously) comes to life, and Cicero uses it to his political advantage.

P. Lentulus Spinther: Reviving Scipio

In 56 Cicero was in the Senate and working on behalf of his friend Lentulus Spinther, governor of Cilicia. The senators were debating about the best course of action in restoring the deposed king of Alexandria, Ptolemy XII.[55] Lentulus has been appointed to the task in 57,[56] but a Sibylline oracle forbade the employment of an army,[57] and the job was put on hold. The question now was whom should be sent.[58] There is a series of letters in the *ad*

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[52] Cf. *Fam*. 4.4 (SB 203), in which Cicero's future under Caesar is made identical with his Republican past; see ch. 2, pp. 69-71. Riggsby 2002 explores Cicero's use of *exempla* from the distant past in his *post reditum* speeches, in which Cicero attempts to convert the recent political past into an exemplary form of the more distant past; see also Dugan 2001: 55 on Cicero's attempt to erase events he wanted removed from the record in the years following his consulship. This kind of nostalgia for an ideal distant past is taken up by Symmachus in the *Relationes*; see ch. 5.

[53] Gotoff 1993: xix: 'Cicero was too resilient, too ambitious, and too optimistic for that'.

[54] See above, p. 10.

[55] See Steel 2001: 229-230.

[56] Dio 39.12.3.

[57] *Fam*. 1.7.4 (SB 18); Dio 39.15.

[58] *Q. fr*. 2.2.3 (SB 6); Dio 39.16; Plu. *Pomp.* 49; cf. Plu. *Cato Min*. 35.2f.

Familiares, in which Cicero keeps his friend informed of the progress of the senatorial debates on the subject of the king's restoration, including his own efforts to win back the assignment for Lentulus. As is reflected in the forensic speeches from this period, Cicero is keen to repay those who had supported him in exile and pushed for his recall, and Lentulus is such a friend. Cicero's oratory in the *post reditum* period is focussed on thanking his friends, attacking his enemies and defending himself.[59] This is true in his correspondence as well, including these letters addressed to Lentulus.

In the end, Lentulus did not restore the king; that was done by the governor of Syria, A. Gabinius in 55.[60] For our purposes what is of interest is the prominent role Pompey plays in this episode and the steps Cicero takes to win him over. As in the letter examined above, Cicero and Pompey are separated at the beginning of this series of letters; Cicero acknowledges in the first letter that his personal *auctoritas* has been damaged by exile, but Lentulus' situation provides motivation for the sender to attempt to get closer to Pompey, so as to influence him to support Lentulus. As the letters proceed, the two individuals are moved closer together and in the end fashioned as the ideal adviser and statesmen. This is accomplished in part by means of the identity of Lentulus: Cicero uses epistolary discourse to identify himself with his addressee, thereby improving his post-exilic self. At the same time, the kind of tentativeness identified in *ad Familiares* 5.7 is present here.

Ad Fam. I.1 (SB 12), 13 January 56 BC

The focus of this letter is the distance between Cicero and Pompey, emphasized by the juxtaposition of a number of images: of Cicero's relationship with Pompey, of Cicero's relationship with Lentulus, of Lentulus' relationship with Pompey and of Pompey himself. This letter is 'written to the moment',[61] which is to say that the sender presents the events narrated with a sense of immediacy (i.e. predominantly in present tense with abrupt shifts in tone), and this, as we shall see, brings out the tentativeness of Cicero's status in relation to and imaging of Pompey. Throughout this series of letters, Cicero defines himself in relation

[59] See above, p. 10 and n. 7. Riggsby 2002: 189-193 explores the political aspects of the *post reditum* forensic speeches, including the ways in which they are tied to Cicero's exile and recall.

[60] Dio 39.55-60; Dio Chrys. 32.70; Cicero did not persuade the Senate in this case, but neither did anyone else; see Steel 2001: 230-232.

[61] Altman 1982: 124: '"Writing to the moment" creates a sense of immediacy and sponteneity that plunges the reader in medias res, so that he feels tuned in to the hotline of events narrated as they occur by the person experiencing them'.

to his addressee and in relation to Pompey; the differences and similarities between the two relationships serve as an indication of Cicero's status from the sender's point of view.

Cicero opens the letter with an elaborate antithesis,[62] which serves as an image of the relationship between sender and addressee and emphasizes Cicero's inability to repay his friend properly (1.1.1.1-5): *Ego omni officio ac potius pietate erga te ceteris satis facio omnibus, mihi ipse numquam satis facio. tanta enim magnitudo est tuorum erga me meritorum ut, quoniam tu nisi perfecta re de me non conquiesti, ego quia non idem in tua causa efficio vitam mihi esse acerbam putem*. Cicero defines sender and addressee in relation to each other with two oppositions: the first between everyone else and himself, the second between himself and Lentulus. In the first, the two opposing entities are set in parallel construction, *satis facio* with the dative, and the second one is negated by *numquam*. In the second pair *erga me* picks up on *erga te* in the previous sentence, emphasizing the difference in what the two men have accomplished for each other. The effect of these constructions is to emphasize the connection between sender and addressee and the weight of what Lentulus did for Cicero by supporting his recall from exile.[63] As this letter (and this series of letters) proceeds, Cicero uses the debt he owes Lentulus as his motivation for getting closer to Pompey.[64]

The passages dealing with Pompey in this letter reflect the same kind of tentativeness discussed in *ad Familiares* 5.7. The tone vacilates between optimism and pessimism about Pompey's stance on whether or not to support Lentulus. The first of these passages is an upbeat description of Cicero and Pompey's efforts on Lentulus' behalf, which betrays the distance between the two (1.1.2.1-8):

Pompeium et hortari et orare et iam liberius accusare et monere ut magnam infamiam fugiat non desistimus. sed plane nec precibus nostris nec admonitionibus relinquit locum. nam cum in sermone

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[62] Wilkinson 1982: 248 cites the letters addressed to Lentulus as evidence for the care with which Cicero composed his 'serious' letters, in contrast with the letters from exile, which 'show much less care' (1982: 248 n. 3). The style of the letters from exile speaks to how talented Cicero is at creating distinct voices appropriate to each situation. In exile the orator-stateman, forced from Rome and its activities, is grieving; for further discussion of emotion, see ch. 2, p. 48 and n. 14.

[63] Cicero repeatedly reminds Lentulus of the debt owed him for his support, a regular feature of the *post reditum* speeches; see *Fam*. 1.4.3 (SB 14); 1.5a.1 (SB 15); 1.7.8 (SB 18) (see below, p. 28); 1.8.6 (SB 19); 1.9.1 (SB 20); cf. *Att*. 9.11A.3 (SB 178A). The word *pietas* is used elsewhere of those principally responsible for his restoration, including Lentulus, Milo and Pompey; cf. *Mil*. 100; of Lentulus: *Fam*. 1.8.2 (SB 19); 1.9.1 (SB 20); *Red. Sen*. 8, *Red. Pop*. 11; of Sestius, Milo and Lentulus: *Sest*. 144; cf. *Planc*. 96. Throughout this period Cicero carries this sense of obligation towards those who helped him, and in the matter of the Alexandrian king he supports Lentulus, despite annoyance with his friend expressed elsewhere (see *Q. fr*. 2.2.3 [SB 6]); a similar sense of obligation would later be cited by Cicero to explain his support of Pompey against Caesar; see below, pp. 44-46 and *Fam*. 6.6.6.4-8 (SB 234).

[64] Cf. *Fam*. 4.13 (SB 225); see ch. 2, pp. 55-57.

cottidiano tum in senatu palam sic egit causam tuam ut neque eloquentia maiore quisquam nec gravitate nec studio nec contentione agere potuerit, cum summa testificatione tuorum in se officiorum et amoris erga te sui.

Cicero's persistence is emphasized through the almost relentless list of infinitives, linked by the conjunction *et*, and by the present tense, which lends immediacy to the tone. It is as if the activity being described is happening as it is narrated.[65] The tense and tone then shift when Pompey's efforts on Lentulus' behalf are described in the present perfect and a list of ablatives of instrument. Whereas Cicero is engaged in one-way, frantic communication with Pompey, Pompey is engaged in daily conversations in the Senate. At the end of the second sentence Cicero emphasizes the connection between Lentulus and Pompey: the reasons for their mutual goodwill are named in parallel constructions. At this stage Cicero, not Lentulus, is distanced from Pompey.

In antithesis with this optimistic description of Pompey's public support for Lentulus is a very different Pompey, as the letter shifts into a more pessimistic tone. A proposal has been put forward that Pompey be sent to Alexandria, and because Pompey's intimate friends are supporting this proposal, questions arise as to Pompey's own feelings on the matter (1.1.3.14-18): *laboratur vehementer; inclinata res est. Libonis et Hypsaei non obscura concursatio et contentio omniumque Pompei familiarum studium in eam opinionem rem adduxerunt ut Pompeius cupere videatur; cui qui nolunt, idem tibi, quod eum ornasti, non sunt amici*. The short sentence summing up their position, with the idiomatic 'it's going downhill',[66] signals a drastic shift from the earlier description of efforts being made on Lentulus' behalf. The use of *videatur* emphasizes Cicero's uncertainty about Pompey's true feelings, despite his public support of Lentulus.[67] As in the previous passage, the present tense lends immediacy, this time emphasizing the sudden change in the sender's expectation of success. This reflects the provisionality of Cicero's image-making; he acknowledges his own uncertainity about whether Pompey is who Cicero says he is.

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[65] On the ways in which epistolary discourse creates the 'impossible present', see Altman 1982: 127-128; Altman identifies three particular temporal impossibilities (1982: 129): (1) of the narrative's being simultaneous with the events narrated (cf. Bray 2003: 17 on the relationship between narrating and experiencing self); (2) of the writer's present remaining valid (the sender can write 'I feel', 'I think', etc., but his present is only valid for that moment, which from the addressee' point of view took place in the past); (3) of a dialogue in the present.

[66] *TLL* 7(i), 943, 83; the phrase is used of battles: Liv. 6.8.7; 9.12.7; *Fam*. 9.9.1 (SB 157); on Cicero's construction of the orator as a quasi-military figure, see Steel 2001: 166f; cf. Fro. *M. Caes*. 3.16.2 (48,19-21); 3.3.2 (37,4-8), where the role of orator is characterized as that of the Roman soldier. On the references to Fronto's text, see ch. 4, n. 2.

[67] Cf. *Q. fr*. 2.2.3 (SB 6): *in ea re Pompeius quid velit, non dispicio: familiares eius quid cupiant, omnes vident; creditores vero regis aperte pecunias suppeditant contra Lentulum.*

Cicero closes his letter in the same way he opened it – with an antithesis, this time between himself, Lentulus' loyal friend, and those whose loyalty towards the addressee is less than it ought to be (1.1.4.7-9). The reassertion of his close connection with the addressee serves in part to bring attention to his uncertain relationship with Pompey, especially because the connection with Lentulus is expressed in both cases by means of antithesis. The images of Pompey, on the other hand, do not match up with each other. Cicero draws a distinction between Pompey's public *persona* and private ambitions; one matches the identity constructed for Pompey by the sender, one does not. This and the other antitheses, along with the abrupt shift from optimism to pessimism accomplished through the sender's attempt to create the illusion of a narrative present, convey a sense of hesitancy. As we shall see, the key to Cicero's re-establishment of his own *auctoritas* is breaking through to the 'private' Pompey.

Ad Fam. I.2 (SB 13), 15 January 56 BC

Things are starting to look up in Cicero's next letter to Lentulus, sent two days later. In the opening of the letter we learn that Cicero has given a speech,[68] and that he *seems* (*visi sum* and *videbatur*) to have regained the goodwill of the Senate. This success is accompanied by a step closer to Pompey; and Cicero presents two images in this letter, of an improved relationship between them and of Pompey himself. These images, however, continue to be provisional, as uncertainty lingers over the reality of Pompey's adherence to the ideal constructed for him.

After describing his progress in the Senate, Cicero presents an image of his communication with Pompey about Lentulus, which is very different from the one in the previous letter (1.2.3.3-8): *Ego eo die casu apud Pompeium cenavi nactusque tempus hoc magis idoneum quam umquam antea, quod post tuum discessum is dies honestissimus nobis fuerat in senatu, ita sum cum illo locutus ut mihi viderer animum hominis ab omni alia cogitatione ad tuam dignitatem tuendam traducere*. The means of communication between Cicero and Pompey has changed: the prounoun signifying Pompey, *illo*, is surrounded by the first person verb, *sum locutus*. In the previous letter, Cicero described his efforts to convince

[68] Cicero describes a deliberative speech, in which he presented a *commemoratio* (cited as a tool of *pathos* in deliberative oratory at *de Orat*. 2.337) of Lentulus' loyalty to the Senate. There is a further reference to *pathos*, by which the orator stirs the emotions of the audience, in *permovere* (see *de Orat*. 2.216, 2.292, 2.178; *Orat*. 20); on Aristotle's rhetorical system including *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* (*Rhet*. 1.2.1356a 1-4), see Fantham 2004: 164-177; May 1988: 1-4. On *ethos*, see n. 12.

Pompey in a rapid-fire list of infinitives, suggesting distance between them; here the syntax reflects a more intimate exchange. Likewise, whereas the passage from the last letter was in present tense, reflecting a frantic one-way conversation, here the tense in in the perfect, the tone more leisurely, reflecting a more relaxed conversation, like those Pompey was having in the Senate in the previous letter. The verb *videor* is used again, as Cicero seems to have succeeded in gaining Pompey's support, but there is room left for doubt. Nevertheless, this image of a friendly exchange of ideas over a meal is the first step toward re-creating Cicero's fiction, bringing himself and Pompey back together.

This image is followed by an improvement to the image of Pompey himself (1.2.3.8-12): *quem ego ipsum cum audio, prorsus eum libero omni suspicione cupiditatis; cum autem eius familiaris omnium ordinum video, perspicio, id quod iam omnibus est apertum, totam rem istam iam pridem a certis hominibus non invito rege ipso consiliariisque eius esse corruptam*. Blame for causing suspicion about Pompey's agenda is deflected from himself to the people around him.[69] Cicero's certainty on this front is emphasized by the use of the indicative throughout, as well as *video,* which echoes the forms of *videor* used above and is juxtaposed here with *perspicio*; both are reinforced by *apertum*.

Cicero has gained confidence in this letter, having spoken in the Senate on Lentulus' behalf, and his successes there parallel his progress with Pompey. As Cicero becomes closer to Pompey (reflected in diction and syntax), his *auctoritas* increases, and Pompey's image is improved: he is raised above suspicion concerning his possible private agenda in the discussions on the king's restoration; yet room for doubt remains. In the letters (omitted for lack of space) sent between this letter and *ad Familiares* 1.7 (SB 18), the uncertainty as to where Pompey stands reflected in *ad Familiares* 1.1 and 1.2 continues to reign.

Ad Fam. I.7 (SB18), late June or July 56 BC

The last letter in the series addressed to Lentulus on Ptolemy's restoration is by far the longest, and while it does not contain much in the way of new subject-matter, it is a more detailed, in-depth account of what is happening in the Senate. Themes treated briefly in the

[69] Cf. *Fam*. 3.10 (SB 73), where Cicero deflects blame from Appius to those around him bad-mouthing Cicero (see below, pp. 40-41). This sort of deflection of blame is utilized by Cicero in the lead up to and during the civil war, in which he claims that it is Pompey's advisers, rather than Pompey, making mistakes; see *Fam*. 6.6.6.1-4 (SB 234). After Caesar's victory, Cicero deflects blame from the dictator to *victoria* herself for the resulting condition of the state; see *Fam*. 4.4.2.12-16 (SB 203) (ch. 2, p. 68). It is a strategy further developed in Symmachus' *Relationes*, where blame is deflected from emperors Gratian and Valentinian II to their advisers; see ch. 5.

previous letters are expanded here. Cicero is very much attached to the fortunes of his friend, as is Pompey, who finally emerges on the side of Lentulus. Stylistically there is a noticeable difference between this and the previous letters; this is the most elaborate, oratorical letter in the group. Along with this rhetorical flare, Cicero has regained his confidence and, thanks to Pompey, *auctoritas*. As Cicero represents it, he and Pompey have become his ideal orator and stateman, the one advising the other.

The whole of the letter is constructed as a series of responses to questions or comments contained in a letter sent by Lentulus, each introduced by *quod*.[70] The sender makes the transition from topic to topic by paraphrasing his addressee's questions, thereby maintaining the illusion of a conversation between correspondents.[71] As Altman points out, epistolary discourse, as a written dialogue, is obsessed with its oral model; it tries to bridge the gap that separates the correspondents.[72] The letter writer attempts the impossible task of making the reader present, and to paraphrase or quote the *You*'s own words from his previous *I*-statement is one way in which the sender is able to conjure up the image of his addressee.[73] This allows the addressee to see himself in his own words, as in a mirror,[74] reminding him of the statement to which the new sender is responding.[75] In this case, it also allows the sender to define himself directly in relation to his addressee at several points along the way, fashioning similar selves for the two men; in this way, Cicero uses the noble status of Lentulus to improve his own standing in the Senate and in relation to Pompey. Therefore, I shall focus on the passages in which sender and addressee are defined and in which developments in Cicero's evolving relationship with Pompey are traced.

Cicero begins by responding to a question from Lentulus about how the various senators are acting towards him (1.7.2.1-2): *Quod scire vis qua quisque in te fide sit et*

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[70] *Quod* is often used for the purpose of changing topic in Latin letters.

[71] See Demetr. *Eloc*. 223-226; Cic. *Fam*. 2.4.1 (SB 48); 12.30.1 (SB 417); Sen. *Ep*. 75.1; Pseudo Libanius 2 (Malherbe); Julius Victor *Ars Rhetorica* 27.1, 17-20.

[72] Altman 1982: 135. This feature of epistolary communication is also important to Fronto and Marcus; see ch. 4; and to Symmachus; see *Rel*. 3; 4 (ch. 5, pp. 178-195).

[73] Altman 1982: 137-138; another way is to create a imaginary dialogue within an individual letter (Altman 1982: 136, 139); see Cic. *Fam*. 4.3.2.4-10 (SB 202) (ch. 2, p. 62). Fictive dialogue also allows the sender to manipulate his addressee (Altman 1982: 139), something Cicero does in his letters to Appius; see *Fam*. 3.7.3.2-9. (below, p. 33). Fronto and Marcus also use dialogue in this way; see Aur. *M.Caes*. 1.4.2 (6,3-7) (ch. 4, p. 125); Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.11 (5,15-20) (ch. 4, pp. 156-157).

[74] See Altman 1982: 97 on the character Merteuil, who 'uses her various readings of letters as mirrors, which she holds up so that others can recognize themselves in the image that their own words have created', in the epistolary novel *Les Liaisons dangereuses*.

[75] This is especially important in a lengthy letter like *Fam*. 1.7; to maintain the illusion of a conversation, the voice of the addressee must be heard (Altman 1982: 137).

voluntate, difficile dictu est de singulis. After a general statement about those who support and oppose Lentulus, Cicero then turns to Pompey and his attitude towards Lentulus in the business of the restoration. He is the only individual, other than Cicero, who is given attention as an individual on this question. Cicero presents another image of his communication with Pompey, and the doubt that hung over Pompey in the previous letters is absent (1.7.3.3-7): *etenim Pompeium, qui mecum saepissime non solum <a> me provocatus sed etiam sua sponte de te communicare solet, scis temporibus illis non saepe in senatu fuisse; cui quidem litterae tuae quas proxime miseras, quod facile intellexerim, periucundae fuerunt*. In the first letter we examined Cicero was doing all the talking, in the second letter they had a discussion, but at Cicero's prompting, and here they have had discussions about Lentulus on Pompey's initiative as well as Cicero's. The syntax reflects the progression: in the episode from the previous letter, where Cicero and Pompey had a discussion about Lentulus, Cicero was the subject of the verb, *locutus sum*; here Pompey is the subject of *communicare solet*. That these discussions have become a regular occurrence is emphasized by *saepissime*. Whereas in the previous letters *videor* was used of Cicero's perceptions of Pompey's thoughts, here he uses *intellego*, indicating certainty.

This image is followed by another one, of an improved Pompey (1.7.3.12-16): *qui mihi cum semper tuae laudi favere visus est, etiam ipso suspiciosissimo Caniniano, tum vero lectis tuis litteris perspectus est a me toto animo de te ac de tuis ornamentis et commodis cogitare*. This is the last occurrence of the verb *videor* in reference to Pompey's position on Lentulus. The superlative *suspiciosissimo* echoes the verbal and noun forms of the same word, used repeatedly in previous letters referring to Pompey's possible ambitions for handling the restoration and to the agenda of his friends.[76] Then the verb changes to *perspicio*, used previously of things Cicero held as factual.[77] The end of the sentence echoes the language at the end of a sentence in *ad Familiares* 1.2, in which Cicero describes his efforts aimed at Pompey to convince him to turn his thoughts to protecting Lentulus' dignity during their dinnertime discussion.[78] A new Pompey is born: public and private have merged, and in both guises Pompey supports Lentulus and Cicero.[79]

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[76] See *Fam*. 1.1.3 (SB 12); 1.1.4; 1.2.3 (SB 13) (above, p. 24).
[77] See *Fam*. 1.2.1 (SB 13) (above, p. 23); 1.2.2; 1.2.3 (above, p. 24); 1.7.1 (SB 18); 1.7.2.
[78] *Fam*. 1.2.3 (SB 13); see above, p. 23.
[79] Holliday 1969: 40-42 discusses Pompey's pretence in this matter, his resulting loss of popularity among Senate and people and Cicero's distrust of him (see *Q. fr*. 2.3 [SB 7]); she ignores this passage in her account of Cicero's views and has missed the progression in Pompey's character over the course of the series. Cicero

At this point there is a drastic shift in tone and style, and the key to this turning point is that Cicero has achieved his aim. He is now able to write with *auctoritas*, thanks to Pompey (1.7.4.1-3): *Qua re ea quae scribam sic habeto, me cum illo re saepe communicata de illius ad te sententia atque auctoritate scribere …* The two ablatives of manner, *cum illo* and *auctoritate*, denoting 'in accordance with', which describe the position from which Cicero writes are separated by an ablative absolute, restating that he and Pompey have often discussed the situation at hand. The repetition of the fact that these discussions have taken place and reiteration that they have happened *saepe*, echoing the *saepissime* from above, provide justification for his claim to *auctoritas*. The rest of this long sentence (146 words) consists of Cicero and Pompey's advice to Lentulus about how to go ahead with the restoration, all of which is in indirect discourse. The following paragraph (1.7.5), much of which is also in indirect discourse, carrying on from the long sentence, is dominated by first person plural verbs. At the end of the subsequent paragraph (1.7.6), Cicero sums up their position, emphasizing that the advice comes from both Cicero and Pompey (*nobis*).

Newly endowed with the *auctoritas* provided by Pompey, Cicero shifts topic, signalled by another paraphrase of the addressee, to his own status in the Senate. Lentulus' question allows Cicero to introduce a characterization of senators according to a set of opposed qualities and to identify himself with his addressee. Throughout this series of letters Cicero uses two words in particular to distinguish between two parties in opposition to each other. One of those words, *levitas*, appears here in reference to Clodius (1.7.7.1-3). Earlier it was used of Cato and Caninius and their actions in the Senate to block Lentulus' case.[80] *Levis* is used to describe Cicero's enemies and the enemies of his friends.

The other party consists of Cicero himself, Lentulus, Pompey and Lentulus' other supporters. They are described as *gravis*, and their actions as acts of *gravitas*.[81] The opposition is explicitly drawn in a brief antithesis (1.7.7.10-13): *poterat utrumque praeclare, si esset fides, si gravitas in hominibus consularibus; sed tanta est in plerisque levitas ut eos non tam constantia in re publica nostra delectet quam splendor offendat*. Up to this point the two qualities have been mentioned in relation to Lentulus' case; here a connection is drawn with Cicero's exile and recall, which emphasizes the sender's connection with his addressee.

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may have distrusted Pompey, but there is more behind his reports to Lentulus. On differences between Cicero's own public and private character in relation to Pompey, see below, pp. 44-46.

[80] *Fam*. 1.5b.3 (SB 16).

[81] *Fam*. 1.1.2 (SB 12) (of Pompey) (see above, p. 22); 1.2.4 (SB 13); cf. *Fam*. 1.5A.4 (SB 15).

As in the *post reditum* speeches, Cicero's characterizations are polarized: everyone is either *levis* or *gravis*. In the speeches, nearly everyone is either completely virtuous or completely corrupt.[82]

The connection between sender and addressee is made explicit, as Cicero then draws a direct parallel between them (1.7.8.1-7):

quod eo liberius ad te scribo quia non solum temporibus his quae per te sum adeptus, sed iam olim nascenti prope nostrae laudi dignitatique favisti, simulque quod video non, ut antehac putabam, novitati esse invisum meae; in te enim homine omnium nobilissimo, similia invidorum vitia[83] *perspexi, quem tamen illi esse in principibus facile sunt passi, evolare altius certe noluerunt.*

Cicero suggests that Lentulus' loss of the task regarding Ptolemy has been caused by the same brand of 'envy' as Cicero's own exile.[84] He rejects his status as a *novus homo* as the reason for his troubles, because Lentulus was treated similarly. D. R. Shackleton Bailey translates *homine omnium nobilissimo* as 'crème de la crème'; indeed the adjective seems to have a double meaning, describing both Lentulus' character and his status as one among the noble class. The effect of this parallel is to grant Cicero himself noble status as Lentulus' equal.

The concessive clause, in which Lentulus' situation is elaborated upon in a metaphor, complicates the parallel. Cicero acknowledges a difference in the injuries sustained by himself and his friend: Lentulus was allowed to remain a leader of state, while Cicero was driven from Rome. Shackleton Bailey argues that taken seriously, this distinction damages Cicero's argument: 'they' would not allow Lentulus to stand higher than themselves, but would not even consider Cicero an equal. As a solution he suggests that the point is meant as a compliment to Lentulus.[85] Certainly, the addressee may not have reacted well to the suggestion that his and Cicero's situations were identical, and this provides another example of Cicero acknowledging the provisionality of his self-protrayal. This is a letter in which the sender has incorporated the words of his addressee, so as to maintain the illusion of face to face conversation, but Lentulus is not there to respond. Though Cicero has made this kind of distinction elsewhere between the crises with which the two men have been faced (one, a

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[82] Riggsby 2002: 181; cf Dugan 2001: 63f on Cicero's characterization of Piso as an 'anti-Cicero' in the *in Pisonem*. Symmachus adopts Cicero's system of categorization according to 'good' and 'bad' values in the *Relationes*; see ch. 5.

[83] Cf. Symm. *Rel*. 3.1, where Symmachus hails the reign of Valentinian II as the end of *vitia*; see ch. 5, p. 181.

[84] A technique also used in addressing Appius; see below, p. 39. Identifying himself with his clients is also a regular feature of Cicero's *post reditum* speeches; see *Sul*. 2; *Flac*. 4-5; *Sest*. 31. See n. 7.

[85] Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 304.

crisis of *dignitas* and the other one of *salus*),[86] and the focus of his parallel is *invidia*, he has also undermined his claim to nobility, acknowledging that Lentulus may not agree with the connection being drawn between them.

Nevertheless, having drawn a parallel between sender and addressee, thereby granting both noble status, Cicero goes on to praise Lentulus for the quality of his mind and of his achievements. The first, *magnitudo animi* (1.7.9.3-4), was attributed to Cicero himself in *ad Familiares* 5.7;[87] the second is drawn out by anaphora with a repeated *magna* (1.7.9.5-7). Cicero then explains that their common experience has prompted him to give Lentulus political advice.[88] Thus, Cicero places himself in the same position as Lentulus and claims for himself his addressee's qualities.

At the end of the letter the sender and addressee are made explicitly identical (1.7.10.9-15):

quod e[g]o ad te brevius scribo quia me status hic rei publicae non delectat, scribo tamen ut te admoneam, quod ipse litteris omnibus a pueritia deditus experiendo tamen magis quam discendo cognovi, tu ut tuis rebus integris discas: neque salutis nostrae rationem habendam nobis esse sine dignitate neque dignitatis sine salute.

Cicero claims that experience grants him the wherewithal to advise Lentulus. Roman political *auctoritas* is tied to practical experience, as one must prove by action as well as ancestry that his *ethos* deserves respect, making public office essential.[89] Cicero has already claimed Pompey's *auctoritas* in this letter, and now claims the experience to back it up. At the end of this sentence he has fused Lentulus and himself together in their experiences; in previous letters he makes a distinction between their situations, which is based on the difference between *dignitas* and *salus*.[90] Here each quality 'must not be considered' except with regard to the other in the case of both men (*nobis*).

Cicero uses *I-You* discourse in this letter in order to make sender and addressee the same – both are noble men of great mind and accomplishment, who are under attack from irresponsible men ruled by envy. In this way, Cicero creates a set of allies for himself, and

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[86] See *Fam*. 1.4.3 (SB 14): *quid enim aut me ostentem, qui, si vitam pro tua dignitate profundam, nullam partem videar meritorum tuorum assecutus, aut de aliorum iniuriis querar, quod sine summo dolore facere non possum*?; cf. *Fam*. 1.2.3 (SB 13); 1.5B.2 (SB 16); 1.7.2 (SB 18); 1.7.8 (SB 18).

[87] *Fam*. 5.7.3 (SB 3); see above, p. 16.

[88] He uses the term *cohortatio*, a term associated with deliberative oratory; see *de Orat*. 2.35; 2.337; cf. 2.50; 2.204. On deliberative oratory in *Att*. 8.3 (SB 153), see Hutchinson 1998: 148f.

[89] May 1988: 7.

[90] See n. 86 above.

uses his connection with Lentulus and Lentulus' connection with Pompey, in order to move himself closer to Pompey, reviving the ideal constructed in *ad Familiares* 5.7. As such, this series of letters offers a summary of Cicero's *post reditum* political agenda. He begins by acknowledging his damaged *auctoritas*, lobbying Pompey from a distance for support, but by the sixth letter is speaking for him. The ideal models that Cicero held up for Pompey in the letter addressed to him, Laelius and Scipio, are not mentioned in these letters. However, Cicero presents himself and Pompey as intimates, one advising the other. At the same time, Cicero continues to infuse his self-portrayal with tentativeness, particularly in his characterization of his and Lentulus' crises as identical. This calls into question the status of the comparison between sender and addressee, and therefore Cicero's status in relation to both Lentulus and Pompey, as his connection with the latter is in part based upon his connection with and similarity to the former.

Appius Claudius Pulcher: The Letter's Day in Court

Appius was the brother of P. Clodius and hence inimical to Cicero in 57,[91] but they were later reconciled.[92] In 51 Cicero was chosen as governor of Cilicia, to succeed Appius.[93] We have Cicero's half of their epistolary exchange (*Fam*. 3) as Cicero was preparing to leave for the province, during his journey and once there. Albrecht categorizes these as formal letters, among those addressed to persons Cicero only met in his official life, though not written in an official capacity.[94] He describes the style of formal letters as simple, sober and factual, only reporting Cicero's own activities in a more rhetorical style.[95] The exchange begins as a friendly one, but it becomes clear that Appius eventually made accusations against his successor, citing hearsay as evidence of Cicero's disloyalty to Appius and the harm he allegedly was doing in the province.

The letters in which Cicero responds to these complaints are perhaps more colourful than Albrecht gives the formal letters credit for. In fact, they represent Cicero's adaptation of

[91] *Att*. 4.1.6 (SB 73).
[92] *Fam*.2.13.2 (SB 93).
[93] Consul in 54 amidst a bribery scandal (*Att*. 4.17.2f [SB 91]); according to Cicero he left Cilicia *eversam in perpetuum* (*Att*. 5.16.2 [SB 109]); see Steel 2001: 198-200.
[94] Albrecht 2003: 70; also included in this category are the letters addressed to C. Antonius Hybrida (*Fam*. 5.5 [SB 5]) and Q. Metellus Celer (*Fam*. 5.2 [SB 2]).
[95] Albrecht 2003: 70.

the judicial oration to the epistolary form.[96] His persuasive aim is to convince Appius of his *fides* towards the addressee; *ethos* becomes central to his arguments, as he endows his own character with honorable qualities while using invective to discredit those who have 'testified' against him.[97] We have already seen in the letters addressed to Lentulus some of the ways in which Cicero constructs his epistolary *persona* by way of his connection with Pompey. While Pompey appears throughout the exchange with Appius, as one reason for their connection (both would support Pompey in the civil war), he is prominent only in those letters in which Cicero is on the defensive, where Cicero's close connection with Pompey becomes evidence in his favour.[98]

It is in this period that the conflict between Pompey and Caesar comes to a head, and later Cicero would claim that war could have been avoided if only he had been in the Senate, advocating peace.[99] When the orator is away from Rome, the letter becomes an alternate venue for using his skills. In the exchange with Appius, Cicero is not able to confront his accuser in person, so he transforms the epistolary space into the courtroom. And, using epistolary discourse, he conjures up the addressee as if in court to be confronted face to face.[100] This allows the sender to characterize himself from the point of view of his accuser (through the use of epistolary dialogue), and then to correct the unfavourable image. However, Cicero does acknowledge the provisionality of his images, practicing caution, while the absence of his addressee allows for the manipulation of Appius.

Ad Fam. III.7 (SB 71), soon after 11 February 50 BC

This is the second of two letters addressed to Appius, both of which focus almost entirely on responding to complaints against Cicero, and it is in this one that Pompey plays an important part.[101] The letter begins with a disclaimer (3.7.1.1-4): *Pluribus verbis ad te scribam cum plus*

[96] See Hoffer 2003 on *Fam*. 5.1-2 (SB 1-2), an argument between political friends Cicero and Metellus Celer, conducted in the court of public opinion in 'open' letters; cf. Fro. *M. Caes*. 1.4-5 (see ch. 4, pp. 123-131); 3.16; *Ant*. 2.2; Symm *Rel*. 21 (see ch. 5, pp. 200-208).

[97] On Cicero's presentation of himself as the wise man as governor (explicitly in contrast to Appius) in his letters addressed to Atticus from Cilicia, see Steel 2001: 197-200.

[98] Among the letters addressed to Appius not discussed here, Pompey is mentioned in passing in *Fam*. 3.8 (SB 70) and 3.9 (SB 72).

[99] *Fam*. 4.1.1 (SB 150); *Brut*. 7, see Steel 2003: 207f.

[100] On the ways in which epistolary discourse attempts to bridge the gap between correspondents, see above, p. 25 and nn. 71-74.

[101] The first, *Fam*. 3.8 (SB 70), concerns the money set aside for deputations sent on behalf of Appius to the Senate to commend the ex-governor's administration (Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 366). Cicero revives his defence against the charge that he prevented these deputations from delivering their commendations by cancelling the monies set aside for the purpose in *Fam*. 3.10 (SB 73); see n. 150.

oti nactus ero. haec scripsi subito, cum Bruti pueri Laodiceae me convenissent et se Romam properare dixissent. itaque nullas iis praeterquam ad te et ad Brutum dedi litteras. This is a common disclaimer in Latin correspondence, by which the sender seeks forgiveness for a brief letter or fewer letters than usual over a period of time due to being busy.[102] That Cicero is in a hurry is reflected in the style of this opening, which is expressed in short, simple sentences, without participles and leaving out all but the absolutely necessary information to explain the circumstances of the letter. Cicero has also 'named the postman',[103] who is waiting for the sender to complete his letter, anxious to continue on to Rome. This contributes to the sense of haste, and implies that the sender has composed the letter without care. However, this passage is followed by a more polished forensic speech, which belies Cicero's rushed tone. This represents a strategy of caution, which would enable the sender to back away from the arguments that follow, in the event that the letter does not have the desired effect.

For the most part, the letter follows the traditional arrangement of the forensic speech, but after this opening, Cicero jumps right into the content of his defence, without the traditional prologue.[104] Of course, even without the sense of haste, a prologue, intended to make the audience well-disposed, attentive and receptive, may not have been deemed necessary in this instance. Within the discussion on arrangement in Book Two of the *de Oratore*, Antonius explains that the prologue must be proportionate to the subject matter and that in cases that are insignificant and do not attract much attention, it may be best to begin with the subject matter itself.[105] This approach may be especially suited to a defence delivered within a letter. Unless the epistle was intended to be circulated more broadly, it follows that the individual addressee would be aware of the background to the situation.[106] In this instance, Cicero is addressing the alledged victim of his crimes, who directly made him aware of the some of the charges against him.

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[102] Cf. *Fam*. 8.7.1 (SB 92); 11.29.3 (SB 335); 12.30.1 (SB 417); *Att*. 9.6A (SB 172A); Fro. *de Fer. Als*. 4.1 (235, 2-5) (see ch. 4, p. 144).

[103] See Altman 1982: 136.

[104] On the traditional parts of speech and Cicero's adaptation of the system, see May and Wisse 2001: 28-32; Albrecht 2003: 79-85; on Aristotle's treatment of *dispositio* (arrangement) in the *Rhetoric* and its influence on the *de Oratore*, see Fantham 2004: 177-185. The traditional rules are riduculed as rigid at *de Orat*. 2.80-83; Cicero offers a modified version, emphasizing the importance of appropriateness to the case at hand and allows for adaptation or exclusion of the parts; see *de Orat*. 2.315-322.

[105] *de Orat*. 2.320.

[106] On the indications of an 'open' forensic letter, see Hoffer 2003: 93-94; cf. Symm. *Rel*. 21, an 'open' forensic letter in the sender's defence (see n. 96).

Cicero abruptly shifts into the judicial world, and the structure of the rest of the letter is a combination of *narratio*, an account of what (allegedly) happened, and *argumentatio*, consisting of proof of one's points and refutation of the opponent's.[107] He begins by characterizing himself, according to the accusations made by Appius (3.7.2.1-9):

Legati Appiani mihi volumen a te plenum querelae iniquissimae reddiderunt, quod eorum aedificationem litteris meis impedissem. eadem autem epistula petebas ut eos quam primum, ne in hiemem incederent, ad facultatem aedificandi liberarem, et simul peracute querebare quod eos tributa exigere vetarem prius quam ego re cognita permisissem. genus enim quoddam fuisse impediendi, cum ego cognoscere non <possum> nisi cum ad hiemem me ex Cilicia recepissem.

Each occurrence of the word for 'complaint' is followed by a statement of the complaint, expressed with *quod* and the subjunctive, indicating a supposed or suggested reason (rarely a factual one).[108] In the last sentence, we must understand something like 'you'll say that…'[109] in the absence of a governing verb. This time the supposed reason is given in a *cum* clause, again with the first person perfect subjunctive. Right from the beginning the syntax suggests that these are false charges, or rather, that the image of Cicero constructed by Appius in his letter of complaint is incorrect.

Moving on to the *argumentatio*,[110] Cicero constructs a fictive dialogue between himself and his addressee, in which he engages directly with the imagined arguments of his opponent. This allows the sender to both conjure up the image of his addressee, bridging the gap between them, and construct for Appius an easily refuted position.[111] Cicero continues the characterization of himself from Appius' perspective, and his accusers are sketched as well (3.7.3.2-9):

primum, cum ad me aditum esset ab iis qui decerent a se intolerabilia tributa exigi, quid habuit iniquitatis me scribere ne facerent ante quam ego rem causamque cognossem? nos poteram, credo, ante hiemem; sic enim scribis. quasi vero ad cognoscendum ego ad illos, non illi ad me venire debuerint! 'tam longe?' inquis. quid? cum dabas iis litteras per quas mecum agebas ne eos impedirem quo minus ante hiemem aedificarent, non eos ad me venturos arbitrabare?

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[107] See n. 104.
[108] *OLD* s.v. *quod* 11b; cf. Woodcock 1959: 196, §240.
[109] Shakleton Bailey 2001(i): 307 translates: 'That, you say, was one way of stopping them…'
[110] In the *de Oratore*, the two parts of argumentation (proof and refutation) are closely linked, since one cannot prove a point without refuting his opponent, nor refute his opponent without proving a point; see *de Orat*. 2.331-332. In the *Orator*, the *argumentatio* is often intertwined with *narratio*; see *Orat*. 36; Albrecht 2003: 81. The close relationship between the two is reflected in Cicero's arguments against Appius' charge; he combines refutation with his own correct version of events.
[111] See n. 73; on dialogue in Cicero's letters, see Hutchinson 1998: 113-138, ch. 5, 'Dialogue', and in Cicero's forensic speeches, see Albrecht 2003: 82 (e.g. *Cael*. 36).

Cicero refutes in a rhetorical question the notion that he was unjust, and supplies a series of increasingly ridiculous counter-arguments from Appius.[112] The first of these includes an ironic *credo*; he uses this verb in a similar way in the *pro Caelio*, when addressing Clodia and hypothesizing that her brother must have had nightmares since he was sleeping in her bed.[113] The *quasi* beginning the following sentence is another ironical introduction, used to similar effect in the *pro Cluentia*, where Cicero ironically suggests that he had not addressed an issue raised by his opponent.[114] Cicero has used Appius' own words to construct an image of the sender, as the target of ridiculous charges, and of the addressee, as unreasonable and foolish.

Cicero then corrects Appius' version of events and thereby the image of himself (3.7.3.10-14): *tametsi id quidem fecerunt ridicule; quas enim litteras adferebant ut opus aestate facere possent, eas mihi post brumam redididerunt. sed scito et multo pluris esse qui de tributis recusent quam qui exigi velint et me tamen quod te velle existimem esse facturum. de Appianis hactenus*. This narration/argumentation is written in a more simple, sober style than what preceeds it. Though the plain style is usually predominent in the *argumentatio*, different levels of style are often juxtaposed.[115] Here Cicero uses a straightforward sentence with main verbs in the indicative to set Appius straight on how the Appians handled the situation, but maintaining the mocking tone of his characterization of them with the adverb *ridicule*.[116] The use of *hactenus* in the last sentence signals the end of Cicero's arguments against this charge.[117]

The structure then repeats: a charge against Cicero followed by his *argumentatio* against it. The charge is stated in the same way as those above (*queror* followed by *quod* and the subjunctive), and it is followed by an ironically absurd characterization of Cicero (introduced by *scilicet*).[118] In his argument against the charge that Cicero did not go out to meet Appius when he was at Iconium, he begins by giving his 'correct' version of events, and this time calls on a witness to lend strength to his case. He names Varro, a *familiarissimus* of Appius, calling on someone from among the circle of his accusers.[119] At last he directly

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[112] On Cicero's use of judicial irony in his speeches, see Albrecht 2003: 21.
[113] Cf. *Cael*. 36 (addressing Clodia); cf. *Att*. 11.19.1 (SB 233); *Phil*. 1.11; Liv. 4.57.9; *N.D*. 1.86; Pl. *Poen*. 1016.
[114] Cic. *Clu*. 138; cf. *Fam*. 7.27.1 (SB 148); *Ver*. 3.118; Pl. *Men*. 639; Ter. *An*. 874; Flor. *Epit*. 1.28(2.12.9).
[115] See Albrecht 2003: 81.
[116] Cf. *Q. Rosc*. 19; *Ver*. 4.148; Pl. *Trin*. 905; Ter. *Hec*. 668.
[117] Cf. *Att*. 11.4A (SB 214).
[118] *Fam*. 3.7.4.1-4; for a similar use of *scilicet*, see *Vat*. 8; cf. *Sul*. 67; Hor. *S*. 2.6.58; Verg. *A*. 4.379-380.
[119] This technique is used by Fronto, who calls upon philosophers when making an argument to Marcus Aurelius in favour of rhetoric (see Fro. *M.Caes.* 3.16.1 [48, 1-5]) and by Symmachus, who calls upon a Catholic bishop when defending himself against Christian accusers (see *Rel*. 21 [ch. 5, pp. 203-204]).

refutes the charge, and explicitly corrects his self-identity (3.7.4.12-5.2): *an ego tibi obviam non prodirem, primum Ap. Claudio, deinde imperatori, deinde more maiorum, deinde, quod caput est, amico, qui in isto genere multo etiam ambitiosius facere soleam quam honos meus et dignitas postulat? sed haec hactenus*. The *an* introduces a direct question with the notion of surprise or indignation,[120] and Cicero uses anaphora with the repeated *deinde* to list the reasons he had for going out to meet Appius, the last of which is Cicero's character – his honor and dignity require it. The rhetorical question invites the reader to draw the conclusion that it is unthinkable that Cicero would not go out to meet Appius.

Having corrected his self-identity, Cicero inserts a digression in the form of an excursus on *nobilitas*,[121] before the epilogue and in direct response to another quotation from Appius. This allows him to reinforce his own good character and to define the addressee, in opposition with himself (3.7.5.2-8): '*quidni? Appius Lentuluo, Lentulus Appio processit obviam, Cicero Appio noluit*.' *quaeso, etiamne tu has ineptias, homo mea sententia summa prudentia, multa etiam doctrina, plurimo rerum usu, addo urbanitatem, quae et virtus, ut Stoici rectissime putant?*[122] *ullam Appietatem aut Lentulitatem valere apud me plus quam ornamenta virtutis existimas*? The nouns *Appietas* and *Lentulitas*, that is, nobility or the quality of belonging to the illustrious families of Appii or Lentuli, are Cicero's inventions.[123] Cicero argues that the quality of the man is more important than his name. This reflects the sender's status as a 'new man', who would naturally argue that ancestry is less important, given that in his own case he had to depend upon his own qualities to attain consular status. But he has also refused to be cowed by Appius' noble birth.[124]

After this characterization of Appius, Cicero gives another of himself, in which Pompey makes his first appearance in the letter to lend Cicero *auctoritas* (3.7.5.12-20):

postea vero quam ita et cepi et gessi maxima imperia ut mihi nihil neque ad honorem neque ad gloriam acquirendum putarem, superiorem quidem numquam, sed parem vobis me speravi esse factum. nec mehercule aliter vidi existimare vel Cn. Pompeium, quem omnibus qui umquam fuerunt,

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[120] *OLD* s.v. *an* 1a.

[121] According to the traditional system of the parts of a speech, a digression is regularly recommended between the argumentation and epilogue; see n. 104. In practice, digressions, which may have the character of an *amplificatio* (in which the present case is viewed within a larger context), most often appear within the *argumentatio*; see Albrecht 2003: 82; cf. *Caec*. 73-77, where Cicero considers the case at hand within the broader context of the definition of civil law; on Cicero's definition in this speech and elsewhere see Harries 2002.

[122] Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 372: the basis for Cicero's statement is unknown. It is has been suggested that if we take *virtus* as 'an admirable quality' *urbanitas* could stand for a cultivated outlook. 'But Cicero must be thinking of a Greek equivalent, perhaps ἀστειότης'.

[123] Albrecht 2003: 142-144; Shackleton Bailey 2001(i): 310, n. 4.

[124] Cf. *Fam*. 5.2 (SB 2); see Hoffer 2003: 95, n. 8.

vel P. Lentulum, quem mihi ipsi antepono. tu si aliter existimas, nihil errabis si paulo diligentius, ut quid sit εὐγένεια *[quid sit nobilitas]*[125] *intellegas, Athenodorus, Sandonis filius, quid de his rebus dicat attenderis.*

The Greek word εὐγένεια, 'nobility', is the first in this letter, and there is a concentration of Greek in the final paragraphs, all of which has the effect of softening Cicero's strong reproaches of Appius.[126] As in one of the letters addressed to Lentulus,[127] Cicero claims noble status, this time by placing himself in the same category as Pompey and Lentulus.[128] He also sets up an antithesis between Pompey and Lentulus on one side and Appius alone on the other through the repetition of *aliter existimare*. He has, syntactically, isolated Appius from the others. Having endowed his own character with nobility, Cicero at the same time has managed to strip it from his addressee.

So ends the *digressio*, signalled by *sed ut ad rem redeam* in the next line (3.7.6.1).[129] Traditionally the digression is meant to be followed by the epilogue, where, according to Antonius in the *de Oratore*, the orator should conclude most often by amplifying his points (*rebus augendis*), either by kindling or soothing the emotions of the jury (*pathos*).[130] The strongest appeal to the emotions, above all *misercordia*, is expected at the end of an oration.[131] As Albrecht explains, there are several exceptions to this rule, speeches in which for one reason or another a profusion of *pathos* was inappropriate. Three of these are worth mentioning in connection to the letter at hand. In the *pro Ligario* and *pro Rege Deiotaro* Cicero has only to persuade an individual judge, Caesar, and he concludes in a deliberately simple and noble key.[132] In the *pro Balbo*, he speaks after the authoritative Crassus and Pompey, and is allowed to show confidence.[133]

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[125] See Shackleton Bailey's apparatus *ad loc*.; he considers the clause a 'blatant gloss' of εὐγένεια; see Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 372-373, but see Baldwin 1992: 7, n. 49: some editions read ἐξοχή, 'eminence' (see *LSJ* s.v. ἐξοχη 2; cf. *Att*. 4.15.7 [SB 90]) instead of *nobilitas*; the two Greek words are not pure synonyms and Cicero himself may be the glossator.

[126] Baldwin 1992: 7 asserts that the Greek crowded at the end of this letter has the 'obvious purpose of smoothing and disarming Appius' reactions to Cicero's careful but palpable reproaches about the state of their relationship ...'; cf. Hutchinson 1998: 15; Steel 2001: 199: '…despite all these indications that Appius was what Cicero must have considered to be an appallingly irresponsible governor, Cicero is desperately anxious to avoid incurring any hostility'.

[127] *Fam*. 1.7.8.1-7 (SB 18); see above, p. 28.

[128] His characterization of Pompey, as the man to be esteemed above all others, echoes the characterization of the statesman in the *post reditum* speeches, in which Pompey is a constant presence (e.g. *Red. Pop*. 16; *Red. Sen.* 7); see Riggsby 2002: 176.

[129] Cf. *Planc*. 67.

[130] *de Orat*. 2.332; see n. 104 above.

[131] On the regular style of the *peroratio*, see Albrecht 2003: 82.

[132] Albrecht 2003: 83.

[133] Albrecht 2003: 83.

In the conclusion to his letter Cicero first sums up his *propositio* for the whole of his defence: he wants Appius to believe that Cicero is not only his friend but his very good friend (3.7.6.1-2). In the remainder, while he certainly attempts to stir Appius to a final decision in Cicero's favour with a bold analogy, *misercordia* is not the emotion to which he appeals (3.7.6.2-10):

profecto omnibus meis officiis efficiam ut ita esse vere possis iudicare. tu autem si id agis ut minus mea causa, dum ego absim, debere videaris quam ego tua laborarim, libero te ista cura: πάρ ἔμοιγε καὶ ἄλλοι / οἵ κέ με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δὲ μητίετα Ζεύς. *si autem natura es* φιλαίτιος*, illud non perficies, quo minus tua causa velim; hoc adsequere ut, quam in partem tu accipias, minus laborem.*

In this passage Cicero pushes Appius further and further away from himself. Appius has already been separated from Lentulus and Pompey; here Cicero joins the other two. In the first part of the second sentence he sets up an antithesis between what Appius might do for Cicero, and what Cicero has done for Appius in the past. Cicero then quotes from Book One of the *Iliad*, where Agamemnon invites Achilles to return home.[134] Cicero's Zeus is Pompey.[135] According to Albrecht, it is rare to see a Greek quotation, which usually has a humourous effect, in a formal letter.[136] But again, the Greek in this passage is meant to soften the blow of Cicero's harsh message.[137] Not only is Appius distanced from Cicero and his supporters, but to stand against Cicero is to stand against a god. In the last sentence there is another antithesis, this time between what Cicero will not be (*minus tua causa velim*) and what he will be (*minus laborem*) in the event that Appius chooses the option offered at the beginning of this passage. By the end Cicero has washed his hands of Appius, confident with Pompey at his side.

J. M. May has examined Cicero's use of Pompey in the published version of the *pro Milone*, in which Cicero acknowledges that his own dignity and *auctoritas* are eclipsed by Pompey's and, by identifying himself, his client and their efforts with Pompey, invests his

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[134] *Il.* 1.174f.

[135] Baldwin 1992: 7 reads the quotation as the 'compliment of an Homeric comparison' paid to Appius, but it is plainly not in reference to the addressee: in the first half of the sentence Appius is relieved of any obligation to act on Cicero's behalf; that Cicero has others, before all Zeus, to stand by him is presented as the reason that the sender does not need Appius' support; Pompey is also characterized as divine elsewhere (see n. 139); Shackleton Bailey 2001(i): 311, n. 5: '"Wise Zeus" seems to indicate Pompey'; on divinity in the *de Lege Manilia*, see Griffin 1933.

[136] Albrecht 2003: 64. Albrecht begins with the assertion that Cicero usually avoids quotations in his orations. He does, on the other hand, quote Greek poetry (ancient rather than new, tragedy rather than comedy) in the letters, usually with a humourous effect. As a result they are largely absent from formal letters and those written in a depressed mood; cf. Hutchinson 1998: 13-16.

[137] See above, p. 36 and n. 126.

own *ethos* with persuasion.[138] In that speech Cicero characterizes Pompey as eminently wise, endowed, in fact, with divine wisdom.[139] In his letter to Appius, two years later, he takes this characterization even further. Cicero does not just have a mortal blessed with god-like wisdom in his corner, but wise Zeus himself. This serves a purpose similar to that in the *pro Milone*; Cicero has used the figure of Pompey to construct a persuasive, authoritative *persona*, and as in the *pro Balbo*, the support of Pompey allows Cicero to conclude with confidence here.

Using epistolary discourse, Cicero conjured up the image of his addressee in order to refute his accusations, and in order to define sender and addressee so as to endow his own identity with nobility and strip it from Appius, isolating him from Pompey. At the same time, the sender has distanced himself to some extent from his message, by downplaying the quality of his 'speech' in the opening passage of the letter[140] and by expressing his strong complaints in Greek.[141] Judging from the opening sentence of Cicero's next letter to Appius, the letter seems to have had the desired effect (*Fam*. 3.9.1.1 [SB 72]): *Vix tandem legi litteras dignas A. Claudio, plenas humanitatis, offici, diligentiae.*[142]

Ad Fam. III.10 (SB 73), April (1st half) 50 BC

In April of 50 Appius found himself charged with *maiestas* by Dolabella,[143] and he seems to have contacted friends and allies to gather support. Though Cicero and Appius have patched things up, the letter to which Cicero responds has put him on the defensive again. This letter represents another example of an abbreviated forensic speech, but in a different configuration from the previous letter.[144] Appius has expressed concern that Cicero would not support him, and it is to this that Cicero is primarily responding, but he also revives his defence against

[138] See May 1988: 129-140; for the speech as a practical application of Cicero's theoretical exposition of rhetorical teaching in the *de Oratore*, including his use of *ethos*, see May 2001; on published versus delivered speeches, see Riggsby 1999: 178-184; Albrecht 2003: 17-18.

[139] *Mil*. 21: *homo sapiens atque alta et divina quadam mente praeditus multa vidi ...*; see May 1988: 130; cf. *Marc*. 1, where divine wisdom is granted to Caesar; on Caesar's divine attributes in that speech, see Levene 1997: 68-77. Cf. Plin. *Pan*. 80.5. The notion that the emperor is Juppiter's co-reagent on earth becomes a regular feature in imperial panegyric.

[140] Fronto and Marcus similarly downplay the seriousness of their epistolary forensic speeches; see ch. 4.

[141] See n. 126.

[142] Cicero himself comments on the style of *Fam*. 3.7 and 3.8 (SB 70) at *Fam*. 3.11.5.3-11 (SB 74).

[143] Shackleton Bailey 1977(i): 375: The grounds for the charge are unknown, but may have been that Appius went to his province without a *lex curiata* or that he stayed beyond the prescribed thirty days after his successor's arrival. He was acquitted.

[144] The prologue and *argumentatio* are included, without the *digressio* and *amplificatio* from the conclusion; on the parts of the forensic speech, see n. 104.

earlier, direct accusations, including some already answered in previous correspondence. The tone of this letter is very different from the last; in his defence Cicero is less aggressive, focussing on his own character and his restored connection with Appius, rather than attacking his accusers.

The sender's *propositio* in this case is that Cicero, as a good friend of Appius, will stand by him and that Appius has no reason to suspect otherwise. Cicero re-builds the foundation of his connection with Appius before making his arguments in response to the charges against him. We saw in the last letter the strategies used to isolate Appius from Pompey and Cicero; here he is reunited with them. The evidence utilized is primarily character, that of Appius, his accusers and Cicero himself. I shall focus on the passages in which Cicero, Appius and Pompey are defined in relation to each other.

In this letter, Cicero uses epistolary discourse to define sender and addressee in the same way that he defined himself in relation to Lentulus in the earlier group of letters, but to a different end. Again Cicero categorizes himself, his addressee and their enemies according to a polarized value system – in the opening of the letter Appius' accusers are described as being driven by *invidia* (3.10.1.8),[145] Cicero asserts that he will use his *gravitas* in opposing them on Appius' behalf (3.10.1.18),[146] and he makes a distinction between what Appius' crisis is (one of *dignitas*) and what it is not (one of *salus*) (3.10.1.15-16).[147] Whereas Cicero used this antithesis and his identification with Lentulus in order to improve his self-identity and come closer to Pompey, in this case he is already on the side of Pompey, and uses his categorization to bring Appius back to the sender's side. In the previous letter to Appius Cicero defined sender (*I*) and addressee (*You*) in opposition, by correcting Appius' erroneous image of the sender; having convinced Appius that Cicero's version of himself is the correct one, the sender adjusts his image of Appius, so as to define *I* and *You* as possessing similar, 'good' qualities.

After the initial characterization of Appius' accusers and of Cicero himself, two further steps are taken in the prologue to reverse the divisions Cicero created in the last letter between Appius and Pompey, and between Appius and himself. The first reunification is with Pompey, as Cicero compares his regard for them both (3.10.2.3-7): *nollem accidisset tempus in quo perspicere posses quanti te, quanti Pompeium, quem unum ex omnibus facio, ut debeo,*

[145] Cf. *Fam*. 1.7.8,1-7 (see above, p. 33); *Att*. 3.7.2 (SB 52).
[146] Cf. *Fam*. 1.7.7; see above, pp. 27-28.
[147] See above, p. 28 and n. 86.

plurimi, quanti Brutum facerem; quamquam in consuetudine cottidiana perspexisses, sicuti perspicies. Appius is identified with Pompey and Brutus, but juxtaposed with Pompey, and the two of them are separated from Brutus by the relative clause recognizing Pompey's greatness.[148] The reunification with Cicero is accomplished by identifying sender with addressee;[149] he relates Appius' troubles to his own, comparing the support Appius is receiving from his friends now to the support Cicero received in his own exile (3.10.4.4-9).

The second half of the letter is taken up by Cicero's argumentation. As in the previous letter, there are two statements of the charges against the sender, each of which is followed by his arguments against them. I shall focus on the second,[150] since it is a restatement of the first and since Cicero uses his connection with Pompey as evidence in his favour. In this case, instead of responding to charges expressed by Appius himself, Cicero is dealing with what others have said about him (3.10.7.1-4):

Te autem quibus mendaciis homines levissimi onerarunt! non modo sublatos sumtus sed etiam a procuratoribus eorum qui iam profecti essent repetitos et ablatos eamque causam multis omnimo non eundi fuisse. quererer tecum atque expostularem ni, ut supra scripsi,[151] purgare me tibi hoc tuo tempore quam accusare te mallem idque putarem esse rectius. itaque nihil de te, quod crediderit, de me, quam ob rem non debueris credere, pauca dicam.

In describing the role he will take in Appius' defence above Cicero cited his own *gravitas* as one of the tools he would use. His detractors are described with the opposite, *levis*, emphasized by the superlative form, completing the antithesis between Cicero and his accusers. The diction expressing what Cicero ought to do with Appius, *expostulo*, and *queror*, echoes the previous letter in a description of what Appius had done to Cicero. He would be justified in doing what Appius did to him, but will not. In the *praeteritio*, blame is deflected from Appius himself to those who have spoken against Cicero;[152] at the same time that the sender shows himself anxious to extend goodwill to his addressee, Appius' folly in

[148] Cf. *Fam*. 3.7.5 (SB 71) (see above, p. 35); Holliday 1969: 59 cites the present passage and *Fam*. 3.10.10 (see below, pp. 41-43) as examples of Cicero's extravagant praise of Pompey in the period leading up to the civil war, when Pompey had declared himself onside with the Senate. She does not consider the persuasive purpose of such praise, by which Cicero continues to reinforce his ideal Pompey as ideal statesman.

[149] Cf. *Fam*. 1.7.8-9; see above, p. 28.

[150] In the first, the 'charge' is vague: Appius' letter indicates some doubt about Cicero's goodwill towards him. In response Cicero refutes the notion that he ever stopped a deputation from going to Rome on Appius' behalf (see n. 101), suggesting that if he had hated Appius, it would have done no harm to his enemy and exposed his hostility, something which Cicero would not be so stupid as to do (3.10.6). These ideas are expanded upon in the second charge and *argumentatio*.

[151] *Fam*. 3.10.6.1-3.

[152] For further examples of deflection of blame, see n. 69.

believing these liars is also emphasized, through the assertion that Cicero will avoid that subject (*de te*) which is in parallel construction with the subject he will take up (*de me*).

Cicero keeps his promise, and his arguments are entirely based on *ethos* and whether or not Cicero is the sort of person who would do the things he is supposed to have done. He begins by describing himself in positive terms (3.10.7.8-13): *nam si me virum bonum, si dignum iis studiis eaque doctrina cui me a pueritia dedi,*[153] *si satis magni animi, non minimi consili, in maximis rebus perspectum habes, nihil in me non modo perfidiosum et insidiosum et fallax in amicitia sed ne humile quidem aut ieiunum debes agnoscere*. Cicero sets up another antithesis, with three positive attributes on one side, and five negatives on the other, which are deemed unable to co-exist in the same character. Two of the positive attributes, greatness of mind and sound policy, echo *ad Familiares* 5.7.3, in which Cicero claims these characteristics for himself with regard to his consulship and asserts that he has them in sufficient magnitude that Pompey will be pleased to be his friend and ally.[154] The first of the negative qualities also appears elsewhere in the correspondence: the actions of those opposing Lentulus in the Senate are described as *perfidia*.[155] Again Cicero deploys his schema of qualities, onto to which one could map the figures who appear both his letters and speeches.[156]

The sender then offers a description of his relationship with Pompey in a series of rhetorical questions aimed at the addressee; this allows him to conjure up his addressee and to construct Appius' definition of an intimate friendship, which in turn he will claim defines the friends between himself and Pompey (3.10.10.3-10):

etenim, si merita valent, patriam, liberos, salutem, dignitatem, memet ipsum mihi per illum restitutum puto; si consuetudinis iucunditas, quae fuit umquam amicitia consularium in nostra civitate coniunctior? si illa amoris atque officii signa, quid mihi ille non commisit? quid non mecum communicavit? quid de se in senatu, cum ipse abesset, per quemquam agi maluit? quibus ille me rebus non ornatum esse voluit amplissime?

He sets up his description in a series of present general or open conditions, theorizing about what might constitute a close relationship in Appius' eyes and demonstrating how he and

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[153] Cf. *Arch*. 1; 4.

[154] See above, p. 16.

[155] *Fam*. 1.5A.4 (SB 15); cf. *Fam*. 1.2.4 (SB 13); 1.5A.2 (SB 15). The second, *insidiosus*, appears in some of the forensic speeches (*Ver*. 2.192; cf. *Flac*. 87; Plin. *Pan*. 95.3: *insidiosissimo principe* [Domitian]), as does *fallax* (*Scaur*. 42; cf. *Att*. 10.11.1 [SB 202]; *N.D*. 375).

[156] See above, pp. 27-28. In the next paragraph (3.10.8) Cicero argues that his actions towards Appius have been ill-suited to the character, which has been assigned to him by his accusers, pointing out that he has pursued Appius' friendship out of wisdom and because of their common interests, rather than out of treachery. For discussion on the Romans' belief that one's character was constant and that it was impossible to disguise one's true *ethos*, see May 1988: 6-7.

Pompey fit the bill in each case. In response to the first conditional clause, Cicero repeats the debt he owes Pompey for his restoration, a recurring theme in the *post reditum* speeches and letters.[157] The rhetorical questions in response to the last conditional clause paint a picture of the ideal Scipio-Laelius relationship Cicero envisioned for Pompey and himself. The verb *communico*, echoes Cicero's descriptions of his relationship with Pompey in the Lentulus letters, at the important turning-point in that series, where Cicero had become Pompey's adviser.[158] The third rhetorical question in that series indicates a development in their intimacy since the Lentulus letters, where Cicero had acquired the authority to speak on Pompey's behalf; here he has become a stand-in for Pompey in the Senate.

Cicero then cites a particular example of Pompey's regard for him, an instance in which they did not agree, but when Pompey nevertheless graciously accepted Cicero's actions (3.10.10.10-18):

qua denique ille facilitate, qua humanitate tulit contentionem meam pro Milone adversante interdum actionibus suis? quo studio providit, ne quae me illius temporis invidia attingeret, cum me consilio, cum auctoritate, cum armis denique texit suis? quibus quidem temporibus haec in eo gravitas, haec animi altitudo fuit, non modo ut Phrygi alicui aut Lycaoni, quod tu in legatis fecisti, sed ne summorum quidem hominum malevolis de me sermonibus crederet.

Cicero has set up a parallel between the current situation, in which certain people are bad-mouthing Cicero, and the circumstances under which Cicero delivered the *pro Milone*. He adapts the version of events to suit his purposes.[159] In the published version of the speech, Pompey is aligned with Cicero and his client. On the other hand, existing accounts of the trial claim that Cicero was intimidated by the presence of Pompey's troops.[160] This narrative falls somewhere in the middle of the two: although Cicero opposed Pompey, he protected Cicero from *invidia*.

The focus of this passage is a characterization of Pompey and of the men speaking against Cicero. The qualities assigned to them are familiar ones. It is *invidia* that Cicero blames for his own exile, for Lentulus' crisis of *dignitas* in the Senate and for Appius' loss of a Triumph.[161] Cicero has identified himself with his addressee, recalling a time when he

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[157] See n. 63 and below, pp. 44-46.
[158] *Fam*. 1.7.4.1-3 (SB 18) (see above, p. 27); cf. *Fam*. 1.7.3.3-7 (SB 18) (see above, p. 26).
[159] On another instance of Cicero's revising events involving Pompey in the letters (*Att*. 9.10 [SB 177]), see Hutchinson 1998: 166.
[160] Dio 40.54; Plu. *Cic*. 35; cf. *Att*. 9.7B.2 (SB 174B), where Cicero asked Pompey for a bodyguard and presumably obtained it.
[161] *Fam*. 1.7.8 (SB 18) (see above, p. 28); 3.10.1 (SB 73). Appius would no longer be able to be decreed a Triumph after he crossed the ancient city boundary, thus giving up his *imperium*, in order to answer the charges of *maiestas* against him. Appius had acquired the title *imperator* in warfare with the Cilician

needed defence against what is now harming Appius. He also identifies himself with Pompey in two ways. First, he assigns some of the same resources to Pompey in protecting Cicero that in turn Cicero will use to defend Appius, *auctoritas* and *gravitas*, the latter of which is a quality consistently attributed to Cicero and his friends. Second, he assigns to Pompey *consilium*, which appeared within the character sketch of the sender.[162] The remaining characteristic, *animi altitudo*, echoes Cicero's description of Pompey's wisdom in the *pro Milone*, where it is *alta et divina*.[163]

In the last letter, Cicero made it clear that Pompey was allied with him but did not elaborate on what that meant in practical terms. Here he has provided an image of how their relationship works, and it conforms to the ideal he set out for Pompey in 62. In the letters addressed to Lentulus, Cicero has to start from scratch and build the foundations of his ideal relationship with Pompey. In these letters to Appius, written sixteen years later, the ideal is a given, the fiction reality, and Cicero uses that ideal as a source of *auctoritas*. Whereas in the first letter to Lentulus, Cicero spoke through Pompey, now he speaks for Pompey. Then again, the ideal image of Cicero and Pompey is presented in a series of rhetorical questions about what constitutes an intimate friendship aimed at the addressee, which are left unanswered.[164] Furthermore, the conditional clauses to which they respond are present open conditions, for example, '*if* the signs of affection and duty count ...' As in the letter addressed to Pompey, the 'reality' of Cicero's imaging depends upon the confirmation of the addressee; thus, as Appius is not there in person to respond to the questions in the affirmative, Cicero's self-portrayal remains provisional.

Conclusion

We have now examined the selves Cicero represents as his own and Pompey's (and how those selves interact with each other) to two of his political friends, and the epistolary strategies used to create them, when forced by his exile to attach himself to one of the leading men of state in order to remain politically involved. Scholars have often turned to the *ad Atticum* for a more personal, honest Cicero, and it is true that the letters addressed to Atticus in the same year as those to Appius present a different picture of Pompey and of Cicero's

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highlanders. He was decreed a *supplicatio*; see Shackleton Bailey 2001(i): 318, n. 2; 1977: 359-360; cf. *Fam*. 3.13.1 (SB 76).

[162] *Fam*. 3.10.7.8-13 (SB 73); see above, p. 41.

[163] *Mil*. 21 (see n. 139); cf. *Fam*. 3.7.6 (SB 71) (see above, pp. 37-38).

[164] 3.10.10.3-10; see above, p. 41.

relationship with him. Yet, the ideal dynamic Cicero had constructed between himself and Pompey elsewhere is also present in the letters sent to Atticus, and it is here that he admits its ultimate failure and the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning is confirmed.

Two letters sent to Atticus late in 50 indicate that Cicero is maintaining a public *persona* not in keeping with his private opinions. The subject at hand is the current political situation and mounting conflict between Pompey and Caesar. In the first of these, *Att*. 7.3 (SB 126), Cicero constructs a dialogue, in which he is asked to speak his mind in the Senate (7.3.5.4-7): *illud ipsum quod ais, 'quid fiet, cum erit dictum, dic, M. Tulli?':* σύντομα *'Cn. Pompeio adsentior.' ipsum tamen Pompeium separatim ad concordiam hortabor. sic enim sentio, maximo in periculo rem esse*. In the second letter, *Att*. 7.6 (SB 129), a similar plan is set out, and Cicero tacks on a disclaimer at the end (7.6.2,8-13): *dices, 'quid tu igitur sensurus es?' non idem quod dicturus; sentiam enim omnia facienda ne armis decertetur dicam idem quod Pompeius neque id faciam humili animo. sed rursus hoc permagnum rei publicae malum est et quodam modo mihi praeter ceteros non rectum me in tantis rebus a Pompeio dissidere*. Cicero acknowledges that what he will say in public about Pompey is not what is in his mind. The public stance reflected here echoes that taken in the letters examined above. He presents himself and Pompey as taking a united front: in the last letter to Lentulus, they are in complete agreement; in the last letter to Appius, Cicero is a substitute for Pompey.

These passages written to Atticus reveal the disagreement between Cicero and Pompey about what was best for the Republic, and the gap between the fiction Cicero created and the reality of his and Pompey's position. Yet, Cicero clearly sees himself as adviser to Pompey, and is therefore presenting a different version of the ideal orator-statesman relationship to Atticus. At the end of the second passage Cicero cites his obligation to Pompey for the support he afforded Cicero in his restoration, as he does over and over again in the period between his recall and the civil war.[165] Here it is presented as unfortunate for the Republic, since it prevents Cicero from making his disagreement with Pompey public. Whether Cicero felt genuinely obligated to Pompey is impossible to determine, but he does present himself as still able to influence the political crisis for the better by influencing Pompey. It has been well-established that Cicero would do what he had to do in order to stay in the political game, and at this time Pompey was his means to doing so. Perhaps the justification for his support of Pompey is a bit of persuasion aimed not only at Atticus, but at

[165] Cf. *Att*. 8.1.4 (SB 151); 9.19.2 (SB 189); 10.7.1 (SB 198).

Cicero himself, who is hanging on to the ideal he created for the sake of his ability to be involved and because Pompey was the man he had backed, but he needs a better reason.

In a letter sent to Atticus in February of 49, *Att*. 8.11 (SB 161), Cicero admits that Pompey has failed to live up the ideal model of Scipio Africanus. Pompey has abandoned Rome, which prompts Cicero to make a direct contrast between the fiction he had created and the reality (8.11.1.6-2.4):

nam sic quinto, ut opinor, in libro loquitur Scipio, 'Vt enim gubernatori cursus secundus, medico salus, imperatori victoria, sic huic moderatori rei publicae beata civium vita proposita est, ut opibus firma, copiis locuples, gloria ampla, virtute honesta sit. huius enim operis maximi inter homines atque optimi illum esse perfectorem volo.' hoc Gnaeus noster cum antea numquam tum in hac causa minime cogitavit. dominatio quaesita ab utroque est, non id actum beata et honesta civitas ut esset.

Cicero quotes his own *de Republica* here, where Scipio considers the ideal statesman,[166] and then asserts that Pompey did not conform to the model. Holliday argues that where Cicero expresses disappointment in Pompey in 59, when Pompey was suffering unpopularity because of his alliance with Caesar and Crassus, Cicero is genuinely upset that his idol has slipped.[167] As for Pompey's own feelings, she asserts that Cicero misunderstood Pompey's discontentment: 'Cicero did not clearly see, or at least, does not give the reader the impression that he fully realized the real motivation for Pompey's dissatisfaction with the coalition at the end of 59. To him, Pompey was heartbroken because of his fall from the lofty position of a statesman'.[168] About the letters relating to Pompey's abandonment of Rome in 49, she asserts that Cicero was 'bitterly disappointed' in him, characterizing Pompey as cowardly, fearful and as possessing a 'little soul' in the letters of 49 and 48.[169]

Taking these expressions of disappointment and anger as Cicero's 'true' feelings about Pompey is problematic. In fact, Holliday has gleaned from *Cicero's* words that Pompey was discontented with his situation in 59,[170] but it is misguided to assume that Cicero's description of Pompey's mood is an accurate one. Cicero's relationship with Pompey is not straightforward: 'Cicero's writing about Pompey responds to the rhetorical needs of the moment; his own significance and self-esteem are variously entangled with his presentation of Pompey, and the treatment of him is adapted to suit Cicero's persuasive or

[166] *Rep*. 5.8.
[167] Holliday 1969: 30-31.
[168] Holliday 1969: 31.
[169] Holliday 1969: 61, 66; see *Att*. 9.11.4 (SB 178); 7.13A.2 (SB 137); 7.21.1 (SB 145); 8.7.1-2 (SB 155); 8.8.1 (SB 158); 8.9.3 (SB 188); cf. Hutchinson 1998: 156-158, 164 on Cicero's account of Pompey's flight from Rome.
[170] Holliday cites *Att*. 2.21.3 (SB 41).

self-persuasive purposes'.[171] He had set up an ideal for the statesman, an ideal which Pompey did not fulfill, but as we have seen, even Cicero himself shows a tentativeness in constructing that ideal in the first place.[172] And it suited the self created for Pompey to characterize him as upset about having fallen from his pedestal. It also suited the self Cicero had developed for himself as adviser and confidant to Pompey to express disappointment when he made mistakes. Another way to look at these passages is to consider what they do for Cicero's own position in Roman politics. By expressing to Atticus (and to Pompey)[173] his disappointment and claiming that the only motivation for supporting Pompey in the end is the obligation Cicero feels concerning his recall, he has also provided himself and his *persona* a way out.[174]

These passages lay the foundations for Cicero's comeback in the Senate when he delivers the *pro Marcello* in 46. The dissatisfaction with Pompey and his failure to take the advice Cicero was giving, allows the orator-statesman to explain away his own Pompeian past when faced with a choice between retirement and remaining active under the dictator Caesar.[175] Cicero would continue to do what he had to in order to remain active, and would attempt to exercise *auctoritas* by transferring his advisory role from Pompey to Caesar. That he is able to say that Pompey would not listen makes that transition smoother. Therefore, Cicero's tentativeness in constructing an ideal self-identity is perhaps more than a symptom of his shaky position within the Senate and in relation to Pompey; rather, it may be done quite deliberately, so as to leave available to Cicero the claim that he doubted Pompey all along.

Looking ahead to our other letter writers, the letters of Pliny and Symmachus most closely resemble Cicero's letters to and about Pompey in that they too adopt an ideal model for their emperors from which they do not deviate; likewise, the provisionality of their imaging is revealed through a similar tentativeness, in the case of Pliny, and through a revelation of failure in subsequent letters, in the case of Symmachus. The idealization of the distant past is an even more prominent feature of Symmachus' *Relationes*, and it is present to a lesser extent in the letters of Pliny and Fronto. As we shall see, the use of epistolary

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[171] Hutchinson 1998: 149; on Cicero's changing attitudes to Pompey, see Hutchinson 1998: 149-150 and 150, n. 18.

[172] *Fam*. 5.7.3 (SB 3); see above, p. 18.

[173] *Att*. 8.11D (SB 161D), sent 27 February 49, in which Cicero sets out the reasons for his not joining Pompey at Brundisium and reminds him of the advice Pompey did not follow; on forensic elements in the letter see Wistrand 1979: 88f.

[174] On patriotism as a reason to dissolve a friendship, see Konstan 1997: 132f.

[175] Pliny would attempt a similar erasure of his own past success under Domitian (see ch. 3, pp. 90-91), as would Symmahcus of his past criticism of Valentinian I and praise of Gratian (see ch. 5, p. 210).

discourse to manipulate and correct the selves of sender (*I*) and addressee (*You*) is a strategy used by all four of our senders.

2

Letters to Caesar

Cicero's persuasive project under Caesar is similar in many ways to his project in relation to Pompey: Cicero is still striving for political *auctoritas* and still has to attach himself to a particular individual in order to acquire it. Just as he did for Pompey, Cicero creates an ideal Caesar and an ideal relationship between the two men. Likewise, some of Cicero's specific goals are similar and expressed in familiar terms: he fashions himself as Caesar's adviser, and we see him progress from a distanced uncertainty about the dictator and his intentions to a confident, informed knowledge about how Caesar will proceed.

Of course, the political circumstances in which Cicero was operating had changed drastically, and he had to adapt his persuasive techniques to a new Rome, in which one individual held all the power. His orations from the Caesarian period are recognized as illustrating the shift in oratory from Republic to Principate.[1] The *pro Marcello*, for example, is an early Latin panegyric, which like so much later panegyric, attempts to influence the future by means of selected praise of the past.[2] Likewise, Cicero must adapt his letter writing to the new political circumstances, and his epistolary approach to Caesar during the dictatorship would later be reflected in the approach of imperial letter writers to their emperors.

After the civil war, Cicero himself reflects upon the need for a new *genus litterarum*, and scholars have noted the emotional tone of the Caesarian letters, which are often thought to contain a 'genuine' expression of Cicero's feelings about the rise of Caesar. For example, M. Winterbottom argues that the *pro Marcello* is in keeping with Cicero's known position in 46,[3] as is gleaned from his correspondence.[4] While he acknowledges that the events surrounding the speech, which are described by Cicero in his letters, may have been less spontaneous than Cicero

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1 Albrecht 2003: 162; Braund 1998: 68; May 1988: 140.

2 Kennedy 1972: 260. The seeds of this shift in oratory had been planted in Pompey's day. The *de Lege Manilia* is a similar treatment of character (see ch. 1, p. 10 and nn. 2-3), and the *pro Milone* a preview of the delivery of forensic speeches before a single judge (May 1988: 129).

3 All dates in this chapter are BC unless otherwise noted.

4 Winterbottom 2002: 24 within an argument against Dyer 1990, who argues that the *pro Marcello* is a 'figured' speech meant to rouse the senators to commit tyrannicide (followed by Morford 1992: 578-579); Winterbottom makes a distinction between his position and that of Rawson, who reads the speech as 'entirely sincere'; see Rawson 1975: 218-219; also against Dyer, see Levene 1997: 68-69.

would have us believe, he simultaneously accepts the emotional content of the correspondence as genuine, strictly private reflections.[5]

H. C. Gotoff rightly argues that it is important to dispel the highly dramatized views taken of the period in Cicero's life following the civil war, in which Cicero's despondency over the loss of the Republic and his own effort to save it are highlighted. Gotoff points out that Cicero often juxtaposes different tones within individual letters and that 'by training and disposition he could express himself in the full panoply of distinctive voices, from dispassionate to fervent'.[6] This kind of juxtaposition, moreover, is at home in the letter, a form that inherently consists of contradictions: it may emphasize presence or absence (i.e. act as a bridge or barrier between separated correspondents); it may serve as a portrait or mask for the sender; it may reflect confidence or non-confidence (i.e. contain candor or dissimulation); it may focus on writer or reader (*I* or *You*); it may emphasize closure or overture (i.e. discontinuation or continuation of communication); it may emphasize coherence or fragmentation.[7] The contradictions in Cicero's Caesarian letters reflect the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning.

The significant difference between Cicero's epistolary approaches to Pompey and Caeasr is that provisionality is more pronounced in the letters concerning Caesar, and it becomes more difficult to pin down the images he constructs. While in relation to Pompey, Cicero creates an ideal image and then takes a step back from it, in relation to Caesar he creates competing and contradictory images in the first place. This provisionality, I shall argue, reflects the uncertainty of Cicero's position in the period following the civil war, but it also allows him to create a

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[5] Winterbottom 2002: 29; on the question as to whether or not the events surrounding Marcellus' restoration were staged, see n. 59. Cf. Winterbottom 1989 on the *Orator*, in which he identifies a contradictory stance in Cicero's elaboration of the ideal oratory. Twice in the *Orator* Cicero explicitly excludes epideictic rhetoric from the discussion, acknowledging that it has a role to play in the education of an orator, but stating that it is *spretum et pulsum foro* (*Orat*. 42). Despite its exclusion, epideictic rhetoric is then incorporated into Cicero's description of the 'middle style'. And the middle style is then explicitly given a place in the forum (*Orat*. 96; see Winterbottom 1989: 126-127). Winterbottom resolves this paradox as a defence of Cicero's own practice, arguing that the inclusion of epideictic rhetoric is the only means by which 'Cicero could bring himself – for it is Cicero, naturally, who lurks behind the perfect orator he is describing – into his own picture of oratory' (Winterbottom 1989: 127).

[6] Gotoff 2002: 222. In his reading of the *pro Marcello*, Gotoff concerns himself with what he argues can be realistically understood through textual analysis: the dynamic that Cicero the speaker hoped to create between himself and his judge and the ways in which he attempts to win over his audience (Gotoff 2002: 224). Gotoff asserts that a Ciceronian speech can only incidentally mirror his true feelings and that it would be a subjective activity to attempt an identification of the real Cicero among the different voices he creates (Gotoff 2002: 220).

[7] See Altman 1982: 186-187.

deliberately contradictory self-identity in relation to Caesar so as to keep the dictator guessing about where Cicero stands politically.

Cicero disguises this agenda by masking it with a particular letter type,[8] and in order to illustrate this I shall focus on a group of letters that overtly conform to two letter types, the *consolatio* and *commendatio*. I shall examine a selection of letters sent before and after the delivery of the *pro Marcello*: first, a letter addressed to Nigidius Figulus, in which Cicero has withdrawn from public life, and is ostensibly focussed on consoling his fellow senator and former Pompeian in their mutual loss of the Republic and senatorial *auctoritas*, but in which a new, politically active Cicero is waiting just below the surface; secondly, two letters of consolation sent to Servius Sulpicius Rufus, one immediately preceding and one following the delivery of the speech, in which that new Cicero will emerge, having used Sulpicius to fashion himself a role in post-Republican Rome; finally, two letters of recommendation addressed to Caesar himself illustrate Cicero's attempts to reinforce the message of the *pro Marcello*.

Nigidius Figulus: A Lesson in Letter Writing

Nigidius Figulus was among those who supported Pompey in the civil war and went into exile at its end. He had supported Cicero as senator in 63, was Praetor in 58,[9] and died in exile in 45.[10] He is one of several former Pompeians to whom Cicero writes to console in exile. Albrecht gives the letters of consolation their own category, and describes them simply as having a formal character.[11] Hutchinson, on the other hand, directs his reader to *Tusculans* 3, where Cicero stresses the importance of being sensitive to particulars; one must see what cure will work for each individual, and the flexibility demanded of an orator is required.[12] Indeed while all the *consolationes* examined here are carefully-constructed letters and contain the common features of

[8] This is also true of Fronto's correspondence with Marcus Aurelius; see ch. 4.
[9] *Q. fr*. 1.2.16 (SB 2).
[10] Figulus was a prolific writer on various branches of learning (Gell. 10.5; 17.7.4f; 19.14; Macr. *Sat*. 3.4.6), but was chiefly remembered as an astrologer and magician (Cic. *Vatin*. 14; Luc. 1.639f; Suet. *Aug*. 94.5; Cass. Dio 45.1; cf. Cic. *Sull*. 41f).
[11] Albrecht 2003: 71.
[12] On consolation in Cicero's correspondence, see Hutchinson 1998: 49-77, ch. 3, 'Consolation'.

the *consolatio* (e.g. an identification with the addressee),[13] Cicero himself makes a distinction between different types of consolation.

There are three versions of the political *consolatio* identifiable in Cicero's correspondence of the Caesarian period. The differences between these versions reflect Cicero's own political outlook and status. Before his return to public life Cicero identifies with his addressees and their pain in exile and at the end of political life as they knew it; this is a letter written in a pessimistic, despairing tone, and the sender's sense of being lost is reflected in its style. The tone of the second version reflects resignation about the loss of Republican political culture, as the sender has found a way to deal with his suffering by seeking comfort in his own good qualities and education. While Cicero continues to identify with his addressees, the focus of the third version of the *consolatio* is on restoration and hope, the style more polished and the tone optimistic. Cicero juxtaposes the three types of *consolatio* within one letter to Figulus, and an image of himself is associated with each one, acknowledging the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning. While his ideal image is identifiable, Cicero presents other potentially valid images, the 'reality' of which depends upon the new ruler.

Ad Fam. IV.13 (SB 225), August (?) 46 BC

The tone of this letter, along with Cicero's outlook on the political situation, changes drastically from beginning to end. The letter opens with a melodramatic outburst of despair, in which Cicero laments that it is difficult even to find a subject for a letter, as he has been excluded from politics and can offer no promise of hope to his friend. But by the end of the letter things are looking up, and he offers hope to the exile after all. Gotoff cites this letter in support of his warning that it would be foolish to take Cicero's expressions of sadness and disappointment in the aftermath of the war as truly his: 'At *Fam*. 4.13.1, written in mid-46, he complains that he is limited by events to the epistolary mode – not of course to the light and witty kind, but the "sad and wretched which still should offer some promise and consolation for your pain; but I had nothing to promise." Yet, by section 5 he has cheered himself up and affects to see light at the

[13] See Cic. *Tusc.* 3; Pseudo Demetrius 5 (Malherbe); Julius Victor *Ars Rhetorica* 27; Pseudo Libanius 25 (Malherbe).

end of the political tunnel'.[14] In fact this letter is constructed as an elaborate tricolon auctum, providing a sampling of the three types of political *consolatio* available under Caesar and a preview of Cicero's political agenda within the new regime.

The opening passage of the letter is written to the moment (in the present tense), as Cicero describes the process of settling on the appropriate sort of letter for the current political circumstances. It is as if the sender writes down his thoughts as they come to him, which emphasizes the sense of hesitancy about what to do in response to the new regime (4.13.1.1-9):

Quaerenti mihi iam diu quid ad te potissimum scriberem non modo certa res nulla sed ne genus quidem litterarum usitatum veniebat in mentem. unam enim partem et consuetudinem earum epistularum quibus secundis rebus uti solebamus tempus eripuerat, perfeceratque Fortuna ne quid tale scribere possem aut omnino cogitare. relinquebatur triste quoddam et miserum et his temporibus consentaneum genus litterarum. id quoque deficiebat me, in quo debebat esse aut promisso auxili alicuius aut consolatio doloris tui.

The first emphatic position in the letter is given to *quaerenti*,[15] and the reader follows his search through the rest of this opening passage, as the sender seems to try out different familiar letter types, only to conclude that a new style is necessary. Repetition, in terms of particular vocabulary (*scribo*, *genus litterarum*, *ne*) and themes (e.g. that the 'usual' style of letter writing has been snatched away), and the present tense contribute to a self-identity caught up in uncertainty: an *I* struggling to define himself.

In the third sentence Cicero discovers what remains for the letter writer. The ablative of time when, *his temporibus*, echoes the same construction from the previous sentence, *secundis rebus*, creating an opposition between what has been lost and what remains. That opposition is further strengthened by the characterization of the old and new letter types, the former as jocular and the latter as sad and miserable.[16] The clause describing what remains available to the letter

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[14] Gotoff 2002: 222; cf. Hutchinson 1998: 47 on the letters written in exile: 'For short moments in the letters at most, one might possibly think Cicero to be only pouring out his emotions; but at least more usually that object must be seen as bound up with the wish to persuade, affect, and soothe, and to keep particular relationships in harmony'; Morello 2003: 194-195 on the 'nothing to say' motif in Cicero's letters of 46-45 (including *Fam*. 4.13); Wilcox 2005 on the letters expressing Cicero's grief over Tullia's death: '... without denying the seriousness of Cicero's grief ... the argument by *exemplum* that Cicero advances in *Fam*. 4.6 participates in his ever-evolving project of self-representation'; for a different approach to the letters from 46, specifically concerning their emotional content, see Winterbottom 2002: 27-30 (discussed briefly above, p. 48).

[15] Cf. *Fam*. 6.10b.1 (SB 222): *Antea misissem ad te litteras si genus scribendi invenirem. tale enim tempore aut consolari amicorum est aut polliceri.*

[16] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 391: *unum ... partem* refers to jokes; cf. *Fam*. 2.4.1 (SB 48), where Cicero describes three categories of letters, the informative, jocular and serious; on *Fam*. 9.20 (SB 193), also from August 46, and

writer, *relinquebatur triste quoddam et miserum*, signals the first segment of the tricolon auctum: this passage represents discovery of the first version of the *consolatio*, in which genuine consolation is not possible, only an empathetic recognition of pain. What follows is a brief sample of this *genus litterarum*, in which Cicero constructs images of sender and addressee appropriate to the letter's pessimistic tone.

As in the letters written in the *post reditum* period, Cicero identifies himself with his addressees after the civil war, commiserating with his fellow Pompeians about their collective loss of *auctoritas*. In the earlier letters, Cicero had to manipulate circumstances to make his identification work at times, assigning to the same *invidia* the blame for his exile and whatever trouble in which his addressee found himself. The same is true of the Caesarian correspondence, and in relation to Figulus the only such difference is that Caesar has pardoned Cicero and allowed him to return to Rome, while his addressee remains in exile. Within each version of the *consolatio* the sender defines himself in relation to his addressee, and in each case they are made similar to each other.

In the first version of the *consolatio*, Cicero characterizes sender (*I*) and addressee (*You*) as hopeless (4.13.1.9-13): *quid policerer non erat; ipse enim pari fortuna adfectus aliorum opibus casus meos sustentabam, saepiusque mihi veniebat in mentem queri quod ita viveram quam gaudere quod viverem*. The verb *polliceor* picks up on the *promisso* from the previous sentence, drawing the natural conclusion that he will not attempt to promise anything to his addressee, as is appropriate to the first version of the *consolatio*. In the second half of the sentence the *mihi veniebat in mentem* echoes the first sentence of the letter, here revealing what does come into Cicero's mind, which is the comparison of his fate with Figulus' fate.

Another important feature of the first version of the *consolatio* is grief over the loss of an active political life. Within this context, Cicero repeats his assertion that he is unable to make a promise to Figulus (the third such statement, using *polliceor* for the second time). This allows him to expand upon his self-identity associated with the first *consolatio* (4.13.2.14-3.9): *obtinemus ipsius Caesaris summam erga nos humanitatem,*[17] *sed ea plus non potest quam vis et mutatio*

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the role of humour amidst the grief for the Republic and for Cicero's own place as orator-statesman, see Hutchinson 1998: 191-198.

[17] Winterbottom 2002: 27 cites this line as contributing to the picture of Cicero's view of Caesar in spring/summer 46.

omnium rerum atque temporum. itaque orbus iis rebus omnibus quibus et natura me et voluntas et consuetudo adsuefecerat cum ceteris, ut quidem videor, tum mihi ipse displiceo. natus enim ad agendum semper aliquid dignum viro nunc non modo agendi rationem nullam habeo sed ne cogitandi quidem; et qui antea aut obscuris hominibus aut etiam sontibus opitulari poteram nunc P. Nigidio, uni omnium doctissimo et sanctissimo et maxima quondam gratia et mihi certe amicissimo, ne benigne quidem polliceri possum.

The focus of this passage is an exploration of the consequences of violent change, which is expressed in the differences between 'then' and 'now', highlighted by a repetition of vocabulary and accidence in two antitheses. The first opposition is brought out in gerunds: while the past is characterized as for action, *ad agendum*,[18] the present excludes the possibility of action, *non modo agendi*. The second opposition, between those Cicero used to be capable of helping and Figulus, whom he is unable to help now, is accomplished with two series of datives: the use of the superlatives and repetition of *et* in the second series emphasizes the drastic nature of the shift being recognized and Figulus' importance in contrast to those described in positive adjectives joined by *aut*.

The oppositions in this passage – between past and present and accordingly between Cicero's 'genuine' self (active) from the past and the self imposed upon him (inactive) in the present – further contribute to the uncertainty of Cicero's situation. Likewise, this passage is written in the present tense, and so the image of Cicero is constructed within a narrative present; and this too lends a sense of uncertainty to the sender's self-definition because, as noted in chapter one, epistolary time is polyvalent,[19] and, as a result, the present is impossible to pin down in epistolary writing.[20] Thus, the image of the sender presented here may or may not be valid at the time that Figulus reads the letter.

A subtle change is executed at this point in the letter, as Cicero returns to the topic of the shift in letter writing, but has altered his options slightly (4.13.4.1-4): *Ergo hoc ereptum est litterarum genus. reliquum est ut consoler et adferam rationes quibus te a molestiis coner abducere*. At the beginning of the letter Cicero had excluded a genuine *consolatio* as an available letter type, having allowed only for something miserable and sad. In the first sentence here he reminds the addressee of that earlier statement, repeating the phrase *litterarum genus*, but then

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[18] Cf. *Att*. 5.15.1 (SB 108), where Cicero complains about his absence from Rome and the forum (in 51).
[19] See ch. 1, p. 15.
[20] Cf. *Fam*. 1.1 (SB 12); see ch. 1, pp. 20-23. On the creation of the 'impossible present' in epistolary writing, see ch. 1 n. 65.

proceeds to contradict the earlier assertion, now ready to console his friend. This contradiction echoes the language from the beginning of the letter: *reliquum est ut consoler* here for *relinquebatur triste quoddam* above, signalling the second segment of the tricolon auctum and the second version of the political *consolatio*. This shift, like the introduction of the first version of the *consolatio* is written in the present tense, lending it immediacy. This new letter type does allow for consolation, in one's qualities and education, and this is Cicero's starting point in consoling Figulus (4.13.4).

Having redefined the purpose of his letter and the addressee to whom he addresses it, Cicero also redefines himself, and identifies a glimmer of hope from his own point of view (4.13.4.9-5.4):

ego quod intelligere et sentire, quia sum Romae et quia curo attendoque, possum id tibi affirmo, te in istis molestiis in quibus es hoc tempore non diutius futurum, in iis autem in quibus etiam nos sumus fortasse semper fore. Video<r> mihi perspicere primum ipsius animum, qui plurimum potest, propensum ad salutem tuam. non scribo hoc temere. quo minus familiaris sum, hoc sum ad investigandum curiosior.

Before naming what it is that Cicero can confirm for Figulus, he builds up justification for it, delaying the verb *affirmo* until after describing its object in terms of Cicero's access to it. In that description there are several pairs: two infinitives, two *quia* clauses, two first person singular present finite verbs, all meant to demonstrate why Cicero can say what he is about to say. In the second half of the sentence Cicero is careful to make a distinction between what trouble Figulus can expect to escape and what trouble he cannot expect to escape, set in antithesis and parallel construction with two forms of *sum* in the present and future tenses. Cicero defines himself at the end of this passage, presenting the second image of the sender as increasingly curious about Caesar, wanting to confirm his suspicion (*videor*)[21] that Caesar is amenable. Again, the image is constructed in a narrative present, and so this Cicero is juxtaposed with the one associated with the first, pessimistic *consolatio*.

Towards the end of the letter, Cicero once again returns to the possibility of making Figulus a promise, and this time his stance has changed entirely from the beginning of the letter.

[21] The verb *videor* is also used in cases where Cicero is uncertain about Pompey's stance; cf. *Fam*. 1.1.3.17 (SB 12) (see ch. 1, p. 22); 1.2.1.4, 6 (SB 13) (see ch. 1, p. 23); 1.2.3.6 (SB 13) (see ch. 1, p. 23-24); 1.7.3.13 (SB 18) (see ch. 1, p. 26).

It is with this abrupt change in outlook that the third version of the *consolatio* is introduced (4.13.6.1-7):

Redeo igitur ad id, ut iam tibi etiam pollicear aliquid, quod primo omiseram. nam et complectar eius familiarissimos, qui me admodum diligunt multumque mecum sunt, et in ipsius consuetudinem, quam adhuc meus pudor mihi clausit, insinuabo et certe omnis vias persequar quibus putabo ad id quod volumus pervenire posse.

This is the third occurrence of *polliceor* and now Cicero is ready to go so far as to promise hope – a promise made in the present about the future. The sender is defined here, and he asserts a self-identity with more certainty than he has thus far: the three verbs describing the actions Cicero will take are all first person future indicative forms, reflecting confidence in knowledge of the way forward. However, the verb which governs the *ut* clause containing the promise, is in the present tense, and this Cicero too is constructed in the present and juxtaposed with the two previous images of the sender.

At the end of the letter, Cicero has some words of encouragement for his friend and restates his promise in a more formalized style (4.13.7.1-9):

Extremum illud est, ut te orem et obsecrem animo ut maximo sis nec ea solum memineris quae ab aliis magnis viris accepisti sed illa etiam quae ipse ingenio studioque peperisti. quae si colliges, et sperabis omnia optime et quae accident, qualiacumque erunt, sapienter feres. sed haec tu melius vel optime omnium; ego, quae pertinere ad te intellegam, studiosissime omnia diligentissimeque curabo tuorumque tristissimo meo tempore meritorum erga me memoriam conservabo.

The opening clause of this passage signals the third segment of the tricolon auctum, and the adjective *extremum* amplifies this final, climactic component. What follows is a formulaic exhortation, which appears elsewhere in Cicero's correspondence, to be of great courage and to remain hopeful.[22] The verbs *orem et obsecrem* give this last passage a more formal, solemn tone,[23] and this passage is further amplified by five superlative adverbs, the heaviest concentration of this form in the entire letter.[24] The first two are in reference to Figulus: *omnia optime* is echoed in the following sentence by *optime omnium*, and the remaining three are in reference to Cicero and the actions he will take in order to help his friend.

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[22] See *Fam*. 1.5b.3 (SB 16) (see ch. 1, n. 80); 6.13.5 (SB 227); 6.14.3 (SB 228); 10.29 (SB 426); 12.25.5 (SB 373); cf. *Fam*. 12.11.2 (SB 366); 14.4.5 (SB 6).

[23] Albrecht 2003: 100: these sorts of duplications are frequent in Cicero's early orations.; cf. *Q. Rosc.* 20.

[24] The letter contains a total of thirteen superlatives, five of which stand alone: *potissimum* (4.13.1.1), *familiarissimis* (4.13.2.5), *iucundissimi* (4.13.5.6), *familiarissimos* (4.13.6.2) and *paratissima* (4.13.6.8), and three of which appear together at the end of the third paragraph: *doctissimo* (4.13.3.7), *sanctissimo* (4.13.3.8) and *amicissimo* (4.13.3.9) (see above, p. 54).

In this letter, Cicero says one thing and does another, and this takes the form of explicit antithesis: he can promise nothing, nor console his friend; he is able to console his friend; he makes a promise for the future.[25] Each sentiment is expressed within a different version of the political *consolatio*, and in a very different tone: hopeless; resigned; and finally formal and dignified (in a grand *amplificatio*). Following the letter from beginning to end, Cicero fashions for himself a way forward politically, and takes his connection with the addressee as motivation for finding that plan of action so as to help Figulus.[26] This is accomplished in part through two shifts in time: from past (a time of action) to present (a time of inaction) and from present to future (a time of action), thereby creating continuity between Cicero's Republican self and his future self under Caesar. Thus, 'consolation' is a fiction or code (what Cicero says he is doing), behind which is Cicero's agenda of self-fashioning in relation to Caesar.

However, each *consolatio* is written to the moment, or rather, each self-identity is constructed in a narrative present. And this complicates Cicero's self-portrayal. This letter may be read as a window into the process by which Cicero cheers himself, from the depths of despair to a place from which he has a plan for the future (quite a feat within a relatively brief letter – 701 words) and attempts to console his friend. But I suggest that this letter represents a carefully orchestrated piece of self-projection, in which it is impossible to pin down who Cicero is, or even who Cicero expects his reader to think he is. Just as the meaning of each present verb in this letter is necessarily polyvalent – when Cicero says, 'I am unable to promise ...' or 'I promise ...', the statement may or may not be valid in the *reader's* present, which is in future from the perspective of the letter writer – so the selves presented in this letter are polyvalent.[27] Which *consolatio*, and accordingly which set of correspondents, is valid at a given time depends upon an external party – Caesar.

The three selves presented in this letter correspond to three possible scenarios. The first, a hopeless, grieving Cicero would result from a refusal from Caesar to restore the sender's allies to

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[25] Antithesis and amplification are elements included in the ideal oratorical style in the *Orator*; antithesis is identifed as a characteristic of epideictic rhetoric, and *amplificatio* as one of the most important ornaments in the orator's arsenal; see *Orat*. 38; 125; cf. *Orat*. 127. See also Albrecht 2003: 164-167 for discussion on the stylistic elements identified as epideictic in the *Orator* and their usage in the *pro Marcello*. For an analysis of the contradictions in the *de Lege Manilia* and *de Provinciis Consularibus*, specifically in relation to imperial rhetoric and ideology, see Rose 1995.

[26] Cf. Cicero's use of Lentulus as motivation for getting closer to Pompey; see ch. 1, pp. 20-21.

[27] On the polyvalence of epistolary time, see ch. 1, p. 15 and nn. 32-34.

Rome, resulting in an inability to enjoy his own restoration. The second, a Cicero resigned to a life of political inaction, would result from Caesar restoring the Pompeians to Rome, allowing the sender to at least take comfort in his education. The third, a politically active Cicero, who is a member of Caesar's circle, is the most desirable, but depends upon Caesar's acceptance of the sender's advice. While one can identify the more desirable self or selves, and which is the ideal constructed by the sender, none is more valid than the others, because each is presented in equally provisional terms (an unavoidable feature of epistolary narrative). Thus, the reader may take his pick of Ciceros: any or all may or may not reflect 'reality'. It depends entirely on Caesar.

Servius Sulpicius Rufus: Through the Looking-Glass

Cicero and Sulpicius had a lot in common, at least according to Cicero in 46. They studied together at Rome and Rhodes.[28] They both served as consul, Sulpicius in 51.[29] They both advocated peace as civil war approached, though Sulpicius pushed for moderation on both sides in public and in the Senate,[30] while by his own admission, Cicero did his urging in private, at the ear of Pompey.[31] Once war broke out, Sulpicius did join the Pompeians, though historians have been misled on this point by Cicero's own characterization of his addressee in the first of the letters examined below.[32] In 47 Sulpicius retired to Samos,[33] but was pardoned by Caesar and appointed governor of Achaia early in 46.

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[28] *Brut*. 151; Cicero places Sulpicius as jurist above his mentor Quintus Scaevola (*Brut*. 152-154); on Cicero's invective against Sulpicius in the *pro Murena*, see Steel 2001: 135, 170-172.

[29] *Att*. 5.21.9 (SB 114).

[30] He was branded slow and inefficient on war matters by Caelius; see *Fam*. 8.10.3 (SB 87).

[31] See ch. 1, pp. 44-46 on Cicero's public and private *personae* in the run-up to the war.

[32] This problem offers a prime example of the dangers of reading Cicero's letters at face-value. There is no direct report of Sulpicius' activities from May 49 to the summer of 47; see Münzer, *RE* iv. 854; Shackleton Bailey 1966(v): 275. Some have maintained that Sulpicius remained neutral in the war: Münzer (*RE* iv. 855) contends that Cic. *Phil*. 13.28f (where Sulpicius is named among the consular Pompeians) and *Fam*. 6.6.10 (SB 234) (where Sulpicius is listed among the pardoned anti-Caesarians) 'tendenziös gefärbt sind und weniger Glauben verdienen' because Cicero contradicts his own characterization of Sulpicius as consistently neutral at *Fam*. 4.3.2 (SB 202) (see below, pp. 79-81) and 6.1.6 (SB 242). Syme (1939: 45, n. 1) follows Münzer and asserts that at *Phil*. 13.28f Sulpicius and Marcellus, 'dismayed by the outbreak of war or distrustful of Pompeius, took no part and should more honestly be termed neutrals'. Against Syme see Shackleton Bailey 1960: p. 253, n. 7: 'Perhaps historical research might not suffer from the assumption as a working axiom that even in rhetorical moments Cicero was not simultaneously a liar and an ass. Every senator must have known perfectly well what Marcellus and Sulpicius did in the war'. He points out that *Fam*. 4.3.2 and 6.1.6 refer to pacific advice before the outbreak of war or shortly after and sees nothing 'tendenziös gefärbt' about *Fam*. 6.6.10; cf. *Att*. 11.7.4 (SB 218); 13.10.1

I shall examine two letters sent to Sulpicius in 46, one from before[34] and one from just after Cicero's delivery of the *pro Marcello*.[35] Considered together, these letters form a thematic unit in conjunction with the delivery of that speech, which highlights the techniques of self-fashioning Cicero uses in order to carve out a role for himself within Caesar's inner-circle. As in the case of the letter addressed to Pompey discussed in chapter one, we might think of each letter addressed to Sulpicius as a mirror, in which Cicero constructs the ideal image of his addressee.[36] Unlike the earlier letter, however, in relation to Sulpicius, Cicero constructs his images of sender and addressee so that one is the mirror image of the other. This allows Cicero to use the identity of Sulpicius to improve the image of himself. And since the composition of a letter in any case involves the creation of an image of sender and addressee, this strategy of self-fashioning is well suited to the letter form, and perhaps especially to the *consolatio*, a letter type in which an empathetic identification with the addressee is to be expected. The sender conjures up his images and then manipulates them according to his goals. At the same time, the provisionality of those images is acknowledged, and Cicero cautiously incorporates tentativeness into his self-portrayal.

The first letter, ostensibly a *consolatio*, addressed to another former Pompeian, contains none of the aimlessness with which the letter addressed to Figulus opens. Instead it provides an example of the second version of the *consolatio*, identified above: Cicero acknowledges that there is no longer a place for either man's former occupation (oratory and jurisprudence) and attempts to console his friend by suggesting activities to which he feels they both should turn for comfort in the aftermath of civil war.[37] Sulpicius had by this time received his pardon from Caesar and the appointment to act as governor of Achaia. However, there is no mention of his

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(SB 318). But the myth of Sulpicius' neutrality dies hard (Shackleton Bailey 1966(v): 275); e.g. Stockton 1971: 276: 'Sulpicius was a genuine Republican. As consul in 51 he worked for moderation against his anti-Caesarian colleague Marcus Marcellus; he stayed neutral when war broke out, and left Italy; after Pharsalus he resumed his legal work until Caesar chose him to govern Achaea'.

[33] *Brut*. 156.

[34] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 359 does not rule out an earlier date for *Fam*. 4.3 (SB 202).

[35] Albrecht includes the letters written to Sulpicius among the private letters, three steps removed from the most private. Addressees are placed on the range of most to least private as follows: Atticus; Quintus, Terentia, Tullia and Tiro; M. Marius, Trebatius, Papirius Paetus and Varro; Lepta, Servius Sulpicius, M. Fadius Gallus, Q. Cornificius, Dolabella (Albrecht 2003: 68-69). The private letters are characterized by more colloquial elements, and many of them are not carefully constructed, but Albrecht also points out that even in the letters to Atticus there are considerable differences in style (Albrecht 2003: 68-69).

[36] See ch. 1, pp. 14-19.

[37] See above, p. 51 for a summary of the three versions; cf. *Fam*. 4.13.4-5 (SB 225), an abbreviated example of the second version; see above, pp. 54-55.

appointment in this letter. Instead Cicero focusses on the close identification of himself with his addressee in a withdrawal from the political life. As in earlier correspondence, Cicero manipulates the circumstances to suit his purposes, in this case in order to construct an image of himself (*I*) who is a mirror-image of Sulpicius (*You*); and this is done in the guise of advising Sulpicius to be like the sender.

After the restoration of Marcellus, however, Sulpicius' political appointment becomes useful to Cicero. Ostensibly the purpose of the second letter is to reassure his addressee that he had good reason to take up the appointment from Caesar, but Cicero uses that appointment in order to construct a parallel between Sulpicius' return to public life and his own return to oratory in the Senate, again creating selves for sender and addressee that are the mirror-image of each other. Cicero then moulds the present into the image of the past and the regime of Caesar into the image of the Republic. These letters consist of a series of mirror-images, as Cicero fashions and refashions the reflection until he is satisfied with the image of himself, of Caesar and of Rome.

Ad Fam. 4.3 (SB 202), first half of September or perhaps earlier, 46 BC

At the beginning of this letter sender and addressee are distinct, though similar individuals, but as the letter proceeds they will undergo a process of blending together, and by the end are distinct but identical individuals. This is accomplished through Cicero's use of *I-You* discourse in order to identify with Sulpicius in his grief. The letter opens with empathetic understanding of the pain Sulpicius suffers at the loss of the Republic (4.3.1.1-5): *Vehementer te esse sollicitum et in communibus miseris praecipuo quodam dolore angi multi ad nos cottidie deferunt. quod quamquam minime miror et meum quodam modo agnosco, doleo tamen te sapientia praeditum prope singulari non tuis bonis delectari potius quam alienis malis laborare*. The *vehementer*, in the first emphatic position, and *praecipuus* emphasize the strength of Sulpicius' grief and single him out as suffering especially among all those grieving for the Republic.

Through the use of the verbal form, *doleo*, echoing the noun, *dolor*, Cicero makes a distinction between the grief Sulpicius experiences and what Cicero is experiencing. This suggests that while Cicero recognizes Sulpicius' condition as his own, the sender has also begun to recover. At the end of this passage the sender asserts that there are things that Sulpicius should take pleasure in, *tuis bonis delectari*, in opposition with what he is allowing to cause him pain,

alienis malis laborare. Sulpicius should look inside himself for comfort, and that becomes the subject of the rest of this letter. Ostensibly Cicero proceeds to show Sulpicius where he can find the comfort that Cicero himself has found.[38]

As the letter proceeds Cicero presents two sources from which Sulpicius could and should take comfort. In both cases sender and addressee are interchangeable; each source of comfort is presented as available to either man, and it is here that they become one. Cicero presents two images from the past, one of each correspondent's service to the Republic and both of which should provide comfort in the present. Fashioning himself and Sulpicius as identical in this helps Cicero to erase his own Pompeian past (4.3.1.6-11):

me quidem, etsi nemini concedo qui maiorem ex pernicie et peste rei publicae molestiam traxerit, tamen multa iam consolantur maximeque conscientia consiliorum meorum. multo enim ante tamquam ex aliqua specula prospexi tempestatem futuram, neque id solum sponte sed multo etiam magis monente et denuntiante te.

In the opening of this passage, Cicero assigns to himself the same kind of grief he has already assigned to Sulpicius. That is, each has been singled out as having suffered especially (Cicero more than anyone) from the loss of the Republic. Cicero then describes his 'past policies',[39] namely, his own foresight concerning the approaching war, in which he takes comfort in the present. The verb used in the metaphor, *prospicio*, is used elsewhere of Cicero's foreseeing this disaster.[40] By the end of the passage, Cicero has brought his addressee into the picture with an ablative absolute, which is delayed until the end of the sentence, and provides a transition into Cicero's next topic, which is an elaboration of Sulpicius' warnings and predicitons.

Sulpicius' consulship is then described, during which he urged the Romans to remember past civil wars and warned them that any armed oppressor of the state now would be even worse

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[38] Cf. Hutchinson 1998: 59-62 who cites the paradox in the opening of *ad Brut*. 1.9 (SB 17), in which Cicero begins by explaining that this letter will not console his friend (whose wife has died), nor will he do what Brutus did for him when Tullia died, because the truly philosophical Brutus needs no such aid from others: 'Cicero uses himself not authoritatively but humbly; it is Brutus that is the authority'.

[39] The word *consilium* is used by Cicero in characterizing himself elsewhere, including his assertions that he had sound policy in his handling of the Catilinarian conspiracy; see *Fam*. 5.7. (SB 3) (ch. 1, p. 16); 3.10.7.10 (SB 73) (ch. 1, p. 41); 3.10.10.14 (SB 73) (of Pompey) (ch. 1, pp. 42-43); the word also appears in the *pro Marcello*, in reference to Cicero's policy on peace (14-15), in reference to the contribution by Caesar's policy to the stability of the city (29) and in reference to the value of good policy in general (9, 19); see White 2003: 80-85 for an examination of the term as clichéd and its appearance in a letter addressed to Cicero by Caesar in March 49, which caused the recipient anxiety over its meaning.

[40] *Att*. 8.11.3 (SB 161); see also *Att*. 8.12.4 (SB 162); 9.13.7 (SB 180); *Fam*. 6.5.2 (SB 239); 2.8.1 (SB 80); 7.20.2 (SB 333); 11.9.1 (SB 380); 12.14.4 (SB 405); 15.15.3 (SB 174); cf. Cic. *Dom*. 11; Liv. 39.51.4; Verg. *G*. 1. 394.

(4.3.1.11-19). Cicero sums up why this should comfort his addressee (4.3.2.1-3): *Quare meminisse debes eos, qui auctoritatem et consilium tuum non sint secuti, sua stultitia occidisse, cum tua prudentia salvi esse potuissent*. Ostensibly Cicero is assuring Sulpicius that if people had only listened to him, war would have been avoided, lives saved. However, the *consilium tuum* is a direct echo of the *consiliorum meorum* from above, and *auctoritas* is used elsewhere in his correspondence of Cicero's own unheeded warnings to Pompey: this statement applies to Cicero himself as well as to Sulpicius, nor is it an unfamiliar theme that he was a voice of reason, to which Pompey would not listen because of those around him.[41] In addition to his urging peace to Pompey, Cicero has also appropriated Sulpicius' consistent and public advocation of peace as his own, rendering their pre-war selves identical and himself free of any bias for either Pompey or Caesar in the early days of their conflict.

Sulpicius' work on behalf of the Republic has not gone unnoticed, and Cicero explains why this should provide comfort in the present. He constructs a dialogue, conjuring up his addressee in the present, having already been used as the model for the sender in the past (4.3.2.4-10):

Dices 'quid me ista res consolatur in tantis tenebris et quasi parietinis rei publicae?' est omnino vix consolabilis dolor. tanta est omnium rerum amissio et desperatio reciperandi. sed tamen et Caesar ipse ita de te iudicat et omnes cives sic existimant, quasi lumen aliquod exstinctis ceteris elucere sanctitatem et prudentiam et dignitatem tuam. haec tibi ad levandas molestias magna esse debent.

As Cicero blends himself with Sulpicius, he also brings them both closer to Caesar. Cicero is certain in his assessment of the judgment of Caesar and of the Roman citizens about Sulpicius, which is expressed here in present indicative verbs (*iudicat* and *existimant*). The distance from and curiosity about the dictator with which Cicero struggled in the letter addressed to Figulus has disappeared here. Just as Cicero's foresight was described in a metaphor, so Sulpicius' qualities in the present are listed and described as the 'last light shining in the state'. While in the previous metaphor, Cicero explicitly places Sulpicius in a position of equality with the sender, in this case, Sulpicius is treated on his own. But should the reader include Cicero in Caesar's assessment as well? The work each man did for the Republic before war broke out has already been equated, and at the outset of this letter Cicero asserted that he would be speaking from his own experience

[41] At *Fam*. 6.6.6.1-4 (SB 234) Cicero blames other Pompeians for undermining his advice to Pompey; see ch. 1 n. 69 for other examples of this sort of deflection of blame.

of what comforts him. Cicero could be substituted for Sulpicius in this passage; but Cicero holds back from making the connection explicitly, and it is in this way that the provisionality of the image is acknowledged.

The second source of comfort for Cicero's addressee should be the educational pursuits to which he has dedicated himself from childhood; again sender and addressee are interchangeable, and this allows Cicero to assign a particular 'good' quality to both (4.3.3.3-9):

reliqua sunt in te ipso neque mihi ignota nec minima solacia, aut, <ut> quidem ego sentio, multo maxima. quae ego experiens cottidie sic probo ut ea mihi salutem adferre videantur. te autem ab initio aetatis memoria teneo summe omnium doctrinarum studiosum fuisse omniaque quae a sapientissimis viris ad bene vivendum tradita essent summo studio curaque didicisse.

The strength of the comforts philosophy brings is emphasized by the opposition set up in the first sentence between *nec minima* and *multo maxima*; thus these are given more prominence than the reputation gained through service, more than the opinion of the dictator. In the remainder of this passage there are two echoes of the opening of the letter. In the second sentence the adverb *cottidie* is repeated from the first sentence in the letter, drawing a contrast between Sulpicius' grief, about which Cicero hears *cottidie*,[42] and his own experience of solace in study.[43] In the third sentence the superlative *sapientissimis*, describing Sulpicius' teachers, echoes *sapientia*, already assigned to Sulpicius.[44]

This has the effect of granting *sapientia* to Cicero as well – though, the connection once again depends upon the reader's confirmation, as it is not drawn explicitly, and this reflects the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning. In the opening of the letter, the sender expressed regret that a man as wise as Sulpicius had failed to look to his *bonis* for comfort. One of those assets is the study of the precepts of very wise men, something which Cicero has done. Therefore, Cicero has been wise enough to turn to what he has learned from the very wise. *Sapientia* becomes an important quality for Cicero during the Caesarian period, and as we shall see, it becomes an important component of his characterization of the dictator once Cicero takes

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[42] 4.3.1.2; see above, p. 60.

[43] Cf. Cicero's definition of *salus* in the *post reditum* period, during which Cicero characterizes his exile as a crisis of *salus*, restored to him primarily by Pompey but also by the other friends who supported him, including Lentulus and Milo (see ch. 1, p. 28). In that situation, possessing *salus* meant being an active Roman citizen, taking part in the activities of the forum. In the present letter, *salus* is instead associated with a withdrawal from those activites and dedication to philosophy.

[44] 4.3.1.4; see above, p. 60.

an active part in the regime. In the *post reditum* period Cicero assigned similar qualities to himself, to his political friends and to Pompey, which created a close-knit group of political allies and brought Cicero and Pompey together. He uses the same technique to draw Caesar into his political circle, endowing himself, Sulpicius and Caesar with wisdom.[45]

At the end of the letter, sender and addressee are pulled apart again, and Cicero spells out his intentions for his own future, suggesting that Sulpicius ought to take up the same path; so, having constructed an identical past and present for sender and addressee, he suggests an identical future (4.3.4.1-8):

tantum dicam, quod te spero approbaturum, me, postea quam illi arti cui studueram nihil esse loci neque in curia neque in foro viderim, omnem meam curam atque operam ad philosophiam contulisse. tuae scientiae excellenti ac singulari non multo plus quam nostrae relictum est loci. quare non equidem te moneo, sed mihi ita persuasi, te quoque in isdem versari rebus, quae etiam si minus prodessent, animum tamen a sollicitudine abducerent.

Though Cicero and Sulpicius are again treated as individuals in this passage, they are individuals with identical selves in identical positions. He sets his and Sulpicius' situations in parallel, as there is no place left for either man's profession. The phrase *non multo…est loci* echoes the *nihil esse loci* from the first sentence. Cicero holds up philosophy as a replacement for both, bringing the two back together with one way forward into the future.

Despite the differences in their past actions and current situations, Cicero performs a complex act of self-fashioning in this letter – an act of self-fashioning which is ideally suited to the epistolary form – which results in an identical sender and addressee in both past and present. Ignoring the fact that he had not publically advocated peace and moderation before the war, and ignoring that Sulpicius had been appointed as governor of Achaia, Cicero focusses on their shared grief for the Republic and advocates a complete withdrawal from public life.[46] That is to say, Cicero conjures up the *past* self of his addressee, on which he then models his own *past* self, thereby erasing his pre-war support of Pompey. And then, that done, Cicero conjures up the *present* self of Sulpicius in order to model it on his own *present* self, thereby placing the two men in the same position outside of Caesarian politics. This is all done behind the fiction of consolation, in which he encourages Sulpicius to take comfort in himself and his own good

[45] See below, p. 70 for further discussion of Caesar's *sapientia* and what it entails.

[46] We have already seen the ways in which Cicero manipulates events in order to construct parallels between his situation and that of his addressee; see ch. 1, p. 28 and pp. 42-43.

qualities. At the same time, some of the parallels between sender and addressee remain ambiguous; it is up to the addressee to draw the conclusion that Caesar has a good opinion of both Sulpicius and Cicero and that both correspondents have in common the quality of wisdom. It is through these ambiguities that Cicero incorporates tentativeness into his self-portrayal and acknowledges the provisionality of the images he creates. As in the letter addressed to Figulus, it is difficult to pin down the identity Cicero constructs for himself.

Though Cicero predicts a continued absence from politics, he is in the process of moving his *persona* back in that direction, fashioning a Caesar and a Rome to match, by stages. His manipulation of events allows Cicero to present himself and his friend as having made the choice to leave politics, but it also provides a foundation for his return. At the end of this letter Cicero is like Sulpicius in having advocated peace and remained neutral before the war, and in the second letter he will follow Sulpicius back into public life, won over by the wise dictator.

Ad Fam. 4.4 (SB 203), mid October 46 BC

The ostensible occasion for this letter is Sulpicius' appointment to the governorship of Achaia, and Cicero attempts to reassure him that he was right to accept the appointment, in response to concerns the addressee has apparently expressed. Conveniently, however, Sulpicius' return to the political arena (which had happened but was not mentioned in the previous letter) provides a parallel to Cicero's own return to the floor of the Senate house. Their return to politics provides the basis for one of the mirror-images constructed in this letter: Sulpicius and Cicero's selves are both altered again to become identical in a shift from inaction to action. This letter is packed with mirrors, and in the end Cicero has the picture he wants for the future of himself, of Caesar and of the state. As in *ad Familiares* 5.7, Cicero uses his memory of the past in this letter to fashion his ideal future; but this letter is also similar to the letter addressed to Pompey in that Cicero's ideal image of the future is provisional and in that this provisionality gives the sender political flexibility.

This letter is constructed as a direct response to Sulpicius' letter, and three of his concerns provide Cicero's content; as in the letter to Lentulus, Cicero paraphrases his addressee to

introduce his various topics,[47] which allows the sender to highlight the definitions of himself in relation to his addressee. The first of these is dealt with in the opening of the letter, where Cicero responds to an apology from Sulpicius (4.4.1.1-11):

*Accipio excusationem tuam qua usus es cur saepius ad me litteras uno exemplo dedisses, sed accipio ex ea parte quatenus aut neglegentia aut improbitate eorum qui epistulas accipiant fieri scribis ne ad nos perferantur; illam partem excusationis qua te scribis rationis paupertate (sic enim appellas) isdem verbis epistulas saepius mittere nec nosco nec probo. Et ego ipse, quem tu per iocum (sic enim accipio) divitias orationis habere dicis, me non esse verborum admodum inopem agnosco (*εἰρωνεύεσθαι *enim non necesse est), sed tamen idem (nec hoc* εἰρωνευόμενος*) facile cedo tuorum scriptorum subtilitati et elegantiae.*

This opening paragraph contains a complex of mirror-images. Its subject is the identical letters that Sulpicius has sent to Cicero, each letter a mirror-image of its predecessor. Shackleton Bailey argues that *uno exemplo* could not mean that the letters were exact duplicates; evidently Sulpicius had sent a series of letters very like each other and in apologetic exaggeration has called them 'duplicates'.[48] Whether the phrase *uno exemplo* was Sulpicius' or Cicero's, a series of 'identical' letters is an appropriate starting point for a letter in which Cicero will once again mould a version of himself in the image of Sulpicius. These letters symbolize the selves of sender and addressee, as Cicero writes and re-writes their identities with each epistolary exchange until one is the reflection of the other.

Cicero's response to Sulpicius' second excuse for sending those letters, that he suffers from 'verbal poverty', is the first step towards making sender and addressee identical in this letter. This comes in two parts. First, Cicero confirms their similarity, denying that Sulpicius is correct about himself and admitting that he, Cicero, does not suffer from such poverty either, making each again reflect the other. This admission in turn lends support to the second part of his response, in which Cicero yields to Sulpicius' *subtilitas* and *elegantia*.[49] This disclaimer is further strengthened by a series of parentheticals. The first two of these provide a sort of

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[47] *Fam*. 1.7; see ch. 1, p. 25.
[48] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 360-361.
[49] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 361: *subtilis* and *elegans* are applied to Lysias' style, Cic. *Brut*. 35; *Orat*. 30; 110; Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.78; the first amounts to *strigostus* at *Brut*. 64 but also suggests refinement and precision (cf. *de Orat*. 1.17). The *loquendi elegantia*, which implies correct and apposite word-choice, of Sulpicius' writings is commended at *Brut*. 153. In the *Orator*, *subtilitas* is associated with the plain style; see *Orat*. 20; cf. *Orat*. 76; 78; 83; 96; 98.

commentary on Sulpicius' assertion and indicate that Cicero is aware that his addressee was making a joke; the second two offer explanation for Cicero's own claims.

Cicero draws attention to his awareness that any denial of skill may be considered merely courteous self-deprecation, an epistolary version of the *captatio benevolentiae*, by which an orator attempts to win over the audience either by making an explicit disclaimer of eloquence or by concealing eloquence.[50] He heads off such suspicion by naming the practice in Greek, εἰρωνεύεσθαι,[51] first stating that there is no need for it, then explicitly asserting that his denial is not false modesty. But should we believe him? Let us consider the status of the selves of sender and addressee. In the lines immediately preceding these, Cicero made Sulpicius his equal, and over the course of the preceding letter the two were moulded into mirror images of each other. The verb he uses here, *cedo*, echoes its compound form, *concedo*, from the previous letter, where Cicero claims that no one has suffered to the same extent as himself over the disaster sustained by the Republic. That however, parallels the preceding passage, in which Sulpicius is singled out as having suffered especially. In that letter the verb highlights a similarity between the men and represents the starting point for the process by which they become identical: here, therefore, Cicero has yielded to no one but himself.

Cicero claims that he is not indulging in false modesty, but that is precisely what he is doing. On the other hand, is it false modesty to yield to one identical to yourself in skill? Either way, Cicero has managed an indirect compliment to himself, and in any case, a *captatio benevolentiae* provides a neat transition into Cicero's second topic: Sulpicius' return to politics via Achaia and Cicero's return to oratory via the *pro Marcello*. Having reasserted that sender and addressee are identical, Cicero goes on to fashion them both a role in Caesar's government. As the letter proceeds, three identities are manipulated: those of Sulpicius, of Rome and of Cicero; in each case the party's present self is moulded into the mirror-image of his/its past self, thereby creating continuity between the past and present behaviour of sender and addressee, and cultural

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[50] See Anderson 2001; for further examples of an epistolary *captatio*, see Fro. *de fer. Als*. 3.8 (231, 12-15) (ch. 4, pp. 139-140); *Orat*. 1-2 (153, 4-10); Symm. *Rel*. 9.1.

[51] Büchner 1941: 356-357 identifies Cicero's usage with the definition given by Aristotle at *Nic. Eth*. IV.7.14-17, which is polite, rather than with the definition found at Arist. *Rh*. 1379b.24, which is mocking in tone; but see Baldwin 1992: 8 who sees no reason for the reference to Aristotle, as the verb is common in Greek philosophy; cf. Ar. *V*. 174 (mocking); Theophr. *Char*. 1 (definition of the 'dissembler'); of Socrates' practice of dissembling in argument: Cic. *Off*. 1.30.108; *Acad. Pr*. 2.5.15.

or political continuity between Rome's Republican past and its present character under the rule of Caesar.[52]

The second bit of Sulpicius' letter to which Cicero is responding is a concern about having accepted his appointment from Caesar. He has set out his reasons for accepting and Cicero approves (4.4.2.1-5): *Consilium tuum quo te usum scribis hoc Achaicum negotium non recusavisse, cum semper probavissem, tum multo magis probavi lectis tuis proximis litteris. omnes enim causae quas commemoras iustissimae sunt tuaque et auctoritate et prudentia dignissimae*. The *consilium tuum* echoes the previous letter, where Cicero was encouraging Sulpicius to take comfort in his past actions on behalf of the Republic. The word is consistently used by Cicero in reference to action, and here it affects a shift from past to present action. The end of this passage contains an echo of the previous letter, where *auctoritas* and *prudentia* were listed among Sulpicius' qualities in describing his efforts to avoid war. Past and present action are assigned identical qualities, and so Sulpicius' present is now a mirror-image of his past.

The third topic supplied by Sulpicius is his dissatisfaction at being away from Rome; Cicero has two direct responses to this dissatisfaction, both of which include a characterization of Caesar, and the second of which includes a characterization of Rome and brings Cicero himself into the picture. In the first Cicero points out the way in which his addressee is better off than those at Rome (4.4.2.12-16): *atque hoc ipso melior est tua quam nostra condicio quod tu quid doleat scribere audes,*[53] *nos ne id quidem tuto possumus; nec id victoris vitio,*[54] *quo nihil moderatius, sed ipsius victoriae, quae civilibus bellis semper est insolens*. We have already seen the ways in which Cicero assigns the blame for Pompey's behaviour to those around him rather than to Pompey himself. The present passage contains an echo of the *pro Marcello*, where the

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[52] Cultural continuity between the distant past and present at Rome is Symmachus' primary goal in his *Relationes*; see ch. 5.

[53] Shackleton Bailey 2001(ii): 246, n. 2 suggests that *quid doleat* would have related to private or provincial matters that could be committed safely to paper. In his commentary, Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 361, he explains that whatever Sulpicius' provincial vexations, they would not involve high politics to the same degree. Cf. *Marc*. 1. Freedom of speech would become an important element in imperial panegyric. Pliny praises the new culture of freedom under Trajan and the emperor's exhortation of the senators to express their opinions frankly, *Pan*. 66.3-4; see ch. 3.

[54] Cf. *Fam*. 4.4.4.16; see ch. 1 n. 83.

blame for the current condition of Rome and its citizens is deflected from Caesar as an individual, described as moderate, to the abstract *victoria*.[55]

The second response to Sulpicius' complaint about his location is an acknowledgement that those in Rome do have one advantage over him, namely that they witnessed the decision to restore *salus* to their colleague Marcellus (4.4.3.1-3). Cicero's account of the events surrounding the decision also puts Caesar in a favourable light, and it is here that Rome's identity is fashioned according to the model of its past (4.4.3.8-14):

…repente praeter spem dixit se senatui roganti de Marcello ne ominis[56] *quidem causa negaturum. fecerat autem hoc senatus, ut, cum a L. Pisone mentio esset facta de Marcello et C. Marcellus se ad Caesaris pedes abiecisset, cunctus consurgeret et ad Caesarem supplex accederet. noli quaerere: ita mihi pulcher hic dies visus est ut speciem aliquam viderer videre quasi reviviscentis rei publicae.*

Cicero offers a vivid and dramatic picture of what has taken place in the Senate: when C. Marcellus had thrown himself at the feet of Caesar, the senators rose up as one in supplication, and Caesar granted their request. The phrase *pedes abiecisset* is used in the *perorationes* of more than one of Cicero's forensic speeches as a component of *pathos*; it is also used to describe the 'charade' that lawyers sometimes used.[57] The verb *consurgo* is used especially of a concerted movement of a body of people.[58] Cicero presents both the Senate's attempt (as a unified body) to persuade Caesar and the dictator's response as spontaneous and unexpected. As Gotoff points out however, it is wise to be suspicious of outbursts of spontaneous, unanimous enthusiasm before absolute rulers; in this case it is difficult to believe that a Senate filled with Caesar's partisans and former Pompeians would have agreed to adulate Marcellus and potentially embarrass Caesar.[59]

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[55] *Marc*. 9: *at vero cum aliquid clementer, mansuete, iuste, moderate, sapienter factum – in iracundia praesertim, quae est inimica consilio, et in victoria, quae natura insolens et superba est* ... (this is the only occurrence of *moderatus* in the speech); for other examples of deflection, see ch. 1 n. 69.

[56] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 362: 'For Caesar to have refused the Senate's first request would have been a bad omen for their future relations'.

[57] Cf. *Fam*. 6.14.2 (SB 228): *cum fratres et proprinqui tui iacerent ad pedes et ego essem locutus quae causa, quae tuum tempus postulabat*; *Att*. 4.2.4 (SB 74): *…Cornicinus ad suam veterem fabulam rediit; abiecta toga se ad generi pedes abiecit*; *Rhet. Her*. 4.65; V. Max. 8.1.absol.6. Cicero employs the practice himself (see *Cael*. 79; *Mil*. 100) and describes others prostrating themselves on his behalf during his exile (see *Red. Sen*. 12; *Sest*. 74), but at times also mocks his opponent for making a spectacle of himself in this way (*Phil*. 2.86).

[58] Cf. (*ut senatus*) Tac. *Ann*. 11.5; (as sign of respect) Cic. *Ver*. 4.138; Plin *Pan*. 54.2; Petr. 60.7.

[59] Gotoff 2002: 224-225 includes a summary of scholars' attempts to explain the circumstances that led to these events, including the possibility that they were pre-arranged by Caesar himself; Winterbottom 2002: 29-30 acknowledges that the occasion may have been less impromptu than in Cicero's account; much had been done in

Whether the actions of Senate and dictator were orchestrated on the spot or are exaggerated here by Cicero, they serve as another image in the sender's mirror. The phrase *noli quaerere* is equivalent to *quid quaeris?*, a common introduction to a brief, clinching remark, meaning 'what more can I say?', or 'in brief'.[60] Here it introduces Cicero's interpretation of the events in the Senate, in which, as in the *pro Marcello*, Cicero attempts to place Marcellus' pardon in a broader context.[61] The image from the Senate is interpreted as a vision of the revivified Republic.[62] The scene on the Senate floor is the mirror-image of the Republic, and again present is the mirror-image of past. As in the letter to Pompey from twenty years earlier,[63] there is a strong sense of nostalgia, this time for the not so distant past, when the Senate still possessed *auctoritas*. Just as Sulpicius' present mirrors his past, so the Senate's present mirrors the Republican past.

In the *pro Marcello* it is the *auctoritas* of the Senate to which Cicero claims Caesar has bowed in the case of Marcellus, for which he praises the dictator's *sapientia*.[64] The victory over himself seemed to show that Caesar respected the Senate and the Republic.[65] We have already seen the way in which Cicero assigns the quality of *sapientia* to Sulpicius and to himself,[66] and in the speech it is also extended to Caesar. In *ad Familiares* 4.3 *sapientia* is defined in part as heeding the lessons of the *sapientissimi*; in the speech Caesar's *sapientia* is defined in part as bowing to the *auctoritas* of the Senate, which has granted Cicero the opportunity to advise Caesar on the policies that will ensure the dictator's glory and immortality.[67] If we conflate the two

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advance on Marcellus' behalf, and 'the scene in the Senate might have been stage-managed or at least foreseen: both Caesar and Cicero playing out the parts of sudden changes of mind' (see n. 14); cf. Kennedy 1972: 259.

60 Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 362.

61 Gotoff 2002: 219.

62 Winterbottom 2002: 29 notes that this letter 'strikes no note other than pleasure at the turn of events', arguing that this letter should not be supposed to have been meant as other than private correspondence; cf. Schmidt 1987: 45; but see Gotoff 2002: 222, n. 7, who points out, within the context of his warning against taking the emotional content of the letters at face-value, that sections one and five of this letter are less upbeat than sections three and four. See n. 14.

63 See ch. 1, pp. 14-19.

64 *Marc*. 3.

65 Albrecht 2003: 172-173; on Caesar's *clementia* as a forerunner to imperial *clementia*, see Griffin 2003.

66 See above, pp. 63-64.

67 Gotoff 2002: 233.

texts, Caesar would be wise to heed the lessons of the wise orator Cicero, who has offered himself as adviser to the regime.[68]

At this point in the letter Cicero brings himself into the picture and Sulpicius' return to public life is paralleled by the orator's (4.4.4.1-9):

Itaque, cum omnes ante me rogati gratias Caesari egissent praeter Volcacium (is enim, si eo loco esset, negavit se facturum fuisse), ego rogatus mutavi meum consilium; nam statueram, non mehercule inertia sed desiderio pristinae[69] dignitatis, in perpetuum tacere. fregit hoc meum consilium et Caesaris magnitudo animi[70] et senatus officium; itaque pluribus verbis egi Caesari gratias, meque metuo ne etiam in ceteris rebus honesto otio privarim, quod erat unum solacium in malis.

His use of *meum consilium* parallels its use above in reference to Sulpicius,[71] and as above there is a shift from past to present, from inaction to action. Cicero's present is now the mirror-image of his past, just like his addressee's. The parallel between the two passages also implies tacit approval from Sulpicius of Cicero's taking an active role in Caesar's government. In the previous passage, the verb *probo* is repeated where Cicero approves of his addressee's return to politics,[72] which echoes the opening of the letter, where Cicero does not approve of the suggestion that the selves of sender and addressee are not identical.[73] The three passages together add up to an invitation to the reader to approve of Cicero's return to public life. But it is up to the addressee, of course, to draw this conclusion, and Sulpicius is not present in person to grant his approval to the sender. Cicero continues to construct his ideal identity in relation to Sulpicius by implication rather than explicit statement, acknowleding the provisionality of his self-portrayal.

At the end of this passage Cicero expresses concern that he will be taken away from the pursuit of philosophy, which was the activity he offered as solace to his addressee in the previous letter, and this continues to be Cicero's theme in the following passage. Towards the end of the

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[68] Gotoff 2002: 234-235; Gotoff's textual analysis of the speech reveals that its aim is to suggest that Caesar has at his disposal an orator-politician-statesman as an experienced and frank adviser; cf. Braund 1998: 69-70 on the programme Cicero sets out for Caesar. Against this view see Dyer 1990, who reads the *pro Marcello* as a veiled attack on Caesar; followed by Morford 1992; against Dyer, see Winterbottom 2002 (see above, p. 48 and n. 5). On the advice set out for Caesar in the *de Provinciis Consularibus*, see Steel 2001: 187-189.

[69] The adjective *pristinus* also appears at *Brut*. 11, where Cicero assures Atticus that his friend has brought him comfort, in part by recalling Cicero to his 'former studies', and at *Marc*. 2, when Cicero praises Caesar for re-opening the door to the speaker's former occupation.

[70] A quality assigned to Pompey and to Cicero himself in his earlier correspondence; see ch. 1, n. 39; cf. Pliny's correspondence where Trajan's *indulgentia* is often the driving force behind the sender's actions, e.g. Plin. *Ep. Tra*. 10.3a, 10.4, 10.5, 10.8, 10.12, 10.13; see ch. 3, pp. 93-94.

[71] 4.4.2; see above, p. 68.

[72] 4.4.2; see above, p. 68.

[73] 4.4.1; see above, p. 66.

letter he makes a resolution for the future, modifying the plan presented previously to Sulpicius, which primarily takes account of the desires of Caesar (4.4.4.9-12): *sed tamen, quoniam effugi eius offensionem, qui fortasse arbitraretur me hanc rem publicam non putare se perpetuo tacerem, modice hoc faciam aut etiam intra modum, ut et illius voluntati et meis studiis serviam*. He presents his decision to continue in the Senate as a compromise between his and Caesar's wishes. The concern, however, is that the dictator may suspect that the sender does not consider Rome a Republic if he remains silent. Cicero has already expressed grief for its loss, but in this letter the restoration of Marcellus signals its return, and Cicero suggests that Caesar is not only aware of the consequences of his actions, but indeed that he intended this outcome.[74] This characterization of Caesar and Cicero contributes to the picture the sender has created of the circumstances under which he returned to the Senate and under which he will remain active, that is, that he has been convinced of the Republic's restoration by Caesar's actions.[75]

As in the last letter, the selves of Sulpicius and Cicero are made identical, and the return to politics of the one mirrored by the other. Along with them, present and past are rendered identical, both for the two men and for Rome, creating political continuity between past, present and future.[76] As in the *pro Marcello*, Cicero constructs a self for Caesar, according to which he would behave in such a way as to allow the Senate its *auctoritas*, as a man wise enough to yield to the Senate and restore the Republican way of doing things. But the provisionality of this picture is revealed in Cicero's treatment of his return to politics as a compromise with Caesar. He has said that dedicating himself exclusively to philosophy would mislead Caesar into thinking

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[74] Cicero also uses Marcellus' restoration as an opportunity to contrast Caesar and Pompey, claiming that Pompey, if he had been victorious, would not have treated his enemies with the same *clementia* (*Marc*. 17-18); see Gotoff 2002: 230-231; elsewhere he remembers Pompey's greatness, but asserts that Caesar is greater (*Deit*. 12); see Albrecht 2003:178. This kind of contrast becomes a regular feature of imperial panegyric and is found in Pliny's letters, between Trajan and Domitian (see ch. 3), and Symmachus' *Relationes*, between Valentinian II and Gratian (see ch. 5).

[75] Gotoff 1993: xxviii: 'Caesar's action in pardoning Marcellus won Cicero over completely … At this point Cicero could conceive of Caesar as the restorer of the Republic'. Gotoff cites *Fam*. 6.6 (SB 234) as illustrating Cicero's new attitude toward Caesar. This letter provides an example of the third, optimistic political *consolatio* identified in *Fam*. 4.13 (SB 225); see above, p. 51 for a summary of the types; cf. *Fam*. 4.13.6-7 (SB 225), an abbreviated sample of the letter type (see above, pp. 55-56). *Fam*. 6.6 also provides an example of a letter in which Cicero maintains the fiction he has created. The upbeat consolation, in which Cicero predicts with confidence that his addressee will be restored to Rome, is not interrupted or undermined, perhaps suggesting that fiction and reality have merged.

[76] Cf. *Fam*. 4.13.2.14-3.9 (SB 225), where present and past are set in opposition within the sample of the first, sad and miserable political *consolatio*, see above, pp. 53-54.

that Cicero does not consider Rome a Republic, and that he will serve both Caesar's wishes and his studies. Thus the 'reality' of the active Cicero constructed in this letter depends upon Caesar. Cicero will only remain active in the case that Caesar is who Cicero says he is. In the event that Caesar does not live up to the ideal, Cicero has expressed a preference for philosophy, and may return to it with joy. Because of the provisionality of epistolary image making, the letter form is a flexible tool of self-fashioning, and in this letter, Cicero takes advantage of that so as to construct two desirable self-identities, either of which may be valid.

Julius Caesar

There are more extant letters among Cicero's collection addressed to Caesar than addressed to Pompey, though they are still relatively few.[77] From the period of interest to us, during which Caesar held supreme power in Rome, there are two letters addressed to the dictator. Both are letters of recommendation, and both stand out as unusual examples of that letter type. The first, *ad Familiares* 13.16 (SB 316), on behalf of a certain Apollonius, contains only a few of the expected elements of recommendations; the second, *ad Familiares* 13.15 (SB 317), on behalf of Precilius, is written in a colloquial style, has a familiar tone and is filled with quotations from Greek epic and drama.

H. Cotton has argued that these letters, among a selection of others, represent Cicero's 'elaborate attempts to free himself from a fixed format',[78] suggesting that the stereotypical letter of recommendation had become so entrenched that it seemed inadequate for a recommendation meant in earnest.[79] However, as we shall see, the letter type serves as the fiction in these letters, beneath which is Cicero's agenda of self-fashioning. Just as 'consolation' was used to divert the reader from Cicero's acts of self-protrayal in the letters to Figulus and Sulpicius, so 'recommendation' obscures his aim in these letters. It is here that we see how Cicero defines himself in relation to Caesar directly, and he not only attempts to reinforce the ideals constructed in the *pro Marcello*, by which Cicero would act as adviser to Caesar, but also, paradoxically, declares himself independent of Caesar's control. Again, Cicero takes advantage of the provisionality of epistolary image making in order to construct a contradictory self-identity, the

[77] See White 2003: 93-95 for a register of their correspondence.
[78] Cotton 1985: 334.
[79] Cotton 1985: 332.

aim of which, I shall argue, is to keep the dictator from pinning down the sender or where he stands politically.

Ad Fam. 13.16 (SB 316), December 46 or January 45(?)

Judging from its opening paragraphs, it is difficult to tell what sort of letter this is. The recommendee, the freedman Apollonius, is only mentioned in relation to his master, Crassus, for the first two paragraphs. In fact, Crassus is the focus of the opening passages, and Cicero points out that it is Caesar who convinced the sender of Crassus' worth. As the letter proceeds, Cicero uses *I-You* discourse to define (and redefine) sender and addressee within the context of Caesar's attitude towards Apollonius. Two images of Cicero are constructed within this context, and as in the Figulus letter, these juxtaposed selves are both potentially valid.

In the third paragraph Apollonius finally receives direct attention as an individual, and at last Cicero explains the purpose of his letter (13.16.3.1-10):

Quod cum speraret te quoque ita existimare, in Hispaniam ad te maxime ille quidem suo consilio sed etiam me auctore est profectus. cui ego commendationem non sum pollicitus, non quin eam valituram apud te arbitrarer, sed neque egere mihi commendatione videbatur, qui et in bello tecum fuisset et propter memoriam Crassi de tuis unus esset, et, si uti commendationibus vellet, etiam per alios eum videbam id consequi posse; testimonium mei de eo iudici, quod et ipse magni aestimabat et ego apud te valere eram expertus, et libenter dedi.

In the opening sentence of this passage, which describes Apollonius' decision to join Caesar in Spain, prominence is given to his own initiative (the *quidem* indicates that it was primarily the freedman's own opinion that motivated him), while Cicero's advice is tacked on, almost as an afterthought (a *non modo…sed etiam* construction would have given them equal weight). Cicero sets up an opposition, using two forms of *valeo*, between what he is not doing, recommending Apollonius, and what he is doing.

Cicero reveals that the aim of this letter is to offer a testimonial of his opinion of Apollonius. In other words, he will deliver an epistolary panegyric praising the character of the freedman. The word *testimonium* is used in the *de Oratore* to describe what the orator does in a laudatory speech.[80] While this testimonial is explicitly not meant as a recommendation, it is also clear that it is not empty or meaningless praise. The recipient of the praise values it highly,

[80] *de Orat.* 3.341; cf. *Att*. 7.8.1 (SB 131); Caes. *Gal*. 5.52.4; *Orat*. 41; Sen. *Suas*. 6.22 (describing Livy's *testimonium* of Cicero); Plin. *Ep*. 6.22.5; 8.24.8; *Pan*. 70.6; Vell. 2.76.1; Apul. *Met.* 6.13; Gel. 12.5.3.

apparently confident that it will make a difference for him, and Cicero claims to know from experience that Caesar pays attention to the sort of testimonial he will give of Apollonius. This is perhaps a reference to the panegyric recently delivered on Caesar himself, the *pro Marcello*, in which case, the addressee (*You*) is defined as the Caesar constructed in that speech, who has heeded the advice offered by the orator.

Cicero then gives a seven line testimonial of his opinion of Apollonius' character, identifying himself (*I*) as the orator who delivered the *pro Marcello* (i.e. the adviser to Caesar). There are two parts to this brief character sketch. In the first Cicero praises Apollonius' education and dedication to worthy pursuits. The second part is related to Caesar (13.16.4.3-7): *nunc autem incensus studio rerum tuarum eas litteris Graecis mandare cupiebat. posse arbitror; valet ingenio, habet usum, iam pridem immortalitati laudum tuarum mirabiliter cupit*. Cicero praises Apollonius' ability to praise Caesar, which certainly seems like a good strategy for putting the addressee in a favourable mood towards the freedman.

However, this passage also picks up on one of the prominent themes in the *pro Marcello*, where Cicero offers advice to Caesar on how he could and should go about winning immortality by means of praise from posterity: in response to Caesar's assertion that he has lived long enough, Cicero argues that despite Caesar's immortal deeds (*rerum tuarum immortalium*), he may not gain glory, defined as service to one's fellow-citizens, country and the world, if he departs the state now;[81] and he urges Caesar to work for a favourable judgment from posterity, ensuring that his fame (*tuas laudes*) will not disappear into obscurity.[82] The testimonial on Apollonius suggests that the freedman will help ensure the immortal glory held out to Caesar in the *pro Marcello*.

In the closing of the letter Cicero reasserts the distinction between recommendation and testimonial, and reverses the course of his letter in the last two sentences by means of two contradictions (13.16.4.8-11): *Habes opinionis meae testimonium, sed tu hoc facilius multo pro tua singulari prudentia iudicabis. et tamen, quod negaveram, commendo tibi eum. quicquid ei commodaveris, erit id mihi maiorem in modum gratum*. Within three sentences, Cicero has turned this letter inside out: in the first sentence he redefines his addressee (*You*), as a Caesar able

[81] *Marc*. 26; cf. *Marc.* 27.
[82] *Marc*. 29-30; cf. *Marc*. 9; 28.

to judge Apollonius himself (emphasized by *facilius multo*), and as one who does not need Cicero's advice. This sentence eliminates the need for the testimonial, rendering it worthless, and stands in opposition to Cicero's previous claim that it would be of value.[83]

It is at this point that Cicero executes an abrupt shift and redefines himself, recommending Apollonius after all, and doing what he had explicitly said he would not. In the last two sentences Cicero falls into formulaic recommendation: the phrase *commendo tibi eum* and its variants are very common,[84] as are the verb *commodo*[85] and the expression of thanks in the last clause, often juxtaposed as they are here. This stands in opposition to Cicero's claim in paragraph three that a recommendation was not necessary and therefore not promised to Apollonius.[86] The sender (*I*) has been transformed to match the new addressee constructed in the previous passage, as a Cicero not offering a judgment of Apollonius but a formulaic recommendation.

The dramatic reverse at the end of this letter places its purpose in question. Why did Cicero write this letter? What is the meaning of the blunt oppositions it contains? It seems unlikely that he genuinely meant to recommend Apollonius, given the strong case he makes for there being no need for such a thing. It is made clear in the first half of the letter that Caesar already has a high opinion of Apollonius' master Crassus, as he has even convinced Cicero himself of Crassus' worth. Apollonius is going to Spain, where Caesar will have the opportunity to observe him and his character first-hand; nor was Cicero the instigator of Apollonius' journey. In the second half of the letter Cicero does give the testimonial that he seems to think might support Apollonius' bid to enter Caesar's circle, but in the end undermines the force of that too. Cotton suggests that by denying that a *testimonium* is a recommendation, 'Cicero is trying to

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[83] 13.16.3; see above, p. 74.

[84] Cf. *Fam*. 13.6.4 (SB 57); 13.13 (SB 280); 13.15.1 (SB 317) (see below, p. 79); 13.17.3 (SB 283); 13.19.2 (SB 285); 13.20 (SB 286); 13.21.2 (SB 287); 13.23.2 (SB 289); 13.25 (SB 291); 13.30.1 (SB 301); 13.32.1 (SB 303); 13.33 (SB 304); 13.34 (SB 305); 13.36.2 (SB 307); 13.37 (SB 308); 13.38 (309); 13.39 (SB 310); 13.40 (SB 59); 13.43.1 (SB 268); 13.45 (SB 271); 13.46 (SB 272); 13.48 (SB 142); 13.51 (SB 61); 13.53.1 (SB 130); 13.58 (SB 140); 13.60.2 (SB 55); 13.63.2 (SB 63); 13.70 (SB 298); 13.71 (SB 299); 13.77.2 (SB 212); 13.79 (SB 276); see Cotton 1984 on Greek and Latin formulas in letters of recommendation.

[85] Cf. Plin. *Ep. Tra*. 10.120.1; Fro. *de Nep. Am*. 2.9 (238, 22); *Fam*. 13.13 (SB 280); 13.32.2 (SB 303); 13.35.2 (SB 306); 13.37 (SB 308); 13.53.1 (SB 130); 13.54.1 (SB 132); 13.69.2 (SB 297); 13.75.2 (SB 60).

[86] 13.16.3; see above, p. 74.

reinvigorate and breathe new life into what seemed to him to have lost its former vitality and hence its potential efficacy'.[87]

But there is more to it than that. Cicero has denied that there is need for him to recommend Apollonius to Caesar, but then does so anyway (saying one thing, while doing another again). And Apollonius is held out as a man capable of ensuring for Caesar the immortality promised the dictator in the *pro Marcello*, if he heeds the advice of Cicero. There are two selves of sender presented in this letter, each associated with one of the two occurrences of *valeo* in the passage explaining what Cicero is and is not doing.[88] One Cicero is offering a testimonial, and knows that this sort of thing has weight with the addressee – *ego apud te valere eram expertus*. The other Cicero offers a recommendation, something he is sure would have weight with the addressee – *eam valituram apud te*.

We might interpret this letter as a veiled exhortation aimed at Caesar to remember the message of the *pro Marcello*, reinforcing the ideals constructed there. The second occurrence of *valeo* seems to be a reference to the speech, and the testimonial of Apollonius contains further references to the suggestions in the speech that Cicero is able to offer the advice Caesar needs to gain the eternal fame he seeks. Perhaps Cicero is simply using Apollonius, a man unknown except in this letter,[89] to take the opportunity to remind Caesar of the testimonial dedicated to his own character and good qualities. But the recommendation might equally have weight with Caesar, and in the end, that is what he offers.

Both testimonial and recommendation are said to be both unnecessary and potentially influential. Therefore, neither definition of the sender and addressee is clearly favoured, and again, it is difficult to pin down who Cicero is meant to be. The addressee may take his choice – Caesar may welcome Apollonius either in light of Cicero's testimonial, which would signal confirmation of the selves associated with the *pro Marcello* (i.e. a Caesar taking advice from Cicero), or in light of Cicero's recommendation, which would signal a confirmation of the second set of selves: a Caesar who does not need substantial advice from Cicero but will hear his formulaic platitudes. Each image of the sender is provisional: who Cicero is depends upon his

[87] Cotton 1985: 334.
[88] 13.16.3.1-10; see above, p. 74.
[89] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 457.

addressee, and the sender acknowledges the artificiality of the second possible relationship between them.

Ad Fam. 13.15 (SB 317), May or June 45 BC (?)[90]

This letter is particularly odd compared to other specimens of recommendations and seems wholly inappropriate to be sent to an unconstitutional ruler. Scholars have variously explained what at first sight seems to be a bizarre conglomeration of Greek quotations[91] and a flippant tone. E. Schuckburgh questions the letter's date because it seems unlikely to have been written after Tullia's death, and she asserts that as it is a letter one would not expect to be sent to a head of state, she would not be surprised if it was never sent.[92] O. E. Schmidt contends that Cicero would not have written in so airy a style so soon after the death of Tullia and that the letter must have been sent before his loss,[93] to which R. Y. Tyrrell and L. C. Purser respond by asserting that Cicero may well have omitted mention of his loss, since he was 'attempting a literary *tour de force* in endeavoring to exhibit originality in a letter of introduction'.[94] Shackleton Bailey characterizes Tyrrell and Purser's argument as a 'fair answer' to Schmidt, but states that there is more to the matter than that, arguing that the letter was meant as a defence against the charge that Cicero was involved in an anti-Caesarian movement.[95] P. White describes the characterization of Caesar in this letter as 'a hero of literally Homeric grandeur whom Cicero has learned the folly of challenging, and whose favor he must entreat even in order to recommend to him the son of one of Caesar's own friends'.[96] Albrecht characterizes this letter as surprisingly charming within an

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[90] See Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 457-458. Because of the title *Imperator* in the heading, this letter is generally dated to March 45, as Caesar was again saluted thus on 19 February, and the title is absent from *Fam*. 13.16 (SB 316), although Cicero uses the title in a letter early in the civil war (*Att*. 9.11A [SB 178A]) (1977(ii): 457). However, Shackleton Bailey argues that the implications of *Fam*. 13.15.2 (see below, p. 83 and n. 117) make late spring or early summer more probable.

[91] Compared to the rest of *ad Fam*. this letter contains a high proportion (in *ad Fam*. overall there are four quotations each from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; this letter contains two from the *Iliad*, three from the *Odyssey* and a tag common to both), while none of the other letters of recommendation contains any Greek quotations; see Baldwin 1992: 9 and n. 60.

[92] Shuckburgh 1900: 228, n. 1; 229, n. 1.

[93] Schmidt 1987: 275; in order to resolve the potential question of date caused by the title *Imperator* Schmidt argues that because Caesar had previously been saluted thus, it is not inappropriate here.

[94] Tyrrell and Purser 1897: 42; cf. Cotton 1985: 332: 'Probably on account of the quotations from Greek poetry, Cicero feels that he has transcended the ordinary letter of recommendation'.

[95] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 457-459.

[96] White 2003: 88.

usually formal category of letter writing, which he argues shows that the degree of familiarity with one's addressee determines the style of a letter.[97]

None of these interpretations takes account of the fundamental contradiction embedded in this letter, and as a result each is incorrect or incomplete in some way. White neatly summarizes what is happening on the surface of Cicero's approach to the dictator, drawing a contrast with a previous recommendation sent to Caesar, in which he was called Cicero's *alter ego*;[98] Albrecht is correct in identifying the addressee as the determining factor in its style; Shackleton Bailey offers the most convincing reading,[99] but it does not go far enough in its interpretation. This letter is indeed a political one, and as in the previous letter, 'recommendation' is a fiction. The letter is constructed in such a way as to make the ostensible subject of the letter, the recommendation of Precilius, act as bookends: the letter begins and ends with formulaic recommendation language, while Cicero's genuine message is buried somewhere in the middle. The series of Greek quotations is not merely an 'accumulation of not very apt tags from Homer'.[100] Hutchinson points out that aside from the artistic value of this 'elaborate and subtle series of citations', his use of Greek in this letter 'also enables Cicero to write with the distance, and community, of cultured discourse about his difficult political relationship with his addressee'.[101]

The letter opens with the formulaic <*P.*> *Precilium tibi commendo*[102] *unice*, and the following four and a half lines consist of the usual elements meant to illustrate the close connection between the sender, addressee and whomever is being recommended. Precilius is described as *tui necessari* and *mei familiarissimi* (*Fam*. 13.15.1.1-2); Cicero's regard for Precilius is expressed with the verb *diligo* (13.15.1.4); Precilius is assigned *modestia*, *humanitas* and *animus* (13.15.1.3), qualities often assigned to the subjects of Cicero's recommendations.[103] At

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[97] Albrecht 2003: 71.

[98] White 2003: 88; see *Fam*. 7.5.1 (SB 26): *Vide quam mihi persuaserim te me esse alteram, non modo in iis rebus quae ad me ipsum sed etiam in iis quae ad meos pertinent*.

[99] Baldwin 1992: 9: 'Everybody quotes Tyrrell and Purser to the effect that "it has a strained and unnatural tone of gaiety". Rightly so, but Shackleton Bailey's suggested political nuances in the choice of quotations are cogent'; cf. Swain 2002: 160, 164, n. 100.

[100] Shuckburgh 1900: 229, n. 1.

[101] Hutchinson 1998: 14-15, within a discussion on the use of Greek in Cicero's letters; the political message of the letter is not discussed.

[102] For other occurrences of this formula in Cicero's letters of recommendation, see n. 84.

[103] For both adjectives together, see *Fam*. 13.12.1 (SB 279); 13.26.2 (SB 292); 13.70 (SB 298); 13.27.2 (SB 293); for *necessarius* alone, *Fam*. 13.6.1 (SB 57); 13.7.4 (SB 320); 13.8.3 (SB 321); 13.11.3 (SB 278); 13.23.1 (SB 289); 13.29.1 (SB 282); 13.30.2 (SB 301); 13.37 (SB 308); 13.71 (SB 299); 13.72.1 (SB 300); 13.79 (SB 276); for

the close of the letter, when Cicero returns to a direct treatment of his recommendation, he indicates how grateful he will be if Caesar accommodates Precilius, using another formulaic phrase, *vehementer mihi gratum feceris* (13.15.3.1-2),[104] and citing the addressee's *humanitas* (13.15.3.2), as is often done, as a reason for granting the sender's request.[105]

Immediately following the typical opening sentences, the tone changes drastically, and Cicero uses colloquial language (13.15.1.5-8): *em hic ille est de illis maxime qui irridere atque obiurgare me solitus est quod me non tecum, praesertim cum abs te honorificentissime invitarer, coniungerem*. The colloquial *em* is used here to introduce a statement,[106] and signals a shift from formulaic language to something more familiar.[107] It also gives this passage a casual tone, and Cicero's reminder that he would not join Caesar even given the other's efforts to win him over, which is emphasized by *praesertim* and the superlative *honorificentissime*, is surprising given the current political situation. That Precilius mocked Cicero because of his attitude is presented as an argument for Caesar granting the sender's request on Precilius' behalf. The reference to Cicero's refusal to heed Precilius in the past allows the sender to shift topic to his own behaviour.

The theme of Cicero's allegiances since the start of the civil war is treated in a series of Greek quotations, defining himself (*I*) in the past and in the present. The first group of quotations

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familiaris alone (also frequent in recommendations), *Fam*. 13.2 (SB 314); 13.5.2 (SB 319); 13.9.2 (SB 139); 13.10.1 (SB 277); 13.13 (SB 280); 13.14.1 (SB 281); 13.17.1 (SB 283); 13.24.1 (SB 290); 13.25 (SB 291); 13.26.1 (SB 292); 13.27.2 (SB 293); 13.29.2 (SB 282); 13.30.1 (SB 301); 13.33 (SB 304); 13.35.1 (SB 306); 13.38 (SB 309); 13.40 (SB 59); 13.43.1 (SB 268); 13.44 (SB 270); 13.45 (SB 271); 13.50.2 (SB 266); 13.53.1 (SB 130); 13.56.1 (SB 131); 13.58 (SB 140); 13.61 (SB 135); 13.65.2 (SB 134); 13.66.1 (SB 238); 13.73.1 (SB 273); 13.74 (SB 269); 13.75.1 (SB 60); 13.78.1 (SB 275); cf. *Fam*. 13.4.1 (SB 318); 13.10.3 (SB 277); 13.18.2 (SB 284); 13.22.1 (SB 288); 13.43.1 (SB 268); 13.55.1 (SB 129); 13.59 (SB 141); 13.60.1 (SB 55); 13.79 (SB 276); for *modestia*, *Fam*. 13.54.1 (SB 132); 13.63.1 (SB 137); 13.69.2 (SB 297); for *humanitas*, *Fam*. 13.3 (SB 315); 13.17.2,3 (SB 283); 13.21.1 (SB 287); 13.23.2 (SB 289); 13.26.1 (SB 292); 13.33 (SB 304); for *animus*, *Fam.* 13.29.2 (SB 282).

[104] Cf. *Fam*. 13.1.6 (SB 63); 13.2 (SB 314); 13.4.3 (SB 318); 13.7.5 (SB 320); 13.9.3 (SB 139); 13.11.3 (SB 278); 13.17.3 (SB 283); 13.22.2 (SB 288); 13.23.2 (SB 289); 13.25 (SB 291); 13.26.3 (292); 13.32.2 (SB 303); 13.33 (SB 304); 13.36.2 (SB 307); 13.38 (SB 309); 13.40 (SB 59); 13.44 (SB 270); 13.51 (SB 61); 13.60 (SB 55); 13.61 (SB 135); 13.63.2 (SB 137); 13.64.1,2 (SB 138); 13.67.2 (SB 296); 13.70 (SB 298); 13.71 (SB 299); 13.72.2 (SB 300); 13.74 (SB 269); 13.77.2 (SB 212).

[105] Cf. *Fam*. 7.5.2 (SB 26) (To Caesar): *Casus vero mirificus quidam intervenit quasi vel testis opinionis meae vel sponsor humanitatis tuae*; 3.1.4 (SB 63); 13.6.4 (SB 57); 13.24.2 (SB 290); 13.64.1 (SB 138); 13.65.1 (SB 134).

[106] Cf. Cic. *Sest*. 59; *Ver*. 2.93; Pl. *Men*. 625; Ter. *An*. 351; Apul. *Met*. 4.25.

[107] Often used in Comedy, it is an abbreviated form of the second person imperative active of the verb *emo*, 'take!' It came to be used as a demonstrative abverb with the imperative, for example, *em specta* (Plaut. *Bacch*. 1023), *em vide* (Ter. *Ad*. 559), and took on a meaning akin to *ecce*, 'there, see there!'; see Hofmann 1951: 35-36; cf. *TLL* 5(ii), 437, 25f.

is made up of an assortment of tags from Homer, found both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (13.15.1.9-2.5):

ἀλλ᾽ ἐμὸν οὔ ποτε θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἔπειθεν.
audiebam enim nostros proceres clamitantis
ἄλκιμος ἔσσ᾽, ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων εὖ εἴπῃ.
ὣς φάτο, τὸν δ᾽ ἄχεος νεφέλη ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα.
Sed tamen idem me consolatur enim. hominem <enim> perustum etiamnum gloria volunt incendere atque ita loquuntur:
μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδί γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην,
ἀλλὰ μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι.

The first quotation appears in Book VII of the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus describes his experiences to the Phaeacians and states that Calypso could not win his heart.[108] This refers to Precilius, who was unable to win the *past* Cicero over to Caesar's side. The second quotation, by which Cicero refers to those opposed to Caesar before the war, occurs in Book I of the *Odyssey* when Athena advises Telemachus to search for news of his father and if he is dead, to get rid of the mob at the palace, by cunning or by open fighting.[109] This call to glory is the one that did win Cicero over, inducing him to take the side of Pompey in the civil war. Cicero makes a drastic contrast between the two parties: the Caesarian Precilius is described as a seductive female, who uses superhuman means to bind men to herself; the Pompeians as the goddess of wisdom. But both sides are represented by Homeric verse.

The third quotation, also from the *Odyssey*, describes Laertes' disappointment when, having asked a visiting stranger for news of his son, he is told that the stranger (Odysseus in disguise) has not seen his son for five years: 'a dark cloud covered him'.[110] The *present* Cicero acknowledges that by listening to the *proceres* he chose the losing side.[111] It is not entirely clear to whom the quotation from the *Iliad* at the end of this passage refers, since as Shackleton Bailey points out, the subject of *volunt* is not *proceres* but an indefinite 'people'.[112] This is Hektor's last cry before going, eyes open, to his death in his fight with Achilles. Knowing he is about to die,

[108] *Od*. 7.258; the line is repeated but with the verb in the third person plural (in reference to both Calypso and Circe) at *Od*. 9.33.
[109] *Od*. 1.302.
[110] *Od*. 24.315.
[111] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 458. In the Caesarian orations Cicero characterizes himself and the Pompeians as mistaken in following their leader, rather than malicious; see Albrecht 2003: 172; Gotoff 2002: 229; May 1988: 147.
[112] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 458.

he vows to do something great first, and attacks, sword drawn.[113] Whomever 'they' are, Cicero characterizes them as having a death-wish, knowing full well that any attempt to oppose Caesar would be in vain but arguing that it would mean a glorious death.[114]

Cicero then claims that he is not moved by these men either, decides that Homer is not appropriate to his current situation, and shifts to Greek drama (13.15.2.6-12):

sed me minus iam movent, ut vides. itaque ab Homeri magniloquentia confero me ad vera praecepta Εὐριπίδου:
μισῶ σοφιστήν, ὅστις οὐχ αὑτῷ σοφός.
quem versum senex Precilius laudat egregie et ait posse eundem et ἅμα πρόσσω καὶ ὀπίσσω *videre et tamen nihilio minus*
αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων.

With the phrase *ut vides* at the end of the first sentence Cicero claims, quite bluntly, that Caesar knows that Cicero is not moved by these men; in other words, Cicero tells the addressee that he knows who the sender is. The *present* Cicero discards the grandiose language of Homer (in dactylic hexameter) in favour of the more straightforward, true precepts of Euripides (in iambic trimeter).[115] The line from Euripides is used to back up Cicero's claim that he is not moved by those who would have him stand against the dictator, and it creates a distinction between his past self, associated with Homer, and his present self, associated with Euripides.

Shackleton Bailey reads the rest of this passage as an elaboration on how Precilius consoles Cicero, picking up on the *idem me consolatur* in the previous passage:

idem is Precilius, who used to mock and scold, but now comforts. How he does this is then explained. People still urge Cicero to strive for glory, but he no longer listens. He leaves Homeric grandiosity to follow the sober maxims of Euripides, which Precilius highly commends, at the same time pointing out

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[113] *Il*. 22.304f.

[114] 'They' are impossible to identify; we have evidence of friends encouraging Cicero to remain active in public life not long before the date of this letter, but it is difficult to believe that anyone was pushing him, as the passage implies, to take an independent political stance against the dictator; see Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 458: In 46 Papirius Paetus seems to have urged Cicero to take an active role in politics as an elder statesman, advice which he rejected, see *Fam*. 9.15 (SB 196). Shortly after Tullia's death Atticus was persuading him to maintain his influence and prestige, remaining in public view.

[115] The line is from Eur. fr. 905 (Nauck); at *Fam*. 7.6.2 (SB 27) Cicero quotes Ennius' *Medea* (Enn. fr. 105 [Jocelyn]): … *et (quoniam Medeam coepi agere) illud semper memento: qui ipse sibi sapiens prodesse non quit, nequiquam sapit*; it has been suggested that this may be a Latin translation of the Euripides frament; see Nauck 1971: 913 and Shackleton Bailey 2001(i):191, n. 5; but against this view see Jocelyn 1967: 352. The word *magniloquentia* is also used to describe Homeric verse at *Orat*. 191 in a discussion of appropriate prose rhythm in oratory. The iambic trimeter is the metre of tragic dialogue; the line (μισῶ σοφιστήν, ὅστις οὐχ αὑτῷ σοφός) scans as follows: ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – (see Raven 1962: 28).

(this is the consolation) that prudence and distinction are not incompatible (perhaps, if we wish to press so far, with reference to Cicero's literary activities)'.[116]

Shackleton Bailey concludes that this letter is a denial that Cicero was plotting in secret against Caesar, who had been warned against him by Cicero's nephew Quintus.[117] Rather than recognise the implication of Quintus' report or dignify any accusations by writing directly and seriously, Cicero 'put his denial in a semi-serious form, and chose of all things for its vehicle a letter of recommendation. Well might he conclude *genere novo sum litterarum ad te usus ut intellegeres non vulgarem esse commendationem*' (13.15.3.5-6).[118]

This reading is not incorrect, but it neglects an important question: why does Cicero revert into Homeric verse at 2.10? What Shackleton Bailey fails to address is Cicero's return to Homer, immediately after having rejected him outright in favour of Euripides. This contradiction calls into question the distinction between the sender's past and present selves: in the past Cicero was won over by the Pompeians, reciting Homer, but claims that in the present he is dedicated exclusively to Euripides, having abandoned Homer; and yet, this change of heart is praised in the present by Precilius, reciting Homer, and furthermore, Precilius was unable to win over Cicero in past by reciting Homer. This is by no means a straightforward, one-way shift in loyalties from Homer (Pompey) to Euripides (Caesar).

Cicero explicitly rejects the *Homeri magniloquentia* for the *vera praecepta* Εὐριπίδου but then has this change of heart praised with *Homeri magniloquentia*. Shackleton Bailey is right in his interpretation of Cicero's declaration of devotion to Euripides; it does indeed suggest that Cicero will not be swayed by the anti-Caesarians. But that message is surely thrown into doubt by the subsequent reverse. And this contradiction is especially arresting because it follows the direct statement that Caesar knows who Cicero is now (*ut vides*). So, who is Cicero, and does Caesar know? As in the letter to Figulus, it is impossible to pin down Cicero's identity in this letter, but unlike the earlier letter, Caesar is not the determining factor in this case. Instead of presenting the addressee with two (or more) potentially valid definitions of the sender, from which Caesar may chose, Cicero explicitly favours one self when he tells Caesar that he knows

[116] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 458.
[117] See *Att*. 13.37.2 (SB 346) (of August); cf. *Att*. 12.38 (SB 278) (of 6 May); 13.9 (SB 317) (of June); *Fam*. 9.11 (SB 250).
[118] Shackleton Bailey 1977(ii): 458; cf. *Fam*. 13.35.1 (SB 306); 1.3.2 (SB 56); 7.6.1 (SB 27).

who Cicero is (*ut vides*), but then undermines that definition, thereby leaving the addressee unable to confirm that he does know who the sender is. Thus, I suggest that this letter is Cicero's declaration of independence: the independent, Euripidean Cicero is not only not swayed by the anti-Caesarians, but he is not swayed by the Caesarians either. Cicero is his own man, smart enough to look out for himself, who will not be exclusively singing anyone else's tune.[119]

Conclusion

There is a predominant pattern running through Cicero's published works from the period of Caesarian rule of saying one thing and doing another. The *pro Marcello* is an exhortation dressed up as praise. The *Orator* is, in part, a demonstration of epideictic rhetoric dressed up as a rejection of the genre. The letters are self-fashioning dressed up as something else: consolation or recommendation. In a sense, politics under Caesar was a game – the Senate, made up of a body of people no longer relevant in the way they had been to Republican politics, continued to go through the motions of assembling and making suggestions to the all-powerful dictator. Scholars have suggested that Caesar may have consciously played along, orchestrating the restoration of Marcellus, staging the trials of Deiotarus and Ligarius.[120] Perhaps Cicero is acknowledging the artificial nature of Caesarian politics and of the Senate's relationship with Caesar in this contradictory epistolary mode, as he seems to do in the letter recommending Apollonius.

Caesar himself has been characterized as a paradoxical figure; A. D. Leeman has argued that he was aware of the contradictions in his character, and used them to manipulate others.[121]

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[119] Cf. Steel 2001: 181-188, whose analysis of the *de Provinciis Consularibus* highlights the ways in which Cicero maintains his independence from Pompey and Caesar, a departure from the traditional interpretation of the speech as merely a sign of Cicero's decision to support the First Triumvirate.

[120] See Gotoff 2002: 239-240; on the trials as a new challenge for the Republican orator, see May 1988: 140-141.

[121] Leeman 2001: 99. Leeman has explored Caesar's 'capacity to act in unexpected and totally opposite directions' (2001: 101). He cites an example of Caesar saying one thing but doing another in the *de Analogia*, and reveals a veiled insult to Cicero, to whom the work was dedicated (an excerpt of the text is quoted at Gel. 1.10.4.; see Leeman 2001: 103-104). Caesar addresses Cicero as follows: *paene principem copiae atque inventorem, bene de nomine ac dignitate populi Romani meritum* (quoted by Cicero at *Brut*. 253; see Leeman 2001: 104). As Leeman 2001: 104 points out, this compliment is not pure flattery: 'Instead of *princeps eloquentiae* he wrote *princeps copiae* (abundance), thus pointing at an element of which Cicero himself was very proud, but which was the main subject of criticism among his literary opponents, the so-called Atticists, who preferred, like Caesar, a terser and more sober eloquence'; but see Mitchell 1991: 189, who takes Caesar's compliment at face-value; for a brief summary of the Atticist vs. Asian debate, see Narducci 2002a: 408-412. Cicero seems to have been attuned to

And like Cicero, Caesar uses contradictory messages in his letters so as to keep Cicero and others off-balance and uncertain of their standing with him. P. White has explored this and some of the other epistolary strategies used by Caesar to manipulate his addressees and manage political relationships to his advantage. During the period of Cicero's stay at Brundisium after Pompey's defeat, he received a series of discordant letters from Caesar and his associates, varying greatly in content and tone.[122] In the end Cicero was stuck until Caesar himself returned to Italy and he could go and pay his respects in person.[123] White acknowledges that Cicero seems to have recognized that he was being manipulated in this situation.[124]

When it comes to Cicero's side of their epistolary exchange during the period of interest to us, White characterizes Cicero as eager to accommodate Caesar, being drawn into public statements that served the dictator's interest, with a tendency to overcompensate in his position as the weaker party of the two.[125] Having given his reading of *Fam*. 13.15 cited above,[126] he observes that 'obliviousness of all but the addressee easily led Cicero to overdo in this way when writing to Caesar'.[127] Certainly there can be no doubt that Cicero was the weaker party in his exchange with Caesar, and that forced him to make dramatic changes in his approach, but White's reading does not recognize the complexity of Cicero's self-portrayal in his letters under Caesar and as a result, I think, does not give Cicero the credit he deserves.

As White points out, managing his relationships *in absentia* from Rome afforded great advantages to Caesar;[128] because the letter is an imperfect substitute for in-person conversation, the sender may create questions in the mind of his addressee, and, in turn, may or may not respond to those questions, which may or may not reach him in any case. I have argued that in his Caesarian correspondence Cicero likewise takes advantage of this aspect of epistolary exchange – he is difficult to pin down in these letters – and furthermore, that this aspect of his

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Caesar's insult dressed up as praise, and Leeman suggests that there is an equally subtle response at *Brutus* 261 (see Leeman 2001: 104).

[122] White 2003: 78-80 discusses *Att*. 11.6.3 (SB 217); *Fam*. 14.23 (SB 171); *Att*. 11.7.2 (SB 218) (describes a letter from Antony); *Att*. 11.9.1 (SB 220) (describes Balbus as becoming more stand-offish every day).

[123] White 2003: 80.

[124] White 2003: 80; see *Att*. 9.5.3 (SB 171); cf. *Att*. 8.15.3 (SB 165).

[125] White 2003: 88-89.

[126] See above, p. 78.

[127] White 2003: 88.

[128] White 2003: 92.

self-portrayal is central to his political strategy. Others have noted that Caesar used his letters to keep his addressees off-balance, leaving them guessing as to where they stood with him. He, like Cicero, seems to have infused his definitions of sender and addressee with ambiguity. As Altman explains, reading is as important as writing in an epistolary exchange, and the careful epistolary reader is sensitive to subtle messages within the letter he decodes. In turn, the act of reading may be so important that the decoding of a message becomes part of a new message, in which the reader's critique is incorporated into the next letter.[129] I suspect that both Cicero and Caesar were able not only to read the coded messages they received, but also to respond in equally multi-layered language.

Cicero's letters to and about Pompey and to and about Caesar both provide examples of the letters in which there is a the gap between fiction and reality, or between the various images of sender and addressee, but each stands at the opposite extreme from the other. While this gap is deliberately prominent in Cicero's Caesarian correspondence, it is, at least by comparison, quite narrow in the letters concerning Pompey. This difference perhaps reflects the political circumstances in which each set of letters was composed. During the *post reditum* period, Cicero was attempting to re-establish his *dignitas* and *auctoritas* as an individual, and he proceeds tentatively in the construction of his ideal images of himself in relation to Pompey; at the same time, I have suggested that this too is a deliberate strategy for maintaining enough distance from his images to allow a shift in loyalities. But in the aftermath of civil war, the entire political landscape had changed drastically, and the Senate along with Cicero was struggling to find its place in the new Rome. Cicero's self-portrayal in this period reveals this struggle for self-definition in relation to an all-powerful ruler, but his letters also transform this 'identity crisis' into a tool of negotiation with the ruler.

Thus Cicero's letters demonstrate the possible range when it comes to the gap between fiction and reality, and as we shall see, our subsequent letter writers fall somewhere on this range. In chapter one I have already suggested that the letters addressed to emperors by Pliny and Symmachus resemble Cicero's letters concerning Pompey. Indeed Pliny's collection displays a similarly narrow gap between the images of sender and addressee, while a more prominent gap becomes unavoidably visible in the letters of Symmachus when his ideal imaging is challenged

[129] Altman 1982: 93.

by others. But the exchange between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius is most like Cicero's letters concerning Caesar: in that collection letter type serves as the fiction or code, which obscures a corrective agenda whereby each sender refashions the selves of the correspondents as they are passed back and forth; and we are able to observe the kind of careful, nuanced reading and writing that I have suggested may have characterized the exchange between Cicero and Caesar.

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Letters to Trajan

We now turn to a self-proclaimed emulator of Cicero, Pliny the Younger, and his correspondence with the Emperor Trajan, which provides another example of the ways in which epistolary discourse invites the construction of images and affords the opportunity for shaping those images according to a political agenda. In his relations with the emperor, Pliny takes cues from Cicero in many ways. Like Cicero, Pliny constructs his ideal ruler, setting out a programme of behaviour for the emperor, in a speech (the *Panegyricus* is a successor of the *de lege Manilia* and *pro Marcello*).[1] Pliny's *Letters* 1-9, like Cicero's letters, serve as a counterpart to his oratory: the *Panegyricus* makes explicit what the letters leave implicit.[2] The idealized figure of Trajan pervades the correspondence both in person and as an implied parallel to the ideal upper-class men in the letters.[3] Within Books 1-9, Pliny explicitly defends the Ciceronian oratorical style against Tacitus' view of imperial oratory as presented in the *Dialogus*,[4] contrasts his own Republican style with that of, for example, Regulus,[5]

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1 See Braund 1998: 53-68; Rees 1998: 79-83; MacCormack 1975: 148-151; Born 1938.

2 Hoffer 1999: 3-5.

3 Hoffer 1999: 5.

4 In *Ep*. 1.20, addressed to Tacitus, Pliny recounts an ongoing debate he has had with an unnamed man about the merits of brevity versus those of a fuller style in forensic oratory and expresses his preference for the latter, using Cicero as his primary *exemplum*; in the *Dial*., by contrast, the conclusion is that the peace of the Empire has eliminated the need for elaborate Republican oratory, which flourished in the turmoil of that age. Scholars disagree about whether there is doublespeak at play in the text (Bartsch 1994: 98-125; Luce 1993; Kennedy 1972: 516-523) or whether Tacitus is presenting the current state of oratory as a good thing (Winterbottom 1964 and 2001; Goldberg 1999) (on a similar question about Tacitus' attitude towards rhetoric in the *Ann*., see Bloomer 1997: 154-195); Leeman 1963: 320 asserts that the *Dial*. contains a 'wholesale rejection of oratory as a suitable means of literary expression'; on Pliny's reaction to the *Dial*., see Kennedy 1972: 548; Goldberg 1999: 232. On *Ep*. 1.20 see Riggsby 1995, who argues that Pliny defends Cicero in order to defend himself, as one who emulates Cicero and believes that orators have an important role in society as engaged public figures; the argument asserting the public character of Pliny's self-fashioning is revived in Riggsby 1998, in response to Leach 1990, who argues for a different picture, suggesting that Pliny's concern is primarily inner self-fashioning. However, recognizing Pliny's concern with self need not invalidate Riggsby's argument – as Henderson convincingly points out, personal and public are intertwined: 'Pliny does consecrate the "inner turn" as the core *locus* of writerly being, but his project does dramatize the cultivation of social standing "out there". The nexus between writing the *Letters* and pressing the world into them is the way we get to Pliny, and he gets to us' (2002b: 14).

5 *Ep*. 4.7.4: his has *nihil denique praeter ingenium insanum*; see Goldberg 1999: 227-228, who argues that Pliny is not writing of an orator without skill, but of one who does not value Pliny's skills, and suggests that a judge, given the choice between hearing Regulus or Pliny plead a case, might well think twice before choosing Pliny. For futher references to Pliny's preferred oratorical style see, e.g. *Ep*. 4.16.2-3 (describing a case in which Pliny spoke in court for a seven-hour sitting); 3.18 (explaining that Pliny restrained himself when delivering the *Pan*., expanded later for publication); 1.5 (attack on Regulus); 4.13.10; 7.20; cf. *Pan*. 76.1-2 (on the case of Marius Priscus).

adopts Ciceronian motifs meant to enhance the status of his speeches,[6] and as R. Mayer has argued, desires *gloria* specifically as an orator and develops a careful strategy in the letters to bring his reader back to thinking of Pliny the orator again and again.[7]

We might then expect that in *Letters* 10, when addressing the emperor directly, Pliny would likewise take up Cicero's epistolary strategies in relation to Pompey and Caesar and incorporate elements of oratory into his letters in order to construct for himself an influential self in relation to Trajan, while attempting to ensure his *gloria* as orator. Instead Book 10 consists of plain, mostly formulaic language on both sides of the exchange, and there is little, if any, indication of the orator in Pliny's self-presentation to the emperor. Because his correspondence with Trajan was probably not published by Pliny himself,[8] and because it is in a different tone and style from the personal letters (the self-assured Pliny of the personal letters is absent here),[9] scholars have concluded that *Letters* 10 is something very different from *Letters* 1-9.

Book 10 is usually treated as an archive of the official correspondence between a provincial governor and the emperor, as it seems to have been intended to be the complete publication of Pliny's letters to Trajan, private and official, as far as they survived.[10] In his stylistic treatment of Pliny's letters, F. Gamberini characterizes his analysis of Book 10 as a sort of 'control experiment', carried out explicitly for the sake of confirming the results of his analysis of Books 1-9.[11] In the context of the relationship between Pliny's *Letters* and Tacitus' *Dialogus*, C. Murgia notes that in the entire tenth book addressed to Trajan 'not a

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[6] Morello 2003 argues that by 'having nothing to say' Pliny, like Cicero, creates a desire in his addressees to read his speeches and elicits from them letters or requests for copies of his work (2003: 208); see Cic. *Fam*. 4.13.1.1-9 (SB 225) (ch. 2, pp. 52-53); cf. *Fam*. 4.4.1.1-11 (SB 203) (ch. 2, pp. 66-67) (both discussed by Morello); cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.3 (3, 14-20). In *Ep*. 3.20 and 9.2 Pliny laments the paucity of material for his letters, in contrast with the richness of Cicero's; Traub 1955: 223 suggests that Pliny dealt with the lack of stirring political subject-matter by narrating historical events in his correspondence.

[7] Mayer 2003 argues that we must emphasize the 'centrality of oratory to the picture Pliny presents in his letters' (2003: 229). Others have considered Pliny's similiarities to Cicero and his adoption of Ciceronian ideas: for a concise summary of the similarities between them, see Wolff 2004; on their approach to self-praise, Gibson 2003 and Rudd 1992; on Pliny's comparisons of himself to Cicero, Griffin 1999: 143; on their approach poetic compositions and literary appropriation as political or depoliticized activities, Wolff 2004: 443; Roller 1998; Hershkowitz 1995.

[8] See Griffin 1999: 140; but see below, p. 95 and n. 49. See Reynolds 1983 on the manuscript tradition.

[9] See further below, pp. 94-96.

[10] Sherwin-White 1966: 535; see also Williams 1990: 2; Bell 1989: 462 and 465; Radice 1975: 120 and 128-132; Wight-Duff 1960: 435-436.

[11] Gamberini 1983: 374: 'But fundamentally the letters of book 10 reveal to us, by the absence of the features common in books 1-9, the essence of the style of the *curatius scriptae*, consisting in the symmetry of paratactic sentences and brevity. The analysis of book 10 is a good "control" experiment (i.e. an experiment conducted *ceteris paribus* but with the omission of one factor, being in this case the literary dimension) confirming the results obtained in the analysis of books 1-9'.

single notable resemblence to the *Dialogus* has been detected by myself or others',[12] while there are several similarities between Books 1-9 and Tacitus' text. In their recent edited volume, R. Morello and R. K. Gibson, having taken a deliberate step away from the historical approach to Pliny's letters, explicitly exclude Book 10 from consideration 'in the interests of moving away from the search for *Realien*'.[13] This volume reflects the trend in recent Plinian scholarship towards interest in Pliny's modelling of the self,[14] the focus of which has been *Letters* 1-9.

However, the composition of a letter inherently involves the construction of an image of oneself and of one's addressee,[15] and it is through image construction that Pliny and Trajan manage their epistolary relationship as governor and emperor. As such, Book 10 does contribute to Pliny's epistolary self-portrayal. And despite the differences between Cicero's letters and Pliny's official correspondence, there are, nonetheless, similarities between Pliny's approach to Trajan and Cicero's approach to Pompey: the gap between fiction and reality, or between the various images constructed of sender and addressee is very narrow (perhaps even more narrow in *Ep. Tra.* 10 than in Cicero's letters); and Pliny, like Cicero, adopts an ideal image of Trajan and their relationship as if it is the 'reality' (i.e. rather than attempting to enact political change in his letters, Pliny projects the 'reality' of his ideals).

Likewise, Pliny's position in relation to Trajan is similar in some ways to Cicero's in relation to Caesar. Like Cicero in the *pro Marcello*, Pliny in the *Panegyricus* is addressing a new ruler, with whom he must negotiate a delicate position because of his own political past (i.e. just as Cicero must erase his support of Pompey, so Pliny must erase his success under Domitian);[16] and like Cicero, Pliny constructs a role for himself and the Senate in the

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[12] Murgia 1985: 187; see also 1985: 187 n. 34: the reason for such a lack is not simply date; differences in subject matter, genre (personal v. official correspondence), and models may all have played a part.

[13] Morello and Gibson 2003: 110.

[14] See Henderson 2003: 124.

[15] On the letter as a mirror reflecting the self, see Altman 1982: 30 and 45 n. 14; on the use of paraphrase or fictive dialogue to conjure up the image of the addressee, see ch. 1, p. 25 and nn. 72-75.

[16] The *Panegyricus*' convoluted style and contradictory content have been the subject of recent studies meant to explain what its form contributes to its message. Syme 1958(i): 114 believes that the speech 'has done no good for the reputation of the author or to the taste of the age'; for similar assessments see also Seager 1984: 129; Kennedy 1972: 546; Sherwin-White 1969: 77; Radice 1968: 169-170; Wight-Duff 1960: 430 and 432. Bartsch 1994: 148-187, chapter five, 'The Art of Sincerity: Pliny's *Panegyricus*' suggests that the speech's most pervasive organizing device, antithesis, is deployed in an obsessive attempt to prove the speech's sincerity, in an age when 'familiar ethical terms and the words upon which rest a whole culture's concept of political morality no longer have a fixed signifier-signified relation to the values they used to represent but now provide an empty nomenclature for ideas largely devoid of meaning ...' (1994: 185). But as Rees 2001 has shown, Pliny's use of juxtaposition serves the form of panegyric; Pliny's combinations of antithetical qualities (e.g. *privatus* and *princeps*, *humanus* and *divinus*; on the latter pair, see Levene 1997) enhance the

management of the Empire. Moreover, just as Caesar seems to have had a hand in creating, or perhaps perpetuating, the fiction presented by Cicero (e.g. by pardoning Marcellus), so Trajan had a hand in developing the ideological propaganda surrounding himself and his family, which is reflected in Pliny's speech of thanks.[17] For example, Trajan took steps to distance his reign from Domitian's,[18] and Pliny strives to distance himself from the previous ruler through constant contrast between the 'bad' emperor(s) of the past and the new 'good' emperor.

I shall argue that Book 10 constitutes a presentation of the 'good' emperor from the *Panegyricus* in action, where we see Pliny constructing the appropriate selves for the correspondents and Trajan mirroring them back in reply. In chapters one and two, we saw the ways in which Cicero uses *I-You* discourse in order to define himself in relation to his addressee, according his own political needs and agenda,[19] but we were unable to examine the responses to Cicero's image construction. Because we have both sides of correspondence between Pliny and Trajan, we have the advantage of being in a position to examine an exchange of selves back and forth and to explore the reciprocity and desire for exchange that helps define a letter.[20]

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speech's subject – Trajan's character – in which all these virtues are somehow able to coexist (2001: 151 and 153). And these antithetical imperial characteristics appear in Book 10 as well (e.g. Trajan is both *parens* and *dominus*; see below, pp. 93-94). For a 'straight' reading of the *Pan*. see Morford 1992 who, drawing a connection between the speech's style and its political content, argues that the speech is a legitimate attempt to show the way forward for Trajan and the Senate; Radice 1968 offers a similar interpretation.

[17] Roche 2002 has shown that Pliny's characterization of the emperor's family in the *Pan*. reflects the family's public image in coinage, portraits and statues in Roman Italy (cf. Leach 1990: 35-39), which reflects, among other values, Trajan's exercise of control over his wife and sister in the wake of Domitian's assassination, in which the late emperor's wife was thought to have been involved (2002: 60); see also Rees 1998: 79-83. For a broader discussion of 'imperial virtues' and their appearance in literature and on coinage, see Wallace-Hadrill 1981.

[18] J. Geyssen has argued that it is only under Trajan that Domitia becomes closely associated with Domitian's death, and that Trajan promoted the idea of Domitia as tyrannicide for his own political ends, using her as a model for the female members of his family. Geyssen points out that the ancient sources are amibigous about Domitia's involvement (e.g. *D.C*. 67.15) but by the time Suetonius is writing under Hadrian, her involvement is considered fact (Suet. *Dom*. 14). This argument was advanced in a paper presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the Classical Association of Canada: 'Inventing a tyrannicide: Trajan's appropriation of Domitia Longina'. I am grateful to Dr Geyssen for his permission to cite his presentation. See also Eck 2002, who, having pointed out that Trajan was a surprising choice for Nerva's successor (because, e.g. his military career was much less spectacular than Pliny tells us, and he earned his consulship in return for loyalty to Domitian [a fact left unmentioned by Pliny; see Radice 1968: 167-168]), concludes that Trajan was selected by a small number of senators, who had been dissatified with Domitian, knew that Nerva would not last long and wanted an alternative candidate to Nigrinius, the general most decorated under Domitian. At the same time, Trajan is known to have changed little in terms of policy from his predecessor(s); see Waters 1969.

[19] See ch. 1.

[20] See Altman 1982: 117 and 121. According to Altman, the most distinctive aspect of epistolary discourse is that it is coloured by not only one but two persons and the relationship between them. Works perceived as

There is disagreement, though, about whether Trajan himself or his secretarial staff drafted his replies to the governor in Book 10. A. N. Sherwin-White follows those who argue that Trajan left the composition of his correspondence to staff and asserts that the uniformity of style among the rescripts suggests the conventions of a bureau, and possibly of a single author.[21] Moreover, the imperial author sometimes quotes his addressee in a response, a practice Sherwin-White characterizes as a 'secretarial device'.[22] On the other hand, W. Williams, following F. Millar,[23] argues that Trajan did manage his own correspondence: 'one should not assume that passages or whole texts written in routine or formulaic language or in stiff jargon are necessarily the work of a secretary ...'.[24] If the emperor were engaged with imperial business himself, one would expect that he would use formulas to save effort.[25] Williams responds similarly to the idea that paraphrase of the addressee's previous letter indicates the hand of a secretary, pointing out that in private correspondence the letter writer with little to say often resorts to this device.[26]

Indeed the quotation or paraphrase of the addressee is a standard feature of epistolarity, which, as we have seen in Cicero's correspondence, contributes to the illusion that a letter is one side of an ongoing conversation[27] and is one way in which epistolary discourse attempts to bridge the gap between sender and addressee.[28] Ultimately, there is no way to know for certain whether Trajan wrote his letters in his own hand or by dictation (or some combination of the two), or whether a secretary or secretaries dealt with his correspondence. The formulaic style of the rescripts alone provides insufficient evidence one way or the other: Trajan could just as easily have composed the formulaic responses to Pliny's formulaic requests. Likewise, if we accept paraphrase of the addressee as evidence

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most 'epistolary' are those in which the *I-You* relationship shapes the language used, and in which the *I* becomes defined relative to the *You* whom he addresses. The *I* always situates himself vis-à-vis another; his locus, his address is always relative to that of his addressee (1982: 118-119).

21 Sherwin-White 1962: 114, following Peter 1901: 123; Henneman 1935: 28-33; see also Sherwin-White 1966: 536-546.

22 Sherwin-White 1966: 537-538; but he does allow for letters probably written by the emperor himself, where Trajan's response is especially forceful; see 1966: 636; 1962: 117.

23 Millar 1967: 19, having examined the external descriptions of the emperor at work in ancient sources, concludes that 'there is evidence that it was not merely an observable fact but a principle that Emperors should compose their own pronouncements, whether written or verbal'. He acknowledges that it is possible that the picture we get from ancient sources may be misleading, if vast ranges of imperial business were handled systematically by officials, in private and concealed from the literary sources.

24 Williams 1976: 67; 1990: 16-17.

25 Williams 1967: 67.

26 Williams 1967: 67-68.

27 See ch. 1 n. 71.

28 See n. 15.

for the hand of a secretary, we might similarly question the authorship of Pliny's letters to Trajan, for he too uses this device.[29] In any case, Trajan's responses are meant to represent the emperor's decisions and are presented as having been written in his hand, and as such the self projected by those letters is that of the emperor.

In addition to conjuring up the image of the addressee, paraphrase allows the sender the opportunity to define or redefine his addressee by colouring the addressee's words with his interpretation of them – a regular feature of Fronto's correspondence with Marcus Aurelius,[30] but mostly absent in the exchange between Pliny and Trajan. Instead, each correspondent usually reflects the image of his addressee, as presented in the previous letter. Cicero was attempting to convince Pompey and Caesar to adopt his definitions of the *I* and *You*: Cicero (*I*) the ideal orator-adviser addressing Pompey/Caesar (*You*) the ideal statesman, who is influenced by the sender. By contrast, much of Pliny's correspondence with Trajan reflects the vision presented in the *Panegyricus*, and Trajan's responses affirm Pliny's definitions. Pliny (*I*) the 'good' governor addresses Trajan (*You*) the 'good' emperor, and in return, Trajan (*I*) the 'good' emperor addresses Pliny (*You*) the 'good' governor.

The characteristics of sender and addressee emphasized in Book 10 have surprised readers, who would have expected a reflection of the image of Trajan as the *princeps civilis*.[31] Instead, we find the 'suppliant voice of the humble official appealing even in matters within his domain to the *indulgentia* of his master'.[32] The term *indulgentia*, the natural affection that a parent feels for a child,[33] is pervasive in Pliny's official correspondence,[34] and he addresses Trajan as *domine* no fewer than eighty-two times in Book 10 alone.[35] The combination of the

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[29] *Ep. Tra*. 10.7 and 10.10; 10.42 and 10.61.

[30] See ch. 4; fictive dialogue may also be used both to conjure up and manipulate the addressee; see *Fam*. 3.7.3.2-9 (SB 71) (ch. 1, pp. 33-34); cf. *Att*. 7.3 (SB 126) (see ch. 1, p. 44); Aur. *M.Caes*. 1.4.2 (6, 3-7) (ch. 4, p. 125).

[31] For the concept, see Wallace-Hadrill 1982; at *Pan*. 56-60 Pliny emphasizes that Trajan considers himself no more than a fellow-citizen, as demonstrated by his refusal of a third consulship.

[32] Cotton 1984: 266.

[33] Cotton 1984: 261.

[34] See n. 96.

[35] Roller 2001: 258. Cf. Pliny's approach to *imagines* of the emperors, in which Fishwick 1984: 126 points out a similar contradiction: while in the *Panegyricus* Pliny 'affects to be scandalized' that Domitian was guilty of placing statues of himself among those of the gods (*Pan*. 52.3) and, in contrast, praises Trajan's 'moderation on this score' (*Pan*. 52.3-4), in *Ep. Tra*. 10.96, concerning the prosecutions of alleged Christians, Pliny's description of the trials reveals that he has 'copied a usage he found reprehensible in the case of Domitian'. That is, Pliny placed the *imago* of Trajan among those of Jupiter, Juno and Minvera for the purpose of testing the accused, thereby putting the likeness of Trajan on par with the likenesses of the gods. Fishwick concludes that 'the fact that he could act in this way provides telling commentary on the flexibility of his attitude to divine honours, to say nothing of his own capacity for *adulatio*'. Likewise, in *Ep. Tra*. 10.8 Pliny seeks Trajan's permission to add a statue of the emperor to his collection of imperial *statuae*, to be placed in the

images of Trajan as both father and master is in and of itself surprising, since in the *Panegyricus* Pliny states explicitly that Trajan is not a *dominus*, but a *parens*.[36]

However, as Roller points out, though the father-son paradigm is used as a benevolent alternative to the master-slave paradigm when describing the emperor-subject relationship,[37] *parens* and *dominus* are really two sides of the same coin: within the family the *paterfamilias* was both *parens* and *dominus* and held the same power over his children as he did over his slaves.[38] The term *dominus* itself is ambiguous, for a given occurrence could be contextualized and recontextualized as polite or as hostile. Pliny takes advantage of this ambiguity: he condemns Domitian for having acted with *immanitate tyranni*, *licentia domini*, which evokes the pejorative image of a master in relation to slaves, and praises Trajan by negating the same labels and presenting alternative paradigms (*Pan*. 2.3): *non enim de tyranno, sed de cive, non de domino, sed de parente loquimur*.[39] About Pliny's frequent use of *domine* in Book 10, Roller concludes that 'this usage is polite and deferential, apparently synonymous with his other, less common but manifestly polite, forms of address such as *imperator optime* ("most excellent commander", three times in book 10)'.[40] Nowhere does Pliny refer to Trajan as *dominus*, which would be to call him a tyrant, but he does address the emperor as *domine*, which in its generalized usage was a common form of politeness, probably used originally to address relatives and others very close to the speaker.[41]

For Pliny's part, his self-presentation in the official correspondence has also surprised scholars. A criticism often levelled at Pliny is that he pesters the emperor, consulting him when it should not be necessary, seemingly afraid to make decisions on his own. Andrews characterizes Pliny as a 'conformist', whose correspondence with the emperor expresses the

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temple he is to build at Tifernum. In his response (10.9), Trajan, though he is usually disinclined (*parcissimus*) to accept such honors, grants Pliny his permission, rather than appear to have checked Pliny's piety (*cursum pietatis tuae*) towards the emperor. Henderson 2002b: 37-39 discusses this pair as part of Pliny's instruction to the reader in 'monumentalized piety'.

36 *Pan*. 2.3.

37 Roller 2001: 213.

38 Roller 2001: 236-239.

39 Roller 2001: 257-258.

40 Roller 2001: 258; cf. Griffin 2000: 553-554; Adams 1995: 119; Sherwin-White 1966: 557-558. On the application of the father-son and master-slave paradigms to the political relationship between the emperor and his subjects during the Julio-Claudian period, see Roller 2001: 247-264; on imperial *recusatio*, Wallace-Hadrill 1982: 35-37; on the parallel between the *optimus civis* and *optimus princeps* within the context of patronage, Nicols 1980. Marcus Aurelius uses the title *magister* in a similarly ambiguous way when addressing Fronto; see ch. 4, pp. 132-133.

41 See Dickey 2002: 93-97; cf. Trajan's use of *mi carissime* in addressing Pliny; see below, p. 105 and n. 90.

attitudes and opinions of Trajan.[42] He argues that the distinct characteristic displayed by Pliny when addressing the emperor is indecisiveness: 'Dispatched to Bithynia with definite instructions and ample authority, he repeatedly postponed his decision in matters both important and unimportant until he had communicated with the emperor'.[43]

Others have defended Pliny, arguing that his consultations were necessary, either as technical questions, requests and reports or due to gaps in the *mandata* supplied by Trajan.[44] Furthermore, there is evidence that imperial *legati* commonly consulted Trajan about matters of jurisdiction and the rights of soldiers.[45] This, Millar concludes, is significant because 'we have less reason to believe that Pliny, when *legatus* of Bithynia, was anything other than a normal imperial governor'.[46] The fact that he sought advice from the emperor on individual matters does not, in and of itself, distinguish him from contemporary *legati*.[47]

There is another possible explanation, beyond practicalities, for Pliny's seemingly constant consultation of the emperor (and his deferential tone) and, in turn, for Trajan's consistent delegation of authority to the governor. G. Woolf has argued that this exchange of deferral and delegation is one aspect of the idealized relationship between aristocrat and *princeps*, 'a demonstration in practice of the virtuous partnership presented in different terms in the *Panegyricus*'.[48] He suggests that Book 10 is best read not as an administrative archive but as part of Pliny's broader project of epistolary self-representation, seeing no good textual reason why the last book of the *Letters* might not serve a purpose similar to that of the first nine.[49]

Similarly, J. Henderson, who characterizes the *Letters* as a monument to their author, argues that the 'defects of character' (fear, doubt and hesitation) deflected from Pliny in the personal letters are allowed to colour the correspondence with Trajan, 'where they demonstrate, paradoxically, the correct deference to imperial wisdom'.[50] A further paradox is

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[42] Andrews 1938: 144; 149: 'Pliny was dominated by a desire to do what was expected of him in the line of duty; he conformed, one might say, to the expectations of his superiors'.
[43] Andrews 1938: 152.
[44] Vidman 1959: 217f; Sherwin-White 1966: 552; Radice 1962: 160.
[45] See Millar 1977: 313-328.
[46] Millar 1977: 325.
[47] Millar 1977: 325.
[48] Woolf 1995: 122; see also Woolf 1998: 68-69.
[49] Woolf 1995: 139 n. 32 identifies three features of Book 10 that stand against the notion of an administrative archive: (1) the inclusion of *Ep. Tra*. 10.1-14, sent before the beginning of Pliny's proconsulship (cf. Stout 1954: 1-2); (2) the repeated concern with the morality of Pliny's *officium* and of Trajan's rule; (3) the relationship idealized in the *Panegyricus*.
[50] Henderson 2003: 118.

contained in Pliny's opposition of his work to monumental *historia*: 'The humble "addition" of mosaic to mosaic is an alternative strategy in the construction of a grand edifice of social-historical writing, with Book 10 complementing the metropolitan scenes of Books 1-9 as the historian's *res foras* complement his *res domi*'.[51]

Cicero created fictions, in which he was the intimate confidant to the man in the position of power in Roman politics. As we have seen in the letters to and about Pompey, the fiction is adopted wholesale, while Cicero subtly incorporates tentativeness into his self-portrayal so as to allow himself political flexibility. Pliny, on the other hand, quite ostentatiously builds tentativeness into his self-portrayal, as an element of central importance in his identity; the ideal governor is constantly defined in relation to Trajan, so much so that he only rarely takes definitive action independently. This reflects proper deference to imperial wisdom, but perhaps also represents a strategy of caution or even a strategy for ensuring the success of the sender's image construction.

The emperor's representative attempts to avoid constructing an incorrect definition of the emperor or of his own role in the province by means of constant invitation to Trajan to define Pliny and their relationship (i.e. rather than risk a mistake, Pliny always allows Trajan to decide who the correspondents are). And even when Pliny's expressed reason for doubt is deemed unnecessary by Trajan, Pliny has been careful to emphasize that he needs the emperor's guidance, and gets it in return. Most of the time, his deferral is met with delegation of authority or confirmation that Pliny has acted properly. Thus, in the case that a proposal advanced by Pliny is rejected, the ideal model is not damaged.

Then again, there are occasions on which the tension between confidence and tentativeness in Pliny's self-portrayal causes a breakdown in the ideal interaction between the ideal governor and emperor. Pliny attempts to balance the two sides of his identity, which appear in two combinations: (1) confidence in Trajan's willingness to define the correspondents (i.e. to give advice) combined with tentativeness regarding action (i.e. deference to imperial wisdom); and (2) confidence in expressing his own opinion combined with tentativeness in hestitating to implement his plans (deference to imperial wisdom again). There are situations in which Pliny does not get this balance right, and he presents more of either confidence or tentativeness than is appropriate. In these cases, as we shall see, the

[51] Henderson 2003: 118-119.

image of Pliny as governor or the image of the emperor is adjusted or corrected by Trajan in his reply.

I have already suggested that Pliny's approach to Trajan is in some ways comparable to Cicero's approach to Pompey. In addition to the adoption of an ideal as if it is 'reality', Cicero and Pliny also take advantage of similar aspects of epistolarity (e.g. the polyvalence of epistolary time) to create desirable *personae* for sender and addressee. Looking to our other letter writers, as the only collection other than Fronto's in which we have both sides of the exchange with an emperor continuously, Pliny's letters provide an important point of comparison with the exchange between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius (especially since both sets of correspondents use paraphrase/quotation to define the addressee); and Pliny is the primary model on whom Symmachus fashions himself in his *Relationes* to the Western emperor, Valentinian II, adapting the 'good' emperor/'bad' emperor dichotomy to his own period.

In the first section of this chapter our task is to illustrate the ways in which Pliny and Trajan operate within the epistolary *I-You* discourse, defining the selves of sender and addressee, and to highlight the important aspects of the ideal constructed in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, which are then reflected in the letters of Book 10. This is possible with a close reading of the first five offical letters, *Letters* 10.15-18, in which Pliny and Trajan establish their relationship as governor and emperor. In the second section of the chapter, we shall move on to two pairs of letters in which a gap between the images constructed by Pliny and Trajan becomes discernible: in *Letters* 10.54 Pliny's over-confidence in making a novel proposal to the emperor leads the governor to fail to live up to the 'good' era in which he lives, and in response, the image of Pliny is corrected by Trajan; in 10.81 it is Pliny's tentativeness that leads him astray, as he offers an invalid definition of the emperor, which is corrected in response. These letters provide examples of an imbalance between Pliny's confidence and tentativeness, the consequence of which is an adjustment of some kind to the images constructed by the governor.

Affirmation: Journey to Bithynia

The opening letters of Pliny's official correspondence with the emperor describe his journey to the province. They set the tone for the rest of the official correspondence, whereby the 'good' emperor takes a personal interest in his provincial governor. This characteristic of

Trajan is emphasized by the conversational tone of these letters, written as if the correspondents are able to carry on a conversation during Pliny's journey. The last two letters in this opening group represent the first exchange of deferral and delegation between the 'good' governor and 'good' emperor. Pliny, keen to get on with his duties, makes his first request to the emperor while deferring to Trajan's authority, and in return Trajan shifts responsibility back to the governor. Pliny invites confirmation of his definitions of sender and addressee from Trajan, and in return Trajan confirms those definitions.

Ep. Tra. X.15, after 17 September, first year[52] *(Pliny to Trajan)*

Pliny writes Trajan in order to update the emperor on his progress towards the province.[53] The letter is very brief and may be included in its entirety here:

Quia confido, domine, ad curam tuam pertinere, nuntio tibi me Ephesum cum omnibus meis ὑπὲρ Μαλέαν *navigasse. quamvis contrariis ventis retentus nunc destino partim orariis navibus, partim vehiculis provinciam petere. nam sicut itineri graves aestus, ita continuae navigationi etesiae reluctantur.*

The sender's treatment of tense, along with the brevity of the letter, lends to it a sense of immediacy, as if Pliny is about to proceed towards Bithynia from Ephesus as Trajan is reading his letter.[54] Pliny writes to the moment, oscillating between the immediate past – 'I have (just) sailed around Cape Malea ...' – and the immediate future – 'now I intend to move towards the province ...' Also, the letter is framed by two verbs in the present tense, with *nunc* as the pivot point between immediate past and immediate future. This letter provides a clear demonstration of the sender's attempt to create an impossible present, creating the illusion that the letter's narrative present is simultaneous with the events narrated.[55]

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[52] For each letter I have listed the date suggested by Sherwin-White 1966; 'first year' indicates the calendar year of Pliny's tenure as governor. Specific dates for Trajan's responses are not offered, but the general guideline given by Sherwin-White is that they 'must be assumed to be several weeks later in each case' (1966: 580); on the timing of Trajan's replies see further below, pp. 100-101 and n. 65. The dates for *Ep. Tra*. 10 and Pliny's provincial governorship are not firm. It is generally agreed that the correspondence with Trajan is in its original sequence, established through Pliny's references to certain dates and annual festivals (see Sherwin-White 1966: 529). What remain uncertain are the exact dates of the governorship (suggestions include 109-111, 110-112, and 111-113) and of his death, which is believed to have occurred in the province, since the letters run out without a clear conclusion; see Birley 2000: 16-17. There is no means of telling over how many weeks or months *Ep. Tra*. 10.104-121, which come after Pliny's final reference to an annual event, were written (Birley 2000: 16). All dates in this chapter are AD unless otherwise noted.

[53] On Pliny's route to Bithynia, see Sherwin-White 1966: 580-581.

[54] See Riggsby 2003 on Pliny's organization of time in the villa letters.

[55] On the temporal impossibilites in epistolary discourse, see ch. 1, p. 15 and n. 65.

The opening *quia* clause emphasizes the sender's sure knowledge that his addressee wants this sort of on-the-road update.[56] All of this contributes to the construction of an image of an emperor who is interested not only in what sort of journey his governor has towards the province, but in having up-to-the-minute information on the governor's progress.[57] And because a letter always invites a response from the addressee, Pliny's confident claim invites confirmation or correction of the definition of the emperor from Trajan in reply.

Ep. Tra. X.16 (Trajan to Pliny)

In his even briefer response, Trajan confirms Pliny's prediction that the emperor would be interested in the progress of his journey to Bithynia, and thus the image of himself constructed by his addressee in the previous letter. This letter too reads with immediacy, in part because it is pared down to a direct response to the last letter:

Recte renuntiasti, mi Secunde carissime:[58] *pertinet enim ad animum meum, quali itinere provinciam pervenias. prudenter autem constituis interim navibus, interim vehiculis uti, prout loca suaserint*.

In each sentence Trajan paraphrases his addressee, including a clause that corresponds to one of the two elements of Pliny's letter. The clause *pertinet enim ad animum meum* echoes Pliny's *ad curam tuam pertinere*; likewise the *interim navibus, interim vehiculis* echoes *partim orariis navibus, partim vehiculis*, both in terms of diction and parallel construction. Trajan uses Pliny's own words to conjure up the image of his addressee, as if in conversation with him,[59] but he also provides an assessment of these words by means of two adverbs of approval in emphatic positions;[60] the inceptive *enim*, 'for sure', used in dialogue to qualify the previous speaker's words,[61] both contributes to the conversational tone and further affirms that Pliny acted appropriately.

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[56] On Pliny's use of *ad te pertinet* at *Pan*. 9.3 as a focalizer of the term *privatus* for Trajan's own perception of himself see Rees 2001: 158. Gamberini 1983: 337-348 provides a break-down of opening periods in Book 10 according to tone (informal/ceremonial), grammatical features and standarized formulas.

[57] Williams 1990: 87, noting that Sherwin-White has postponed the date of this letter until after Pliny's arrival in the province on 17 September, argues that the indication in the second sentence of future plans after the arrival in Ephesus suggests an earlier date, probably late August (following Merrill 1911: 415-416). Sherwin-White does not acknowledge this discrepancy, but if Pliny composed this letter after his departure from Ephesus, he has recounted the journey of his experiencing self as if it is taking place in the present, in which case he has manipulated epistolary time in order to create the image of a keen governor updating his keen emperor during his journey. *Ep. Tra*. 10.17a provides a clear example of this kind of manipulation of epistolary time; see below, pp. 102-104.

[58] On Trajan's choice of diction in addressing Pliny see below, p. 105 and n. 90.

[59] On paraphrase and its role in *Ep. Tra*. 10 in general, see above, pp. 92-93.

[60] Also noted by Williams 1990: 87.

[61] *OLD* s.v. *enim* 1.

Trajan has mirrored Pliny's construction of himself (the interested emperor) and their relationship back to his addressee by means of what we might call approval by paraphrase. The emperor regularly confirms Pliny's definitions of the selves of sender and addressee in this way.[62] And like Pliny, he writes to the moment: Trajan preserves the present tense in the clause indicating his interest ('it *is* of interest to me ...'), and he extends the present tense to the ongoing action of his addressee ('what sort of journey you *are having* to your province ...' and 'wisely *you travel* at one time by ship ...'). This letter is written as if both the act of writing and the act of reading were simultaneous with the events narrated; it is as if Trajan were able to give an immediate response, as in face to face conversation, to Pliny's letter.[63]

The arrangement of the letters in Book 10, which are grouped in pairs – a letter from Pliny followed by the reply from Trajan – contributes to the impression that the correspondents are able to provide instantaneous (or nearly instantaneous) responses to each other. It strengthens the conversational tone, especially in the case of pairs such as this one, in which the letters are very brief, to the point and written to the moment. The ancient editor, whether Pliny himself or someone else,[64] has constructed by means of arrangement the image of a continuous conversation, thereby obscuring the real chronology of the correspondence. Given that these letters would have moved back and forth across thousands of kilometres in the hands of messengers (a six to eight week journey in either direction), none of the replies from the emperor dated during the first year of Pliny's governorship would have actually reached him before the second year.[65]

This demonstrates another aspect of epistolarity discussed by Altman, whereby either narrative continuity or discontinuity may be maximized through the order in which letters are presented, the number of correspondents and plots, whether or not letters are dated and whether or not the intervals between letters are emphasized.[66] Narrative continuity is

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[62] For further instances see (Trajan confirming Pliny's self-definition) *Ep. Tra*. 10.3: *... convenientissimum esse tranquillitati saeculi tui putavi praesertim tam moderatae voluntati amplissimi ordinis non repugnare. cui obsequio meo opto ut existimes constare rationem ...* and 10.3b: *et civis et senatoris boni partibus functus es obsequium amplissimi ordinis, quod iustissime exigebat, praestando*; 10.8 and 10.9; 10.52 and 10.53; 10.98 and 10.99; 10.100 and 10.101; 10.102 and 10.103; 10.104 and 10.105; (Trajan confirming Pliny's definition of the emperor) 10.23: *quod videris mihi desiderio eorum indulgere posse* and 10.24: *possumus desiderio eorum indulgere*; 10.88 and 10.89; (Trajan confirming Pliny's definitions of both sender and addressee) 10.120 and 10.121.

[63] Cf. *Ep. Tra*. 10.45 and 10.46.

[64] See above, p. 95 and n. 49 and n. 8.

[65] i.e. replies sent from Rome during the fall of 109 (?) would not have arrived at Bithynia until after the beginning of the following calendar year, 110 (?); see Millar 2002(ii): 40-41 and 42-46.

[66] Altman 1982: 169-170.

emphasized in *Letters* 10, in which there are only two correspondents, the interval between letters is in most cases eliminated in favour of immediate response, and a given request or consultation is usually resolved in the next letter.[67] This arrangement in itself serves to create the image of a peaceful, well-managed Empire.[68]

The emperor's avid interest in his provincial magistrate in this exchange reflects one of the points of contrast between Trajan and Domitian drawn in the *Panegyricus*. Pliny declares that by acknowledging and rewarding a former provincial governor for a job well done, Trajan had inspired young men to imitate this 'good' magistrate.[69] He goes on to rejoice in the fact that under Trajan, the provincial magistrates could be certain that the emperor would know it if they did something well and receive his support, a marked difference from the previous reign, under which one could not depend on the emperor knowing of his deeds in the first place and even if they were known, there was no guarantee that the emperor would acknowledge them.[70] That in turn encouraged corruption and dishonesty.

Pliny's description of his travel to Bithynia may seem, like many of his communications with Trajan, to be unnecessary. The governor often writes, already having taken action on a given issue, in order to elicit approval from the emperor (or as in the case of the present exchange, simply to inform the emperor), and in turn he receives that approval, in the form of paraphrase accompanied by affirmation.[71] These seemingly extraneous exchanges provide opportunities for the correspondents to demonstrate aspects of the ideal presented in

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[67] There are a few examples of a postponement of the resolution to a request or plan by several letters: the question of whether or not (and where) a new public bath should be built at Prusa (*Ep. Tra*. 10.23-24 and 10.70-71); Pliny's proposal to build a canal (10.41-42 and 10.61-62). One other narrative is interrupted: the request to detain the embassy from the Bosporos, to which letters there are no responses from Trajan included in the collection (10.63-64 and 10.67).

[68] This is another way in which Book 10 stands in contrast with Books 1-9, in which there are several addressees and narratives and in which those narratives are at times distrupted in order to create tension and suspense for the reader; see de Pretis 2003: 141-145; Ash 2003: 215. The arrangement of the correspondence between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius is likewise in letter-response pairs; see ch. 4.

[69] *Pan*. 70.1-4.

[70] *Pan*. 70.4-8.

[71] For further instances in which Pliny explicitly requests approval for an action/decision taken and receives it in this way, see *Ep. Tra*. 10.3 and 10.3b; 10.27 and 10.28; 10.43 and 10.44; 10.90 and 10.91; 10.96 and 10.97; 10.98 and 10.99; 10.120 and 10.121; (in approval of a proposal) 10.54 and 10.55 (see below, pp. 109-110); 10.70 and 10.71. Trajan paraphrases his addressee in other cases as well; see (in response to a request for advice) 10.21 and 10.22; 10.29 and 10.30; 10.45 and 10.46; 10.49 and 10.50; 10.56 and 10.57; 10.68 and 10.69; 10.72 and 10.73; 10.79 and 10.80; 10.92 and 10.93; 10.116 and 10.117; 10.118; and 10.119; (in acknowledgement of prayers) 10.35 and 10.36; (agreeing to consider a proposal) 10.41 and 10.42; (responding to a request made by another via Pliny) 10.106 and 10.107; (using *ut scribis*) 10.19 and 10.20; 10.31 and 10.32; 10.33 and 10.34. See Gamberini 1983: 335-337 for a complete division of the letters in Book 10 according to function (Trajan's responses have been excluded).

the *Panegyricus* in their letters: in this case the 'good' governor recognizing the emperor's interest in his magistrates and therefore delivering the relevant information (which even includes a report on travel conditions) and in turn the 'good' emperor confirming that recognition.

Ep. Tra. X.17a, after 17 September, first year (Pliny to Trajan)

In Pliny's next letter, he picks up where he left off in the description of his journey to Bithynia and echoes his previous letter, maintaining the conversational tone (10.17a.1-2):

Sicut saluberrimam navigationem, domine, usque Ephesum expertus, ita inde, postquam vehiculis iter facere coepi, gravissimis aestibus atque etiam febriculis vexatus Pergami substiti. rursus, cum transissem in orarias naviculas, contrariis ventis retentus aliquanto tardius, quam speraveram, id est XV kal. Octobres, Bithyniam intravi. non possum tamen de mora queri, cum mihi contigerit, quod erat auspicatissimum, natalem tuum in provincia celebrare.

An important element of the relationship between Pliny and Trajan is demonstrated by this passage: the emperor is put at the forefront in everything, from the decisions Pliny makes as an individual to the very safety of the state.[72] In this case, Pliny expresses joy rather than disappointment about his later-than-hoped-for arrival, since it allowed him to celebrate the emperor's birthday in his province. This celebration is given emphasis, having been delayed until the end of the sentence, following the brief relative clause with deictic function, *quod erat auspicatissimum*. This emphasis on the importance of Trajan as an individual is frequent in Book 10 (reflecting the monolithic image of Trajan elsewhere, including the *Panegyricus*),[73] by means of a set of recurrent formulas (e.g. 'worthy of your reign')[74] and recurrent themes, such as the desire to adhere to Trajan's *mandata*[75] and to be worthy of

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[72] See *Ep. Tra*. 10.35: *vota pro incolumitate tua, qua publica salus continetur*; 10.52: *te generi humano, cuius tutela et securitas saluti tuae innisa est*; 10.100: *te remque publicam florentem et incolumem ea benignitate servarent*; 10.102: *diem, in quo in te tutela generis humani felicissima successione translata est*.

[73] See Roche 2002 on the focus on the heroic image of Trajan in the public representations of the imperial family and in the *Panegyricus*.

[74] See *Ep. Tra*. 10.1.2: *digna saeculo tuo*; 10.3.2: *convenientissimum esse tranquillitati saeculi tui putavi*; 10.23.2: *dignitas ... saeculi tui*; 10.37.3: *saeculo tuo esse dignissimam*; cf. (of Domitian's reign) 10.2.2: *illo tristissimo saeculo*; see also 10.41.1: *tua quam gloria digna*; 10.70.3: *dignumque nomine tuo*; cf. (on requests made in the emperor's name) 10.59: *per salutem tuam aeternitatemque petit a me*; 10.83: *per aeternitatem tuam salutemque*; (on public works in Trajan's name) 10.85.2: *quare honori tuo consecrarentur, ... qui Traiani adpellarentur*. Trajan's reign is also referred to with *tempora*; see *Pan*. 50.7: *securitas temporum*; 67.3: *fidelitate temporum*; *Ep. Tra*. 10.12.2: *felicitas temporum*; (of Nerva's reign) 10.58.7: *felicitas temporum*; cf. (of the contrast with previous reigns) *Pan*. 2.3: *diversitas temporum*; 35.2; 47.1: *priorum temporum*; 55.2.

[75] See *Ep. Tra*. 10.56.3: *sicut mandatis tuis*; 10.110.1: *utebaturque mandatis tuis*; see also 10.86a: *ea fide quam tibi debeo*; 10.86b: *ea fide quam tibi debeo*; 10.21.1: *voluisti*; 10.3.3: *omnia facta dictaque mea probare sanctissimis moribus tuis cupiam*; cf. (on the reasons for consulting the emperor) 10.31.1: *referendi ad te, de quibus dubito*; 10.96.1: *omnia de quibus dubito ad te referre*; 10.29.1: *te conditorem disciplinae militaris*

Trajan's favour.[76] In other words, Pliny repeatedly expresses the desire to be who Trajan says he is, constantly defining himself in relation to the emperor. Deference to imperial wisdom, as seen in the governor's tentativeness, not only ensures sound decisions in the administration of the province, but also ensures that Pliny is who he should be.

Pliny quickly shifts from the past into the present and a description of his first task upon arrival in the province (10.17a.3-4):

Nunc rei publicae Prusensium impedia, reditus, debitores excutio; quod ex ipso tractatu magis ac magis necessarium intellego. multae enim pecuniae variis ex causis a privatis detinentur; praeterea quaedam minime legitimis sumptibus erogantur. haec tibi, domine, in ipso ingressu meo scripsi.

Nunc, given emphasis by position, with *excutio*, 'Now I am investigating ...', give the impression that the activity described is simultaneous with the act of writing and that it began soon after Pliny reached Bithynia. But as is specified by the closing sentence, in which Pliny identifies precisely the timing of his letter, there is a great deal happening all at once. Pliny informs the emperor 'I have written ... upon my very arrival'. Having expressed the initiation of his examination of Prusa's finances as an ongoing present action, the final period suggests that in fact both his arrival in the province and the beginning of his work are simultaneous with the act of writing his letter to Trajan.[77]

Pliny has constructed an image of himself as an eager, hard-working governor ready to get down to business. Throughout the official correspondence Pliny strives to show himself in this light, whether out in the field, personally inspecting potential building sites for aqueducts or canals,[78] or dealing with the Christians.[79] However, keeping in mind the

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firmatoremque consulerem; 10.68: *te, domine, maximum pontificem consulendum*; 10.58.4: *donec te consulerem de eo, quod mihi constitutione tua dignum videbatur*; 10.112.3: *quod in perpetuum mansurum est, a te constitui decet, cuius factis dictisque debetur aeternitas*; 10.65.2: *consulendum te existimavi ... quod auctoritatem tuam posceret*; ; 10.114.3: *parte legis, quae iam pridem consensu quodam exolevisset, necessarium existimavi consulere te*; 10.108.2: *instituta ... brevia tamen et infirma sunt, nisi illis tua contingit auctoritas*; 10.72: *senatus consultum ... quod de iis tantum provinciis loquitur, quibus proconsules praesunt; ideoque rem integram distuli, dum tu, domine, praeceperis, quid observare me velis*.

[76] See *Ep. Tra*. 10.13: *ad testimonium laudemque morum meorum pertinere tam boni principis iudicio exornari*; 10.51.2: *ut iis, quae in me adsidue confers, non indignus existimer*; see also 10.26.1: *tua in me beneficia*; 10.118.3: *id est beneficia tua interpretari ipse digneris*; 10.120.2: *inter alia beneficia*. See Gamberini 1983: 355-357 for a list of deferential formulas in Book 10.

[77] Eco 1985 has shown the ways in which Pliny uses temporal shifts in *Ep*. 6.16 to construct a heroic death for the Elder Pliny. Eco identifies two narrative worlds (one past, one present), which are blended in such a way as to give the Plinies of the past the knowledge of Pliny in the present, rendering the Elder Pliny a fearless man, who knew his fate and faced death courageously. Cicero and Fronto both use temporal shifts as well, to fashion their ideal addressees; see Cic. *Fam*. 5.7 (ch. 1, pp. 14-19) and Fro. *Ant*. 1.2 (ch. 4, pp. 159-168).

[78] See (on the aqueduct) *Ep. Tra*. 10.37.2; (on Pliny's proposed canal project) 10.41.4; 10.61.1; (confirmation from Trajan) 10.62; see also (on the theatre at Nicea) 10.39.2; (on a building involved in a judicial inquiry) 10.81.7.

difference between the narrating and experiencing selves, this is, certainly within the present letter, a construct.[80] At the least, it was necessary for the sender to arrive in the province before he could commence the examination of the town's finances and to sit down to write his letter after the events described.[81]

Ep. Tra. X.17b, between 17 September and 24 November, first year (Pliny to Trajan)
This letter is a postscript to the previous one.[82] Pliny begins by reiterating that he has arrived in the province (10.17b.1): *Quinto decimo kalendas Octobres, domine, provinciam intravi, quam in eo obsequio, in ea erga te fide, quam de genere humano mereris, inveni*. It seems unnecessary for Pliny to repeat the exact date of his *ingressus* at Bithynia. He might have been concerned that this letter would reach Trajan before the previous one,[83] but it also allows Pliny to claim yet another event occurring simultaneously with the completion of his journey – the discovery that the province is obedient and loyal to the emperor. The noun *obsequium* also appears in the *Panegyricus*, where, within the context of the contrast between the old tyranny of Domitian and new freedom under Trajan, Pliny claims that the subjects of the Empire have come to obey and emulate Trajan.[84] In his letter Pliny confirms the reality of the obedience promised in his speech, which is apparently evident immediately upon his arrival at Bithynia. Obedience to the emperor, from Pliny as an individual and from the Empire as a whole, is another recurring theme in Pliny's speech of thanks and in *Letters* 10.[85]

In the remainder of the letter, Pliny has a request for the emperor pertaining to his investigation of Prusa's finances (10.17b.2):

Dispice, domine, an necessarium putes mittere huc mensorem. videntur enim non mediocres pecuniae posse revocari a curatoribus operum, si mensurae fideliter agantur. ita certe prospicio ex ratione Prusensium, quam cum maxime tracto.

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[79] *Ep. Tra*. 10.96.
[80] For a similar gap between the experiencing and narrating selves, see Fro. *M. Caes*. 1.3.2 (3,10-13); ch. 4, p. 154.
[81] Sherwin-White 1966: 583: 'A few days must have elapsed since his actual arrival'; Williams 1990: 88 dates this letter soon after 18 September; he does not address Pliny's statement that he has written *in ipso ingressu*, but apparently does not trust Pliny's statement in this case, though he does in *Ep. Tra*. 10.15; see n. 57.
[82] Williams 1990: 89; Sherwin-White 1966: 583.
[83] So Williams 1990: 89 and Sherwin-White 1966: 583.
[84] *Pan*. 45.5: *Huic enim cari, huic probati esse cupimus, quod frustra speraverint dissimiles, eoque obsequii continuatione pervenimus, ut prope omnes homines unius moribus vivamus*.
[85] See *Pan*. 2.5; 16.3; 42.2; 45.5; 54.5; *Ep. Tra*. 10.3.3; 10.3b; cf. (of Trajan's wife's obedience) 83. 7; (of Trajan's own obedience before his accession) *Pan*. 9.3; 10.3; 57.3; (of Trajan's obedience to the Senate as emperor) 78.1; *Ep. Tra*. 10.100. The phrase *generi humano* is also found in the *Panegyricus* and elsewhere in Book 10, in reference to the benefits bestowed upon mankind thanks to Trajan; see *Pan*. 6.1; 34.5; 57.4; 90.2; *Ep. Tra*. 10.1.2; 10.52 (see n. 72); 10.102 (see n. 72).

The request is presented as a suggestion: Pliny does not use a direct question to ask Trajan to send a surveryor, nor does he state that he thinks Trajan should send one; instead he says, 'consider, sir, whether you think that ...'. Many of Pliny's requests in the official correspondence take this form.[86] On the other hand, Pliny does frequently offer an opinion when looking to Trajan for a decision,[87] or even states his request as a necessity (e.g. 'it is necessary that you ...').[88] In each case, although Pliny has indicated his own preference or made a proposal, it is made clear that Trajan has supreme authority in every matter, reflecting the governor's deference towards imperial wisdom. In this way, Pliny ensures the success of his image construction; even in the event that Pliny's request is denied, he has been careful to emphasize his desire for Trajan's guidance, and that is what usually comes back to him, in one form or the other. Having built tentativeness into his ideal self-identity, he is able to suceed even when he appears to fail.

Ep. Tra. X.18 (Trajan to Pliny)

This letter serves as a response to both 10.17a and 10.17b. In the opening of the letter Trajan continues to maintain the correspondents' conversational tone by delaying direct address and by paraphrasing the description of the end of Pliny's journey (10.18.1-2):

Cuperem sine querela corpusculi tui et tuorum pervenire in Bithyniam potuisses, ac simile tibi iter ab Epheso et navigationi fuisset, quam expertus usque illo eras. quo autem die pervenisses in Bithyniam, cognovi, Secunde carissime, litteris tuis.

This passage also has a veneer of affection towards the addressee, achieved through the use of the diminutive (conveying sympathy for Pliny's illness)[89] and the form of direct address

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[86] *Ep. Tra*. 10.33.3; 10.49.2; 10.54.2 (see below, p. 109); 10.77.2; see also (*ut disciperes*) 10.75; 10.92; (*superest ut dispicias*) 10.112.3.

[87] *Ep. Tra*. 10.23.1 (see n. 62); 10.79.4-5. Also belonging to this category are some of the requests signalled by the verb *rogo* in indirect question (often *rogo ... digneris*); see (request for a decision, having given his opinion) 10.108.2; 10.116.1; (seeking approval on a decision) 10.43.4; (seeking permission to take some action) 10.8.4; 10.10.2; cf. letters in which *rogo* is used for a different sort of request: (seeking instructions or advice pertaining to an offical matter) 10.19.1; 10.27; 10.29.2; 10.45; 10.47.3; 10.56.1; 10.81.8 (below, p. 110); 10.118.3; (requests that some favour be bestowed upon Pliny himself or another) 10.4.6; 10.5.2; 10.6.2; 10.11.2; 10.12.1; 10.13; 10.26.2,3; 10.94.3 (*rogarem*); 10.104.

[88] *Ep. Tra*. 10.37.3; cf. 10.39.6; 10.41.3.

[89] According to Lucian *Laps*. 13 the first command contained in the imperial *mandata* given to a provincial governor was to look after his health (see Williams 1990: 88; Sherwin-White 1966: 585), which perhaps shows that the emperor was expected to show this kind of concern for the well-being of his governors. Williams 1990: 89 points out that Trajan uses a diminutive with contempt at *Ep. Tra*. 40.2 (*Graeculi*), but 'here he may be attempting to unbend a little'.

regularly used by Trajan in relation to Pliny (often paired with *mi*).[90] *Carissime* is one of the adjectives commonly used in Latin address to express affection, respect or admiration.[91] Like *domine*, it probably started as an address for close friends and relatives, which over time also came to be used in a generalized way.[92] Similarly, the vocative *mi*, which seems to be especially associated with epistolary writing,[93] is used to address intimates, but may also be used when the impression of intimacy is desired.[94] Thus Trajan's (*mi*) *Secunde carissime* conveys unemotional and formulaic politeness,[95] but also contributes to the projection of the image of Trajan as an affectionate father-figure.[96]

The rest of this letter contains one of Trajan's concise formulations of Pliny's mission in the province.[97] Again, Trajan picks up on the language in the letters to which he responds – in particular the verb *excutio* from 10.17a – but in this instance he also recontextualizes his addressee's words (10.18.2-3):

provinciales, credo, prospectum sibi a me intellegent. nam et tu dabis operam, ut manifestum sit illis electum te esse, qui ad eosdem mei loco mittereris. rationes autem in primis tibi rerum publicarum excutiendae sunt: nam et esse eas vexatus satis constat. Mensores vix etiam iis operibus, quae aut Romae aut in proximo fiunt, sufficientes habeo;[98] *sed in omni provincia inveniuntur, quibus credi possit, et ideo non deerunt tibi, modo velis diligenter excutere.*

Each occurrence of the verb in this passage relates to one of the two elements in Pliny's letters pertaining to his duties as governor. Trajan confirms Pliny's self-definition as the keen governor, who recognizes one of the needs in his province (in this case, the examination of the financial accounts), and applies it to the broader context of Bithynia as a whole. That 'examination' is necessary in contexts other than the financial is brought home by the second

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[90] For further occurrences of (*mi*) *Secunde carissime* see *Ep. Tra*. 10.16 (above, p. 99); 10.18.2; 10.20.1; 10.36; 10.44; 10.50; 10.53; 10.55; 10.60.2; 10.62; 10.80; 10.82.1; 10.89; 10.91; 10.95; 10.99; 10.101; 10.115; 10.121.

[91] Dickey 2002: 130 (see pp. 131-133 for a table of the others); cf. *TLL* (iii) 504,74-505,22.

[92] Dickey 2002: 93.

[93] See Dickey 2002: 216-220.

[94] Dickey 2002: 215-216.

[95] Dickey 2002: 141, 218.

[96] See Dickey 2002: 17-18; Trajan's address is an example of 'positive politeness': 'a strategy in which the speaker tries to gratify the addressee in some way'; a common form is the use of an address that reminds the addressee that he has a connection with the speaker. As noted earlier, Pliny develops the paternal aspect of Trajan's character through his frequent use of the word *indulgentia*; on Pliny's use of *indulgentia*, *dominus* and *parens* in reference to Trajan, see above, pp. 93-94. For a survey of occurrences of *indulgentia* in Book 10, see Cotton 1984: 252-259, in which precedents for Pliny's usage are cited where appropriate, as well as later developments; cf. Pliny's use of *bonitas tua*, used in the same contexts (see Cotton 1984: 259), and of *beneficium*, the results of the emperor's *indulgentia* (see Cotton 1984: 259). Williams 1990: 18 cites a parallel example of an emperor addressing an official as 'dearest' (Marcus Aurelius to Marsianus).

[97] For similar 'mission statements' see *Ep. Tra*. 10.32; 10.117 (see Woolf 1995: 122).

[98] On Trajan's building projects see Williams 1990: 89-90; Sherwin-White 1966: 585-586.

occurence of the verb, in the last emphatic position of the letter.[99] Moreover, this definition is preceded by an even broader statement about acting in the interests of the provincials, for which purpose Pliny, whose important position as imperial appointee is emphasized by the long *ut* clause,[100] was especially chosen.

At the same time, this exhortation to get on with the examination of the towns' accounts, even though in his letter Pliny explicitly states that that is precisely what he is doing, seems unnecessary, as does his acknowledgement of the date of Pliny's arrival. I have just suggested that the former serves to conjure up and confirm the image of the addressee constructed in the previous letter. However, both of these elements of paraphrase may also reflect the distance over which the correspondents are communicating, and the potential for failure: letters may be delayed or lost,[101] and in any case, as noted above, their delivery in both directions takes time. Therefore, each correspondent is careful to remind the other of where they were in their exchange; in 10.17-18 this is manifested in Pliny's repetition of his arrival date, and in Trajan's acknowledgement of that information.

Regarding the examination of the accounts, Trajan's exhortation perhaps reflects the central role he takes in shaping the images of the correspondents. In the absence of a well-defined governor in Pliny's own letters, the emperor overstates his definition of the addressee, reiterating Pliny's own statement about the examination of financial accounts before expanding upon it. In the *ut* clause describing Pliny's appointment, Trajan uses the passive voice – *you were sent by me*. This too may be related to the precariousness of epistolary communication over vast distances: Trajan, knowing that it may be some time before Pliny will hear from him again, takes the opportunity to give a full definition of the addressee, as a way to shore up the image of his governor (i.e. a way of reminding Pliny who he was in his previous letter). While Cicero acknowledged the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning in his letters concerning Pompey by qualifying or even undermining his self-identity, in the letters of Pliny and Trajan provisionality is reflected in the seemingly obsessive paraphrase of each other. Because the image in a given letter may or may not be valid by the time it reaches

[99] See Altman 145-146; she points out that the final lines of any literary unit (chapter, scene, etc.) can be a privileged moment for emphasis, summary, retrospective, illumination or playful punch-line. For examples of the use of the final line of a letter for emphatic self-definition, see Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.18.2 (50, 21-25); Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.12 (5, 20) (ch. 4, pp. 156-157).

[100] i.e. in contrast with the proconsuls chosen by lot; Sherwin-White 1966: 585.

[101] See Introduction, p. 6.

its recipient,[102] Pliny and Trajan participate in what we might think of as a sort of rehearsal, a performance of carefulness, and the repetition is a strategy for ensuring that the correspondents remember who they are during the interval between letters.

Turning to Pliny's request for a surveyor, these letters provide an example of a typical exchange between these correspondents. Pliny makes a suggestion, displaying his willingness to do as Trajan decides, and in return Trajan leaves the task or decision in the governor's hands instead.[103] For Pliny's part, Williams suggests that he did not believe that Trajan's generalization about surveyors applied in Bithynia, since he makes a similar request at a later date,[104] and this is the sort of exchange that has led scholars to conclude that Trajan regularly became frustrated by Pliny's unnecessary requests for advice or assistance. However, as noted earlier, one aspect of the idealized relationship presented in Book 10 is precisely this deferral to the emperor, answered with the delegation of authority to the governor.[105] The virtues of Pliny and Trajan work together for the well-being of the provincials.[106]

Furthermore, this exchange and others like it also reflect the new culture of freedom described in the *Panegyricus*, in which Pliny explains that the consuls are now able to express opinions freely and make pronouncements without fear.[107] Pliny manages to maintain both for Trajan the image of the *princeps civilis*, who wants the opinions of his equals, and for himself the proper deference owed the emperor. Pliny attempts to maintain this balance between expressing his opinion (confidence) and deferring to the emperor (tentativeness) throughout the official correspondence. In turn, Trajan often responds positively to Pliny's idea, in any case praising his *diligentia*, and either grants the request for assistance or, as in this case, leaves the situation altogether in Pliny's hands.[108] We have now seen the ideal model for interaction between governor and emperor and how it works in epistolary exchange: sender and addressee construct ideal definitions of the 'good' governor and emperor, both through their self-presentation in *I*-statements and through the confirmation of the *You*'s self-presentation from the previous letter.

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[102] On the consequences of the time gap between correspondents, see ch. 1, p. 15.
[103] For further examples of Trajan encouraging Pliny to seek out what he needs within the province see *Ep. Tra*. 10.40; 10.62; for examples of Trajan leaving the plan entirely to Pliny see 10.40; 10.62; 10.86.
[104] *Ep. Tra*. 10.39.6; see Williams 1990: 90.
[105] See above, pp. 95-96.
[106] Woolf 1995: 122.
[107] *Pan*. 93.
[108] There are instances in which Trajan does offer a solution in response to Pliny's consultation; see Ep. Tra. 10.19 and 10.20; 10.21 and 10.22; 10.29 and 10.30; 10.31 and 10.32; 10.33 and 10.34; 10.45 and 10.46; 10.47 and 10.48; 10.49 and 10.50; 10.56 and 10.57; 10.58-59 and 10.60; 10.65 and 10.66; 10.79 and 10.80; 10.92 and 10.93; 10.110 and 10.111; 10.114 and 10.115.

Correction: Loan Sharking and a Treason Trial

Though the ideal model examined above, in which the governor defers to imperial wisdom and receives the support of his emperor in response, characterizes much of the correspondence between Pliny and Trajan, it is not universally reflected in their letters. There are instances in which Pliny falters, by failing to live up to the 'good' era which he so often praises, or by constructing a definition of the emperor, which in turn is corrected by Trajan. It is in these letters that the gap between fiction and reality, or between the images constructed by Pliny and Trajan is revealed.

Ep. Tra. 10.54, 28 January – 18 September, second year, and 10.55

In this pair of letters Pliny writes the emperor seeking approval for a scheme to loan out public monies in the province. His letter is similar in may ways to the letters discussed above: Trajan is placed at the forefront, this time because the emperor's *providentia* is named (before Pliny's *ministerium*) as contributing to the collection of public funds (10.54.1); Pliny takes advantage of the new culture of free speech to propose a lending scheme, according to which the interest rate would be lowered (*minuendam usuram*) and city councillors would be compelled to borrow from public funds (10.54.2) so as to ensure that the monies do not 'lie idle' (*ne otiosae iaceant*);[109] and he requests Trajan's approval in the same language as the request for a surveyor above (*dispice ... putes*), deferring to imperial wisdom (10.54.2).[110]

The first part of Trajan's response is similar to letters already discussed: the emperor approves the first part of Pliny's plan through paraphrase (*usurarum minuatur*) and puts the decision about the new rate of interest back into the hands of his governor, completing the exchange of deferral and delegation.[111] In the last sentence, however, Pliny is strongly reproached for suggesting that town councillors be forced to take out loans from public funds (10.55): *invitos ad accipiendum compellere, quod fortassis ipsis otiosum futurum sit, non est ex iustitia nostrorum temporum*. Trajan paraphrases his addressee again, turning Pliny's

[109] Personal loans were seen as the alternative to the investment of public funds in property; see Williams 1990: 109; Sherwin-White 1966: 635.
[110] Sherwin-White 1966: 636 suggests that Pliny applies to Trajan in this instance because of the novelty of his proposal.
[111] For further examples of approval by paraphrase, see above, p. 101and n. 71.

argument against himself with *ipsis otiosum*.[112] And he uses one of the formulaic phrases often used by Pliny himself, saying that the suggestion would not be 'in keeping with the justice of our times'. In doing so, he appeals to one of the ideals set out by his addressee in the *Panegyricus* and evoked in Pliny's letters.[113] The emperor uses Pliny's contrast between the previous reign of the 'bad' emperor and the new reign of the 'good' emperor, to correct an element of Pliny's image of himself (or an element of Pliny's image of his role in the province).[114] Pliny has expressed his opinion freely, but it is not in keeping with the 'good' times, and it must be corrected.

Ep. Tra. 10.81, 28 January – 18 September, second year, and 10.82

This pair provides another example of an instance in which one of Pliny's images must be corrected, but this time that of the emperor. Pliny writes to Trajan to request that he make a legal decision in a case that has come before the governor. Dio Chrysostom has applied for the transfer of certain public works he had undertaken to the city of Prusa (10.81.1), but the magistrate Eumolpus, on behalf of Archippus, has appealed to Pliny, requesting that the transfer be delayed until Dio produces the accounts (10.81.1) and charging Dio with treason because he had buried his wife and son in a building where a statue of Trajan had been placed (10.81.2). Pliny closes his letter with a request for guidance (10.81.8): *te, domine, rogo ut me in hoc praecipue genere cognitionis regere digneris ...* , again deferring to imperial wisdom.[115]

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[112] Sherwin-White 1966: 636; he also argues that the vigour of this reply suggests the emperor's own hand; on the authorship of Trajan's replies, see above, pp. 92-93. For further examples of paraphrase when Trajan rejects a proposal, see *Ep. Tra*. 10.77 and 10.78; 10.108 and 10.109.

[113] See n. 74.

[114] Williams 1990: 110: 'Pliny's proposal is classed as the kind of thing Domitian might have done'; Merrill 1911: 427-428 argues that Pliny had a Domitianic precedent for his scheme, since he 'usually does not originate wildly extravagant notions of administration ...'; against this view see Sherwin-White 1966: 636. There is one other occasion on which Pliny is corrected in this way. In *Ep. Tra*. 10.96 Pliny reports to Trajan on his management of the trials concerning alleged Christians. Pliny is more cautious in this letter than in 10.54: in the opening he asserts his uncertainty in this matter and appeals to the man better able than any to provide advice; and towards the end of the letter, when Pliny discusses the damage which the cult might do in the province, he is careful not to state a clear opinion about whether or not it is dangerous. He shifts from optimism (10.96.8) to pessimism (10.96.9) and then back to optimism again (10.96.10). Like Cicero in the letter addressed to Figulus, Pliny is difficult to pin down in this letter; each scenario presented is potentially valid. This letter provides an example of the tension between confidence (in asking for help) and tenativeness (in avoiding the construction of a firm image of himself), which characterizes Pliny's self-portrayal. In his reply Trajan provides the general guidelines requested by the governor for future proceedings, and in doing so orders Pliny not to continue to use the anonymous pamphlets to identify Christians, using the formulaic 'not in keeping with our age'. Despite his caution, an element of Pliny's self-image is in need of correction.

[115] Sherwin-White 1966: 678: 'Pliny's request reflects the condition of public life after Domitian rather than Pliny's timidity – even under the "best" emperor only the action of the emperor himself could disallow a charge involving *maiestas minuta*'. For further examples of requests stated in this way, see n. 87.

In reply, Trajan scolds Pliny for having entertained the charge of treason at all. In this case, the governor's hesitation should have been unnecessary because Pliny ought to be better acquainted with Trajan's policies (10.82.1): ... *cum propositum meum optime nosses, non ex metu nec terrore hominum aut criminibus maiestatis reverentiam nomini neo adquiri*. In this case, Trajan claims that Pliny *should know* who Trajan is; and indeed Pliny praises Trajan in the *Panegyricus* for putting an end to charges of treason based on trivial acts.[116] The governor has constructed an invalid definition of the emperor, and as in the previous pair, Trajan takes up a theme from Pliny's speech of thanks, in order to correct Pliny.[117]

Conclusion

It is widely recognized that during the early imperial period Roman aristocrats had to find new contexts in which to acquire status among their fellow aristocrats.[118] As Dupont explains, during the Republic, oratory, as an essential instituion of *libertas*, is the means by which the ideal citizen enacts and confirms his status. Furthermore, performance is fundamental to the impact of the *oratio* and of the orator, for oratory is firmly rooted in a culture of orality.[119] With Augustus' seizure of power, the spaces for the performance of the *oratio* disappear together with its political context; the emperor monopolizes political discourse, leaving no need for persuasive speech.[120]

The *recitatio* emerges as a form of private discourse that bestows social prestige and thus substitutes, at least in part, the traditional *oratio*.[121] The practice resembles oratory in that it requires an audience, and that audience consists of a group of *amici*, obliged to attend recitations and offer judgment. As such, the *recitatio* creates a community based upon the exchange of gifts, thereby implying reciprocity and capturing the values of the old Republican elite.[122] The recited text, revised on the suggestions of the audience, might then be published

[116] *Pan*. 42; 34-35; see Williams 1990: 131; Sherwin-White 1966: 679.
[117] For further examples of instances in which Pliny's definition of the emperor is corrected by Trajan, see *Ep. Tra*. 10.68 and 69; 10.108 and 108; in both cases Pliny has asked Trajan to give a general guideline for a given type of situation, and in response Trajan instructs Pliny to follow local custom, because it is not the place of the emperor to give a ruling in these cases. In a sense this fits into the ideal model of interaction between governor and emperor: Pliny defers to Trajan and Trajan delegates authority. But perhaps it also reflects a desire on the part of Trajan not to be pinned down in that way, which comes into conflict with Pliny's desire to be well-defined by the emperor.
[118] See, e.g. Leach 2003 on *otium*; Roller 1998 on poetry; Bloomer 1997: 110-153 on declamation.
[119] Dupont 1997: 44.
[120] Dupont 1997: 44-45.
[121] Dupont 1997: 45; cf. Henderson 2002b: 141-151 on *Ep*. 3.18 and the delivery/recitation of the *Panegyricus*.
[122] Dupont 1997: 52-53; cf. Starr 1990 on attendance at recitations.

and become public discourse, the audience of which could potentially be the whole of the Empire. Publication, however, allows for the consumption of a text in the absence of its author and therefore entails a further performative loss. It interrupts the process of social communication, eliminating the possibility of exchange and reciprocity.[123]

Recitation itself holds a middle ground between the pure orality of the Republican *oratio* and epistolary writing, which implies the absence of the writer during the act of reading.[124] The *recitatio*, like epistolary writing, involves a written text and reciprocity. Thus, an epistolary exchange is able to stand in for the *recitatio* in written form, and an example of this is found in the exchange between Pliny and Tacitus (*Ep*. 7.20). Pliny puts himself in the position of the *auditor*, having read Tacitus' text and made suggestions for improvement, and asks that his friend do the same to his own text in return. As Dupont concludes, this exchange is based upon reciprocity and traditional aristocratic values: 'Two writers, during their lifetime, succeed in overcoming the constraints of the book, thanks to epistolary writing, which allows dialogue and thus a symmetry between reader and writer. They accomplish the rare feat of reconstituting, under the Empire and by means of writing, a space for *libertas*'.[125] Woolf has argued that Dupont overestimates the importance of the *recitatio in practice* for Roman elite society,[126] but he also acknowledges the importance of the *idea* of the *recitatio* as an imaginary space for Pliny's self-presentation.[127]

I would argue that the letter exchange functions similarly as an imaginary space for Plinian communication, and we might likewise apply the paradigm of the *recitatio* to *Letters* 10: Pliny (*I*) casts himself as *recitator* seeking judgment from Trajan (*You*) the *auditor*. Rather than eliciting corrections to be made to written texts, it is Pliny's adminstrative and judicial decisions, opinions and ultimately his identity as the 'good' governor which are under scrutiny (10.43.4): *te, domine, rogo ut quid sentias rescribendo aut consilium meum confirmare aut errorem emendare digneris*.[128] After all, 'good' people as well as 'good' books are '"filed down" (*limatus*), "polished up" (*politus*, *ornatus*), and "emended"

[123] Dupont 1997: 56-57.
[124] Dupont 1997: 52.
[125] Dupont 1997: 59; cf. Morello 2003: 187: '... letters, both as physical objects and as intellectual artifices, form part of the currency of *amicitia*, to be exchanged with correspondents as (and with) gifts and representations of the absent friend'.
[126] Woolf 2005: 216 n. 43.
[127] See Woolf 2005: 212-218.
[128] *Ep. Tra*. 10.43.4. In the *Panegyricus* Trajan is characterized as an *emendator*; see *Pan*. 6.2; 53.1; cf. 46.6.

(*emendatus*)'[129] in the *Letters*. Trajan, as well as Pliny, invites response and potentially correction simply by sending a letter. This exchange is also meant to represent a space for *libertas* under the Empire, for as Pliny tells us, Trajan adheres to the code of reciprocity at the heart of aristocratic friendship;[130] he has bid the Senate be free, and magistrates may speak their minds freely without fear of their emperor.[131]

As an expression of the idealized relationship between 'good' governor and 'good' emperor, Pliny's letters to Trajan, like the *recitatio* and his correspondence with Tacitus, represent free discourse within a 'private' performative context. The result is, as we have seen, the 'good' governor's consistent deference to the emperor, and in turn the 'good' emperor's consistent delegation to the governor. However, reciting before the emperor is a different matter from reciting before other audiences;[132] as we have seen, 'free speech' in Book 10 is exercised with caution, and while each correspondent usually confirms the identity of the other, Pliny's freely offered opinion is not welcomed always by Trajan. In those cases, the image presented by the *recitator* is corrected by his *auditor*.

The *recitatio* model might also be applied (to varying degrees) to the letter collections of Cicero, Fronto and Symmachus. The notion of the letter as a replacement for a performative context is certainly present in all three, and to a greater degree than in Pliny's letters to Trajan. Cicero advocates on his own behalf in an epistolary 'courtroom' before his accuser in the letters to Appius;[133] he recreates the setting in which he delivered the *pro Marcello* for Sulpicius.[134] The correspondence between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius most closely resembles the *recitatio* paradigm: each correspondent takes the role of *recitator*/*auditor* by turns, sending speeches and rhetorical treatises to the other for judgment. But this performative aspect of the letter is most fully developed by Symmachus, who like Pliny is geographically separated from his emperor but who was also denied access to the emperor's predecessor, and he uses his letters to the emperor as a conduit for the *oratio* he was not permitted to deliver in person. Like Pliny, all three 'perform' for their audience/addressee and invite judgment.

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[129] Henderson 2003: 122; see, e.g. *Ep*. 1.10; 1.20.21; 1.8.3-5.
[130] *Pan*. 44.7-8; 60.5-7; see Griffin 2000: 545-555.
[131] *Pan*. 66. Cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1982: 38-39.
[132] Ancient authors discuss the difficulty of talking to rulers; see, e.g. Ahl 1984 on 'figured speech'.
[133] See ch. 1, pp. 30-43.
[134] See ch. 1, pp. 69-70.

Moreover, Cicero, Fronto and Symmachus take advantage of the invitation to judgment inherent in the *recitatio* and attempt to manipulate and correct their addressees. When it comes to the reciprocity at the foundation of the *recitatio* paradigm in *Letters* 10, the only collection with which we may compare it is the correspondence between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius. In that exchange the correspondents do not merely offer their judgment as *auditores* of the quality of texts they exchange, but go further: each makes corrections to the identity of the other. Like Cicero, Fronto and Marcus create fictions, beneath the surface of which is discernible a corrective agenda. Reciprocity takes on a dual playful/coercive nature.

On the other hand, the end to which Pliny uses this invitation for correction afforded by epistolary exchange makes him unique among the other letter writers under consideration, because the Trajan found in Book 10 is not in need of correction. These correspondents project an idealized relationship, in which the political ideal is manifest. This idealized relationship is Pliny's fiction (as the idealized relationship between Cicero and Pompey/Caesar is Cicero's), but, as suggested earlier, Trajan also had a hand in creating the image of himself presented by Pliny, and that image appeared on, among other media, the coinage issued during Trajan's reign.[135]

In chapters one and two I have suggested that we might think about a letter from Cicero addressed to Pompey or Caesar as a sort of mirror, in which the sender creates the desirable reflection of the addressee. As we shall see, this image is useful when thinking about the letters of Fronto, Marcus Aurelius and Symmachus as well. Senders may create the ideal mirror-image from scratch or use the addressee's self-presentation as a starting-point, to be adjusted or reshaped. But Pliny's letters are something quite different. The paired letters of Book 10 (letter and response) with their paired images of sender and addressee (*I* and *You*) are like the two sides of a coin: each side confirms both the image of the emperor, on one side, and the image or images of his Empire, on the other side, as well as the *value* (literally) of those static, permanent images as part of the living currency (again, literally) of an empire. That is not to say, however, that this tight correspondence between the two sides does not have any capacity to reveal occasional inconsistencies (e.g. of the type identified in the last few pages of this chapter). These inconsistencies, rather, are in keeping with the tensions inherent in the letter form, but for the most part the impressions of disagreement between

[135] See above, pp. 90-91 and nn. 17-18.

sender and addressee which we have seen in Cicero's correspondence and which we shall see in the chapters to follow are, remarkably, excluded.

Perhaps it is no accident that the first official exchange between Pliny and Trajan concerns Prusa's finances. Coins, like the letters of Book 10, are both static and in motion, for money travels as far as letters do. Thus Book 10 becomes a sort of treasury (managed by none other than the former *praefectus aerarii Saturni*[136]) and each letter becomes a coin preserving obverse and reverse images of the ideal *princeps* and his ideal Empire. As such, the idealized relationship in Book 10 has implications far beyond the boundaries of Bithynia; it has, in fact, the widest possible repercussions for everyone living everywhere in the entire Roman Empire. The virtuous governor and his virtuous emperor work for the well-being not only of the provincials but of the entire *generis humani*.

[136] From 98-100; see *Ep*. 5.14.5; *Ep. Tra*. 10.3a.1; 10.8.3; *Pan*. 91.1.

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Letters to Marcus Aurelius

Fronto's epistolary agenda in relation to Marcus Aurelius is perhaps more similar to Pliny's agenda than to Cicero's. While Cicero clearly is fighting for his political career, jostling for a position as the adviser to Pompey/Caesar, Pliny less urgently benefits from imperial approval as the appointed governor of Bithynia. Likewise Fronto's goals are less urgent than Cicero's. Fronto is concerned with his legacy as the personal tutor of rhetoric to a future emperor and the extent to which that emperor's speeches and edicts will reflect his instruction and his interest in good Latinity,[1] and he constructs images of Marcus accordingly. This is not to say that Fronto never attempts to influence Marcus' actions as emperor,[2] but it is to his appointment as the imperial rhetoric tutor that he owes the beginning of his career as a courtier and, therefore, his social status depends upon his personal relationship with the imperial family.[3]

As suggested in the previous chapter, Fronto's correspondence with Marcus Aurelius is in many ways most directly comparable with Pliny's Book 10: we have both sides of the exchange, and are in a position to examine how both correspondents manage the *I-You*

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[1] The focus of Fronto's rhetorical instruction, as it comes down to us in his correspondence, is style, and he never discusses the technical aspects of oratory: invention, arrangement, memory or delivery; see Kennedy 1972: 600; Russell 1990: 13-17. He based his theory of style on finding the 'right' words to express one's thought, but readers have recognized Fronto's attraction to old Latin words and have identified his theory as archaism. Many see Fronto as a leader of this movement, which was concerned with reviving the Latin of the Republic, against the tide of degeneration during the Silver Age; see Brock 1911: 32; Russell 1990: 13-14; Leeman 1963: 365; Haines 1919(i): xl. Marache 1952 drew a distinction between Latin archaism and what was happening in the Greek Second Sophistic, a classicizing movement interested in a pure Atticism. Cameron 1984: 43-44 suggests that the archaistic movement was the result of a combination of factors internal and external (i.e. the influence of the Greek Atticist movement). But the picture of an archaistic movement, which parallels the Atticist movement during the second century AD (see, e.g. Brock 1911: 24), has been challenged by scholars who point out that these 'archaizers' created new words more than dredged up old ones (Swain 2004: 17), that much of their language is not attested in the Republic or in the first century of the Empire (Holford-Strevens 2003: 363) and that Fronto and Gellius advocate the substitution of unsuitable archaisms with common expressions (Garcea and Lomanto 2004: 43). Swain 2004: 17 suggests that it might be better 'to see these second-century authors as linguistic nationalists whose aim was to reinvigorate Latin as a language that was capable of change and innovation but also rightly proud of its ancient pedigree'; cf. Kennedy 1972: 597; Holford-Strevens 2003: 357; Leeman 1963: 371; Goodyear 1982: 677.

[2] e.g. *Ant*. 2.1-2.2 (95-96); see n. 149. All references to the text are followed by the page and line numbers in van den Hout's edition in brackets.

[3] See Champlin 1980: 94-117, chapter 7, 'The Friend of Caesar'.

epistolary discourse;[4] Fronto and Marcus use paraphrase and quotation of the addressee as a means of defining the addressee; the correspondence is arranged in pairs, eliminating the interval between letter and response by the exclusion of dates and maximizing narrative continuity.[5] The editor has structured the correspondence in such a way as to project the image of an ongoing conversation, just as Pliny's editor did.[6] Indeed, the differences between the epistolary agendas of Fronto and Pliny are all the more striking for the similarities in the configuration of their correspondences with their respective emperors.

While Pliny was primarily confirming the 'reality' of the ideal Trajan, Fronto is attempting to make his ideal a reality; like Cicero and Symmachus, Fronto (using his identity as orator) attempts to persuade his addressee to accept his ideal definitions of sender and addressee, in this case the ideal *magister* and the ideal orator-emperor. Likewise, while Trajan often was confirming Pliny's ideal definitions and mirroring them back in his replies, Marcus consistently redefines sender and addressee, shifting the basis of discussion from eloquence to Stoicism. What makes Fronto unique among our letter writers, though, is the nature of his relationship with his emperor. Unlike the others, Fronto is able to fall back on a previous position of some authority over Marcus, as his former rhetoric tutor; it is his status as *magister* with which he attempts to maintain influence over the emperor, his former student.

Our understanding of the relationship between Fronto and his imperial pupil has changed in recent years; E. Champlin nicely summarizes the traditional view: 'upon his appointment as tutor, Fronto quickly won his pupil's love and thoroughly instructed him in the art of Latin rhetoric; but in the course of the 140s the young prince was converted to philosophy, to Fronto's dismay and over his protests; and thereafter, although personal relations remained warm, Fronto never won back the earlier intimacy and authority'.[7] Indeed many scholars go so far as to say that Fronto harboured 'hatred of philosophy and all its

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[4] For a general discussion on epistolary *I-You* discourse see Introduction, p. 4.

[5] For a general discussion of arrangement and its role in creating continuity or discontinuity in a letter collection, see ch. 3, pp. 100-101; on the chronology of Fronto's epistolary collection see n. 39.

[6] See Haines 1919(i): ix-xxii. The original editor is unknown, but one possibility is Fronto's son-in-law, Aufidius Victorinus, who was Fronto's heir and a leading man during the reign of Commodus, putting him in a favourable position to be the literary executor. His goal may have been to bring Fronto into prominence as Marcus Aurelius' tutor, and to put on record his view on oratorical and literary style.

[7] Champlin 1980: 121. All dates in this chapter are AD unless otherwise noted.

works',[8] and that for him 'a philosopher on the throne was a disaster'.[9] Likewise these scholars generally position Marcus at the opposite extreme, pointing to *ad M. Caesarem* 4.13, a letter in which Marcus admits that he has been neglecting his rhetorical exercises in order to read Ariston (identified as the third century BC Stoic), as evidence of Marcus' final break with rhetoric.[10] These scholars have built up the picture of a disagreement between the emperor Marcus and his former tutor about the merits of philosophy, in which Fronto desperately attacks it, and Marcus largely ignores him.

Others have argued that this picture must be redrawn. Champlin questions the value of *ad M. Caesarem* 4.13 as evidence of a sudden and complete conversion to philosophy,[11] and points out that there is also evidence for Marcus' abiding interest in literature and eloquence and for his being known as an accomplished orator as well as a philosopher.[12] E. Rawson questions the appropriateness of labelling Marcus the 'philosopher-king',[13] noting that his philosophy tutor, Rusticus, was also a Roman aristocrat[14] and that in the *Meditations* Marcus voices suspicion that claimants to the role of philosopher-king were play-acting.[15] In any case, as emperor, Marcus had no choice but to make use of oratory in his public speaking

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[8] Brock 1911: 39; see Brock 1911: 78-84, chapter eight, 'Fronto's Opposition to Philosophy'.

[9] van den Hout 1999: ix; cf. Leeman 1963: 366; Kennedy 1972: 600-601; Haines 1919(i): xxxiii-xxxiv; Mackail 1913: 235.

[10] van den Hout 1999: 186; Karadimas 1996: 18; Kennedy 1972: 600; Haines 1919(i): xxxiv; Brock 1911: 52.

[11] Champlin 1974: 144 argues that Ariston should be identified with the jurist Titius Ariston, which would better suit the context of the letter and in particular the statement that 'the laws must sometimes be allowed to sleep' (4.13.3 [68,8-9]). Birley 1987: 226 accepts Champlin's argument that the letter does not represent a sudden conversion, but argues that it is clear that Marcus is suffering an inner crisis. See Moles 1978 for parallel supposed 'conversions' from rhetoric to philosophy, especially Dio Chrysostom; Moles points out the dangers in conversion-analysis and argues that in Dio's case, conversion is not supported by the facts of his career.

[12] D.C. 71.1.1-3; Hdn. 1.2.3; Aur. Vict. *Caes*. 16.1; *Epit*. 16.7; Champlin 1980: 121-122; see also Rawson 1989: 255.

[13] Rawson 1989, exploring the extent to which Greeks attempted to persuade Roman emperors to take philosophical advisers, concludes that while Romans were familiar with the notion of the philosophic ruler and adviser, many of them were not terribly interested in these ideas (1989: 255); on the tendency from the time of the Second Sophistic to equip 'good' emperors of the past with such an adviser, see Murray 1965; Champlin 1980: 121-122 points out that the image of Marcus as philosopher-king was fastened upon by subsequent generations, but was not so overwhelming for his contemporaries. See also Stanton 1969 who, after an examination of the legislation enacted during Marcus' reign, concludes (against Noyen 1954 and 1955) that he did not apply his philosophical beliefs as emperor.

[14] Rawson 1989: 252; on Rusticus see also Champlin 1980: 119f; Brock 1911: 52-55; D.C. 71.35.

[15] Rawson 1989: 252; Aur. *Med*. 9.29. Themistius assigns, along with Rusticus, Epictetus as philosophic adviser to Marcus (Themist. 5.63d). However, Marcus clearly never knew Epictetus personally, while by his own account read and valued his works (see Rawson 1989: 251). On Marcus' own devotion to philosophy, see D.C. 71.1; SHA *M. Ant*. 1.1; 2.6; 8.3; 16.5; *Avidius Cassius* 1.8; 3.5-6; 14.5.

and is not likely to have completely rejected the teaching of his rhetoric tutor. Champlin sees in the post-accession letters evidence of Fronto reassuring an anxious emperor, who lacks confidence in his own oratorical abilities.[16]

Fronto, for his part, according to D. Karadimas, recognizes the value of philosophy in that it produces great thoughts, to which one may put eloquent words, and urges Marcus to dignify his philosophical thinking with equally great speech.[17] Fronto's disappointment with his student lies in a difference in priorities: Fronto would have Marcus reverse the order in which philosophy and oratory received his attention rather than demand an abandonment of philosophy altogether. Aware of his former student's preference for philosophy, Fronto takes a conciliatory stance, in which moderation between the two possible extremes is advocated.[18]

What evidence is there then of the debate between rhetoric and philosophy in Fronto's correspondence with Marcus Aurelius? In the letters written before Marcus' accession, Champlin, having discounted *ad M.Caesarem* 4.13, sees very little indeed: 'we are left with a correspondence between Fronto and Caesar Marcus which reveals almost no concern for the perils and attractions of philosophy: Fronto's skirmishes with the discipline are confined to letters and essays composed in his old age and after Marcus' accession as emperor'.[19] Without the 'conversion' letter, what appears to remain is only *ad M.Caesarem* 3.16, in which Fronto explicitly defends rhetoric against Marcus' opinion that it is dishonest.[20]

As for letters exchanged after Marcus became emperor, there is a small group, in which Fronto lays out his theory of style, that contain his attacks, such as they are, on philosophy. These include the book entitled *de Eloquentia* (five letters in M. P. J. van den Hout's edition) and one entitled *de Orationibus*. Marcus makes no explicit statement against rhetoric in any of his letters addressed to Fronto during this period.[21] Evidence for his position is therefore taken from his *Meditations*, written after his exchange with Fronto, or deduced from Fronto's

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[16] Champlin 1980: 125; cf. Brock 1911: 53.
[17] Karadimas 1996: 13, 17; cf. Champlin 1980: 123.
[18] Karadimas 1996: 16-17.
[19] Champlin 1980: 121; cf. Goodyear 1982: 677.
[20] Champlin 1980: 174 n. 19.
[21] On the absence of replies to Fronto's attacks on philosophy in the post-accession letters, see n. 89.

arguments (i.e. Marcus' opinion is thought to be in opposition to them) and from Fronto's representation of the emperor's state of mind. In other words, scholars have looked outside the letters written by Marcus himself for evidence of his opinion, in some cases trusting Fronto to provide an accurate representation.[22]

There appears to be little evidence at all for the debate between philosophy and rhetoric in Fronto's correspondence, especially in the letters exchanged with Caesar Marcus. However, while scholars have rightly come to adopt a more moderate view of the positions taken by the two correspondents on this topic, they have failed to recognize that these positions are in fact evident throughout their exchange. As we have seen, the act of writing a letter is an act of self-definition, which also affords the opportunity of defining the self to which one is addressed. In this correspondence, as in Pliny's Book 10, we are able to observe an exchange of selves between the correspondents, but of a different sort than the exchange between Pliny and Trajan. The exchange between Fronto and Marcus is presented by the correspondents as a game, whereby each (re-)creates *personae* for sender and addressee, often explicitly within the context of a joke. This game manifests itself in the choices of the correspondents within the epistolary form.

The focus of both Fronto and Marcus' shaping and reshaping of selves is the relationship between them, and each accomplishes his fashionings by using strategies of epistolary discourse to define himself in relation to the other and vice versa. Before Marcus' accession, Fronto (*I*) the teacher addresses Marcus (*You*) his student within their teacher-student relationship. In turn the student redefines himself as Marcus (*I*) the Stoic addressing Fronto (*You*) as something other than his teacher (e.g. his friend/lover) within the context of Stoicism. This picture changes after Marcus becomes emperor, when Marcus (*I*) the busy emperor writes Fronto (*You*) his teacher, a pair of selves that does not naturally fit into either the exchange between Stoic friends or between a student and his tutor. In turn Fronto (*I*) takes up his role as teacher and addresses Marcus (*You*) his student, reasserting his *auctoritas* as *magister* and re-establishing eloquence as the foundation of their relationship.

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[22] e.g. Champlin on *Eloq*. (1980: 125), *Orat*. (1980: 125-126) and *Ant*. 1.2 (see n. 233).

As discussed in chapter two, the self-fashioning attempted by Cicero goes on beneath the surface of some fiction; he says one thing while doing another. This model is in some ways analogous to the notion of 'code-switching', defined as 'the practice of using two or more languages in the same utterance',[23] which S. Swain has developed in his examinations of Greek in Cicero and Fronto's correspondence.[24] He identifies two codes in which Fronto and Marcus speak to each other: profuse expressions of love or friendship, and problems of health.[25] He offers a reading of the Greek erotic letter (*Addit. epist*. 8), sent from Fronto to Marcus, and reveals the political realities obscured by the code, in which the tutor-pupil relationship is overshadowed by the client-prince relationship.[26] As in Cicero's correspondence, a different linguistic register is used to discuss an awkward topic.

Swain's interest is the sender's choice of language: 'Language choice ... is often bound up with the identity which a person is seeking to project on a particular occasion ...'[27] When it comes to the epistolary form in particular, the choice of letter type is similarly connected to the self-projection of the sender. The sender's *persona* is determined, in part, by the type of letter he is sending; one addresses oneself to the recipient of a letter of consolation in very different terms than to the recipient of a love-letter,[28] and a different letter form, like a different linguistic register, may be used to discuss an awkward topic.

For our purposes then, 'code' may be (re)defined as letter type: Cicero's political self-fashioning is obscured by the letter of consolation or the letter of recommendation. And it is by means of the conventions or coded language of, for example, the forensic letter or the love-letter that Fronto and Marcus conduct their playful exchange of selves. But these codes also obscure a corrective agenda and a struggle to control the *personae* of sender and addressee: Fronto attempts to influence the emperor and his priorities (i.e. to persuade him to put rhetoric before or at least alongside philosophy), and Marcus puts his (former) tutor back in his proper place in relation to the emperor. The debate between rhetoric and philosophy, as

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[23] Adams and Swain 2002: 2.
[24] On Cicero see Swain 2002; on Fronto see Swain 2004: 17-28.
[25] Swain 2004: 19.
[26] Swain 2004: 20-21.
[27] Adams and Swain 2002: 2.
[28] Pseudo Demetrius and Pseudo Libanius each identifies several letter types (21 and 41 respectively) according to their style; see Malherbe 1988: 30-41 and 67-81.

well as the political realities of the relationship between correspondents, is lurking behind discussions about something very different.

It is on letters in which this coded language is employed by the correspondents that I shall focus my attention in this chapter, letters in which the conflict between rhetoric and philosophy is obscured by an unrelated topic: first, those concerning sleep, in which each correspondent uses forensic rhetoric to argue either for or against its usefulness (for or against a Stoic approach to sleep/eloquence); and secondly, letters dealing with illness and health, in which the correspondents explore the letter's capacity for either bridging or increasing the distance between sender and addressee and their ideal Stoic or eloquent selves. These are letters that have usually been read at face-value, but as in Cicero's correspondence, the sender's corrective agenda is discernible upon closer inspection.[29]

To Sleep or not to Sleep

The Stoics included sleep in the category of things to be enjoyed once justice had been done to serious and weighty business.[30] Cicero explains that if sleep did not provide necessary rest for the body, it would be considered *contra naturam* (because it robs us of our senses and suspends our activity), and we would happily deny ourselves sleep almost to the point of doing violence to nature for the sake of business or of study.[31] All in all the Stoics recognize the necessity of sleep for survival,[32] but advocate getting only the minimum necessary, in favour of devotion to work, to self-evaluation and especially to philosophy.

Over the course of their epistolary exchange, Fronto repeatedly expresses concern about Marcus' sleeping habits. Seventeen letters contain some reference to sleep and/or

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[29] There are some similarities between my approach to Fronto's letters and that of A. Freisenbruch, who deals, in the second chapter of her 2004 PhD thesis (a summary of Fronto's correspondence), with the epistolary and pedagogical relationship between Fronto and Marcus, exploring the power dynamics involved in the education of the prince. She also approaches the letters from the perspective of epistolarity. But my thesis is distinguished from hers especially by its comparative perspective. Unfortunately, I only became aware of her thesis quite late in my own writing process and have been unable to take account of it more fully.

[30] Cic. *Off*. 1.103.

[31] Cic. *Fin*. 5.54; cf. Sen. *Ep*. 8.1; 83.6; 88.41; 83.15; 55.5.

[32] Sen. *Tranq*. 17.6.

dreams.[33] Of those with reference to some deficiency of sleep, one concerns a Fronto unable to sleep from worry about his student's oratorical progress, one an ill Fronto suffering from insomnia, and one a distressed Marcus unable to sleep because he is worrying about Fronto's illness.[34] Eight contain some reference to Marcus either writing or working in the evening (in the middle of the night in one case), denying himself sleep for the sake of work, or to his being sleepy due to a loss of sleep for this reason.[35] The frequency of references, taken by many at face-value,[36] has lead some to conclude that Marcus 'was a bad sleeper'.[37]

Certainly on one level these letters do reflect practical considerations. For example, Fronto's request that Marcus sleep the night before he delivers a speech in the Senate: *si quicquam nos amas, dormei per istas noctes, ut forti colore in senatum venias et vehementi latere legas*, to which Marcus responds: *ego te numquam satis amabo: dormiam*.[38] Good advice for any public speaker. However, in some cases Marcus' approach to sleep reflects the Stoic approach, and when responding on those occasions, Fronto's exhortation that Marcus sleep takes on a meaning beyond the practical one. In fact, discussions about the merits of sleep versus those of putting it off for study is one of the codes in which Fronto and Marcus communicate and jostle for control of the images of sender and addressee.

M. Caes. I.4, AD 145[39] *(Marcus to Fronto)*

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[33] Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.10.1 (43,5) (gods show their power in dreams); 4.13.3 (68,8-9) (the 'conversion' letter; see above, p. 118); 5.74.2 (85,13-15) (Marcus can sleep – it is so cold he cannot put his arm outside the bed clothes [i.e. to study]); Fro. *M.Caes*. 4.12.4 (66,10-12) (Fronto sees Marcus in his dreams).

[34] Fro. *M.Caes*. 3.17.1 (49,2); Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.9.1 (42,5-6); 5.22 (72,14-16).

[35] Aur. *M.Caes*. 2.8.3 (29,1); 3.22.2 (52,12-13) (see n. 56); 4.5.4 (62,3-5); *Ant*. 3.6.2 (103,13-15); Fro. *Ant*. 1.5.4 (94,2-3); *M.Caes*. 1.4-5 (see pp. 123-131) and *de fer. Als*. 3.7-9 (230,20-233,17) (see pp. 139-143) are discussed in detail below.

[36] van den Hout 1999: 531; Grimal 1991: 285-286 (see below, p. 140); Champlin 1980: 129; against this view see Brock 1911: 120-121, who sees Fronto's defence of sleep (*M.Caes*. 1.5 and *de fer. Als*. 3) as rhetorical exercise, not to be taken seriously.

[37] van den Hout 1999: 15; see also 1999: 24; cf. Brock 1911: 48; Grimal 1991 (see n. 122).

[38] *M.Caes*. 5.1-2 (69,41-70,2).

[39] For each letter I have listed the date suggested by van den Hout 1999. Fronto's collection is not arranged chronologically in the original text and given the lack of specific historical references in the correspondence, dating them is very difficult (see Champlin 1974). Some modern editors have attempted a chronological arrangement (e.g. Haines 1919), and much of the scholarship on the collection focusses on this issue (I refer the reader to van den Hout 1999 for details of the chronological questions pertaining to particular letters). What can be safely determined is whether a given letter was written before or after Marcus Aurelius' accession, thanks to the titles assigned to the books of letters in the original text and the forms of address at

We have already seen the way in which Cicero adapts forensic oratory to the epistolary medium in order to defend himself against Appius Claudius.[40] This letter reflects a similar adaptation, but for different reasons: this is a rhetorical exercise, more removed from the 'real' courtroom than the examples in Cicero. As suggested in the conclusion to chapter three, Marcus and Fronto adopt the roles of *recitator* and *auditor* in their exchange; in this letter Marcus (*recitator*) delivers ('performs') a forensic speech before his tutor (*auditor*).

Marcus begins and ends his letter by defining himself and his relationship with sleep, and in the end constructs a Stoic image of himself. In opposition to Fronto's arguments (in a lost letter) in favour of sleep, Marcus takes the role of prosecutor, indicting sleep as if in court[41] (1.4.1 [5,22-6,2]):

accipe nunc tu paucula contra somnum pro insomnia. quamquam, puto, praevaricor, qui adsiduo diebus ac noctibus somno adsum neque eum desero neque <sino> deserat, adeo sumus familiares. sed cupio hac sua accusatione offensus paulisper a me abscedat et lucubratiunculae aliquam tandem facultatem tribuat.

Marcus' close mutual relationship with sleep is emphasized: he admits his collusion with the defence; that Marcus is an active participant in this relationship is demonstrated by *adsum* (Marcus is with sleep, not the other way around),[42] by the repetition of *desero* (neither would desert the other) and by the use of *familiares*. In the last sentence Marcus hopes that this *accusatio* will anger sleep enough to cause a break in their constant ('day and night') companionship so as to enable him to work into the night.[43] Marcus has suggested that he does not earnestly hope to be successful in his indictment of sleep; he has undermined the force and seriousness of his argument from the outset, and this is a strategy consistently employed by both correspondents. Each downplays the seriousness of his image construction, which contributes to the outward appearance of a game.

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the beginning of individual letters (see Champlin 1974: 137); scholars are in agreement on this count and date letters at least broadly to either before or after 161.

[40] See ch. 1, pp. 30-43 and n. 96 for further examples of forensic letters.

[41] It is made clear in these opening lines that Marcus is presenting his arguments within a legal context through the use of particularly legal vocabulary – *praevaricor*, *accusatio*; For a similar use of *accipe* in a forensic context see Cic. *Fam*. 3.7.3.1-2 (SB 71).

[42] *somno adsum* is a forced pun with double meaning: 'I side with sleep' and 'I am sleep's companion' (van den Hout 1999: 15).

[43] See Dowden 2003: 150-154 on Roman lucubration, the greatest model of which is Pliny the Elder, who denied himself for the sake of devotion to the writing of value-literature (2003: 152).

Before presenting his specific arguments on behalf of wakefulness, Marcus constructs a fictive dialogue with his addressee, in order to anticipate and head off a counter-argument from Fronto (1.4.2 [6,3-7]): *quodsi tu dices faciliorem me materiam mihi adsumpsisse accusandi somni quam te qui laudaveris somnum ('quis enim,' inquis, 'non facile somnum accusaverit?'): igit<ur cui>us facilis accusatio, <eius>de<m> difficilis laudatio; cuius difficilis <lau>datio, eius non utilis usurpatio*. This passage provides an example of one of the ways in which the correspondents use the tools of epistolary discourse in order to undermine each other. While Cicero uses dialogue in his letters to Appius in order to mock his accusers,[44] it allows Marcus to imagine a possible objection to his position and eliminate it before it can be raised.[45] Whether Fronto would have indeed made this particular argument is left an open question by the introductory clause, 'In case you say that ...'.[46] Aside from being a technique by which the sender might attempt to make his reader present, epistolary dialogue also allows the sender to manipulate his addressee,[47] and Marcus takes advantage of that to create an opponent whose argument he can easily knock down.

Towards the end of the letter Marcus engages directly with the arguments of his addressee.[48] Having already characterized Fronto's (potential) argument as unsound, he quotes his addressee's previous letter and refutes each argument in turn.[49] Fronto had argued that both Ennius and Hesiod owed their beginnings as poets to sleep, and Marcus' counter-argument concerning Ennius reveals a Stoic approach to the subject (1.4.6 [7,15-17]): *Transeo nunc ad Q. Ennium nostrum, quem tu ais ex somno et somnio initium sibi fecisse. sed profecto nisi ex somno suscitatus esset, numquam somnium suum narrasset*. Marcus' response, that Ennius could not have recounted his vision had he not woken up,[50] contains an echo of a Senecan passage in which deep sleep is associated with a lack of self-awareness, a sleep from

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[44] Cic. *Fam*. 3.7.3.2-9 (SB 71); see ch. 1, pp. 33-34.
[45] Cf. *M.Caes*. 3.2.1 (36,14-19), where Marcus uses dialogue for the same purpose.
[46] Cf. *M.Caes*. 3.3.3 (37,24).
[47] On manipulation by means of epistolary dialogue, see ch. 1 n. 73; cf. *de fer. Als*. 4.2 (234,6-9) (see below, pp. 144-145); Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.11 (5,15-19) (see below, pp. 156-157).
[48] In the interim 1.4.3-5 (6,8-7,14) he gives a series of *exempla* from the Homeric epics.
[49] Cicero uses a similar strategy (combination of argumentation and refutation) against Appius; see ch. 1, pp. 33-35.
[50] Ennius himself gives an account of the dream in which Homer told him to write the *Annales*; see Cic. *Acad*. 2.16; *Rep*. 6.10; Lucr. 1.124-126; Fro. *Eloq*. 2.12 (141,8-9).

which one is only able to wake through devotion to philosophy. Seneca begins with the premise that whereas someone who sleeps lightly perceives his dreams and is sometimes even aware that he is asleep, the mind of one who sleeps deeply is incapable of consciousness of dreams or of self; it is the person who has awakened who recounts his dream (*somnium narrare vigilantis est*).[51] Both the idea that dreams are a source of knowledge[52] and that philosophy is a sort of 'awakening' also appear elsewhere in a philosophical context.[53]

In the closing of the letter Marcus explains why he has engaged in this rhetorical argument (1.4.8 [8,5-7]): *haec satis*[54] *tui amorei quam meae fiduciae luserim. nunc bene accusato somno dormitum eo, nam vespera haec ad te detexui. opto ne mihi somnus gratiam referat*. Van den Hout cites the first line of this passage as the basis for dating the letter to 145, since it shows that 'Marcus begins to have his doubts about the sense of such a composition, a state of mind that will find its climax in 146-147'.[55] He also notes that it was 'rather exceptional to write and study *post cenam*', and suggests that the reason Marcus did so may be that he did not sleep well.[56] However, in addition to the the admission that he lacks faith in this sort of exercise, the passage also contains another hint of Stoicism. Marcus reiterates that he has put off sleep in order to write his letter, and according to the Stoics one ought to finish the day's work and self-evaluation before going to sleep, in part so as to ensure a good night's sleep, free from anxiety.[57] Having finished his work, sleep ought not to 'pay him back', and the ability to sleep soundly can be a sign of the calm that comes with philosophical conviction.[58]

Marcus' relationship with sleep is transformed from beginning to end in this letter. In the opening he describes himself as sleep's close friend and constant companion. He

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[51] *Ep*. 53.7-8; cf. Sen. *Prov*. 5.9.

[52] e.g. Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.10 (see n. 33); Aristid. *Or*. 47-52; Cic. *Rep*. 6.9-29; Calcidius *On the Timaeus* ch. 251; see Polito 2003: 64-66; Dowden 2003: 154-158.

[53] e.g. Pl. *Phdr*. 251e; Plut. *Amatorius* 765a; for a survey, see Dowden 2003: 159-163.

[54] van de Hout subsequently concluded that *satis* should read *satius*, so 'rather for the sake of my love for you than for my own faith in it' (1999: 14).

[55] van den Hout 1999: 14, citing *M.Caes*. 4.13 (the 'conversion' letter); see above, p. 118.

[56] van den Hout 1999: 20 cites *M.Caes*. 3.22 (52,7-13) in which Marcus closes by saying that though he is not sleepy, he will force himself to sleep so that Fronto will not be angry and mentions that he writes in the evening (*me vespera haec scribere*); cf. Aur. *M.Caes*. 2.8.3 (29,1); 5.54 (80,12); Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.5.1 (8,14) (see below, p. 128); for a full list of references to sleep in the correspondence see nn. 33-38.

[57] See Sen. *Ep*. 56.7-8; *Ira* 3.36.2.

questions its usefulness, points out that one must wake from sleep in order to recount his dreams, and in the end will go to bed, having completed his rhetorical exercise, undertaken more from love of his tutor than for its own sake. From a Stoic point of view, this letter could as easily be an account of one's awakening from the sleep of unawareness thanks to philosophy, to which the sender will now devote himself, placing sleep in its proper category among things necessary but secondary to study and self-evaluation. The process of indicting sleep has resulted in a distance from it.

The closing passage of this letter illustrates the deceptively playful approach to self-fashioning taken by both Fronto and Marcus. The sender has, over the course of his letter, fashioned himself into a Stoic, but downplays the force of that self-definition by referring to his letter as an exercise in writing for mere amusement (*luserim*).[59] At the same time, the suggestion that his rhetorical exercise is something other than a serious enterprise, undertaken from affection for the addressee, undermines the student-teacher relationship between the correspondents; nor does the sender make reference to that relationship, instead defining his addressee as an easily defeated opponent in court rather than as his *magister*. As we shall see, both correspondents will continue to present their exchange of selves as an epistolary game, which perhaps reflects the provisionality of epistolary self-fashioning (like Cicero in relation to Pompey, the correspondents cautiously undermine their own images), but it also serves to obscure (with a veneer of joking) the attempt on Fronto's side to influence the behaviour of Marcus, and the attempt on Marcus' side to deflect Fronto's images of the emperor.

M. Caes. I.5, AD 145 (Fronto to Marcus)

Fronto sends back his judgment of Marcus' text to his student, but in addition to assessing the effort in terms of style, he also assesses the image Marcus constructed of himself and his relationship with sleep, and reshapes it. He shifts the topic slightly, from an argument about the inherent usefulness of sleep to one about whether or not Marcus himself values it. The sender begins by describing the self of his addressee, as it appeared in his letter, holding up the mirror to Marcus (1.5.1-2 [8,11-16]):

[58] e.g. Socrates at Pl. *Cri*. 43b; see Dowden 2003: 148.

…in qua pauca quae ego pro somno dixeram tu multis et elegantibus argumentis refutasti ita scite, ita subtiliter et apte, ut, si vigilia tibi hoc acuminis et leporis adfert, ego prosus vigilare te mallem. sedenim vespera scripsisse te ais, cum paulo post dormiturus esses. igitur adpropinquans et imminens tibi somnus tam elegantem hanc epistulam fecit.

In the first sentence Fronto characterizes Marcus' letter and the Marcus who produced it. The letter's eloquence is emphasized through the list of adverbs modifying *refutasti*, strengthened by the repetition of *ita* and through the pair of nouns in the conditional clause, in which the possibility that wakefulness is to be credited with Marcus' eloquence is expressed and eliminated: '*if* wakefulness brings you such sharpness and wit, I would absolutely prefer you to keep awake'.[60]

Having established Marcus' eloquence and that it did not originate in wakefulness, Fronto then uses Marcus' words to create a link between it and sleep. Paraphrase, as we have seen, allows the sender to both conjure up the addressee and either confirm or redefine his self-characterization.[61] Fronto echoes the close of Marcus' letter, where he specified that he had written in the evening and indicated that he was about to go to bed. From that, Fronto draws the conclusion that sleep's proximity is what made his student witty.[62] The repetition of *elegantis* reinforces the link. Marcus had distanced himself from sleep for the sake of his work; Fronto refashions his addressee into someone made eloquent by sleep, as if to reveal the true significance of Marcus' own words. Fronto and Marcus often take as their starting point in refashioning each other a reinterpretation of the addressee's own words.

Fronto targets only one line of Marcus' letter for criticism: his argument concerning Ennius. Here, as in the opening of the letter, Fronto uses the addressee's own words to (re)define Marcus (1.5.5 [9,4-10]):

ecce autem circa Q. Ennium aliam malitiosam petam dedisti, cum ais 'nisi ex somno exsuscitatus esset, numquam somnium suum narrasset.' at od<e>rit m<e> Marcus meus Caesar, si pote, argutius! praestrigiae nullae tam versutae, 'nulla', ut ait Laevius, 'decipula tam insidiosa'. quid si ego id postulo, ne expergiscare? quin postulo ut dormias! aliud scurrarum proverbium: 'en cum quo in tenebris mices'.

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[59] Cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 4.12.3 (66,5-6); Aur. *M.Caes*. 5.22 (72,15); Cic. *Fam*. 9.16.9 (SB 190).

[60] Haines 1919(i): 97.

[61] For a general discussion of paraphrase as an aspect of epistolarity, see ch. 1, p. 25; for examples in Cicero, see ch. 1; for examples in Pliny, see ch. 3; cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.1 (2,19-3,3) (see below, p. 153); *Ant*. 1.2.1 (86,26-87,4) (see below, p. 159); 1.2.6 (88,23-25) (see below, p. 163); Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.18.1 (50,9-11).

[62] Brock 1911: 121 (in response to the argument that Fronto is to be taken seriously): 'That the approach of sleep stimulates mental effort is not the common experience of mankind'.

Fronto uses a military term, *malitiosa peta*, translated 'a miss', 'an unfortunate stroke' by van den Hout,[63] and on the other hand 'a nasty turn' by C. R. Haines (who has *pilam* for *petam*),[64] to describe Marcus' argument. The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* defines the adjective as 'wicked', 'malicious',[65] but van den Hout argues that there is nothing malicious about Marcus' remark concerning Ennius and so there is no 'slight' done against Ennius or Fronto.[66] However, Haines' translation is supported by the rest of the passage. As Fronto goes on, he describes Marcus' argument further as a 'trick so clever', and quotes Laevius, adding another pair strengthened by *tam*, a 'snare so treacherous'.[67]

In the rhetorical question Fronto has again shifted the focus onto his student, here making a distinction between Marcus' implication that Fronto would have Ennius never wake up, but as if applied to Marcus himself, and Fronto's actual exhortation, which is that Marcus go to sleep in the first place. Fronto is playful in this passage, attacking the notion that he would bid his student never wake as ridiculous: 'And supposing I ask you never to wake up?' In the last sentence Fronto quotes a proverb: 'see, one with whom you may play morra in the dark',[68] which refers to a game in which the players must guess how many fingers their opponents raise.[69] An ironic *en* suggests that Marcus could not be trusted to play the game fairly.

According to van den Hout, 'Fronto jokingly aims at Marcus' with the proverb;[70] indeed he does, characterizing Marcus as a *scurra*, but there is also a coercive element in this passage, which becomes clear when the philosophical implications of the proverb are considered. Cicero uses this proverb to illustrate that ethical behaviour ought to be practiced

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[63] van den Hout 1999: 22: 'The *TLL* does not give this meaning of *malitiosus* (O. Hey regards our passage as corrupt), but it justly states that *malitia* can also mean *malum*, *miseria*'. On *peta* see Timpanaro 1957: *peta* = *ictus gladiatoris*, citing Serv. *A*. 9.437: *petitiones enim proprie dicimus impetus gladiatorum*; cf. *Gloss*. I. 441: *petam*: *expetam*, *concupiscam* (Verg. *A*. 4.535) (see Lindsay 1965).

[64] Haines 1919(i): 98-99; see van den Hout's apparatus *ad loc*.

[65] *OLD* s.v. *malitiosus*; cf. *Rhet. Her*. 4.66; Cic. *Tusc*. 3.50; *Inv*. 2.37; *Quinct*. 56; *Agr*. 2.28; Fro. *M.Caes*. 4.3.1 (56,12); *Off*. 1.33; 3.74; van den Hout cites Fro. *Eloq*. 2.7 (139,1) (*malitia*); *M.Caes*. 2.2.6 (21,2).

[66] van den Hout 1999: 22-23.

[67] Laev. *poet*. 29; see Courtney 1993: 142: (of Fronto's quotation) 'It is uncertain whether anything other than *decipula* come from Laevius'.

[68] Otto 1965: 221-222: 'Wir sagen: "Mann kann ihm die Katze im Sacke abkaufen"'.

[69] See *TLL*(viii) 929,60-78: *vehementer vel celeriter moveri, palpitare speciatim de ludo quodam, i.q. digitis sortiri*; *OLD* s.v. *mico* 4; cf. Cic. *Div*. 2.85, where the casting of lots is compared to playing morra, because in both activities luck rules instead of reason; Suet. *Aug*. 13.2; Calp. *Ecl*. 2.26; see van den Hout 1999: 23.

for its own sake rather than out of self-interest (e.g. to avoid punishment): *aut unde est hoc contritum vetustate proverbium: 'quicum in tenebris?' hoc, dictum in una re, latissime patet, ut in omnibus factis re, non teste moveamur*.[71] As in the opening of the letter, Fronto has characterized the Marcus created in his letter: using Marcus' Stoic argument, that one must wake in order to recount one's dreams (or to be aware of one's self and one's faults) he fashions an un-Stoic addressee, who uses clever traps to prove his point. And this act of redefinition is disguised as a harmless joke at Marcus' expense.

In the closing of the letter, Fronto turns the mirror on himself and considers his position in relation to his addressee (1.5.5-7 [9,10-15]):

sed sumne ego beatus, qui haec intellego et perspicio et insuper ab dom(ino) meo Caesare magister appellor? quo pacto ego magister, qui unum hoc quod te docere cupio, tu dormias, non inpetro? perge uti libet, dummodo dii te mihi, sive prodormias sive pervigiles, facultat<e> fandi et tam eleganti prosperent. vale, <m>eum gaudiu<m> et cura mea seria.

Fronto begins by characterizing himself as *beatus*, especially because he is called *magister* by Marcus. Then he questions his right to that title,[72] linking it to success in teaching Marcus to sleep. I have already mentioned that scholars have concluded that Marcus was 'a bad sleeper'.[73] However, one must ask what that means: was Marcus unable to sleep, or did he choose to deprive himself of it? Fronto presents Marcus' sleeping habits as a matter of personal preference, and in the opening of the letter he created a direct association between sleep and eloquence. Thus to teach his student to value sleep is to teach him to value eloquence. Furthermore, in questioning his right to the title *magister*, he has questioned the identity constructed for himself by Marcus (though not, as we have seen, in the previous letter): it is left to the addressee to determine whether his defintion of the sender is valid.

This is a response to Marcus' Stoic approach to sleep/eloquence; that is, that sleep is to be put off for study and self-evaluation, as subtle and deceptive rhetorical techniques are to be avoided. The condition he places on Marcus doing as he pleases, that the gods preserve his

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[70] van den Hout 1999: 23.
[71] *Fin*. 2.16.52; cf. *Off*. 3.19.77; Petr. 44.
[72] Fronto's status as tutor is a recurring topic in the correspondence; see Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.18.2 (50,21-25); *de fer. Als.* 1 (226,9-14) (below, p. 133); *Ant.* 1.1.1 (86,12-14) (below, p. 158); Fro. *Orat*. 1-2 (153,4-10); *M.Caes*. 1.5.5 (9,10-13) (below, p. 130); *Ant.* 1.2.1 (86,26-87,4) (below, p. 160); 1.2.2 (87,17-23).
[73] See n. 37.

rhetorical ability[74] whether he sleeps late[75] or rises early, indicates that he is advocating a policy of moderation when it comes to the balance between sleep and wakefulness, between eloquence and philosophy. This is in keeping with Fronto's more direct arguments elsewhere, that a philosopher needs eloquence, including the *artificia* that Marcus has spurned.[76]

This pair of letters provides a demonstration of one of the strategies used by the correspondents to disguise their *persona* construction – joking. It also illustrates the kind of exchange of selves in which Fronto and Caesar Marcus participate: on the one hand Marcus infuses the selves of sender and addressee and their relationship with Stoicism, and on the other hand, Fronto eliminates Stoicism and replaces it with eloquence, returning their relationship to the student-teacher context and fashioning Marcus into the ideal student. This pattern is partially disrupted, however, by Marcus' accession to power: Marcus begins to project an image of himself as the busy emperor and, unexpectedly, he recalls their former student-teacher relationship, a setting in which Fronto is happy to conduct their exchange, but also one in which the authority of the *magister* is overwhelmed by that of the emperor. As a result, Fronto's attempts to remain influential are rendered ineffective.

de feriis Alsiensibus

The ancient editor of Fronto's correspondence placed together four letters concerning Marcus' stay in Alsium at the beginning of his reign as a single book entitled *de feriis Alsiensibus*. The word *feriae*, 'holiday', 'a day of rest', is Marcus' own description for his stay at the seaside resort. Both correspondents use this term ironically, since in fact the emperor got away to Alsium in order to work undisturbed.[77] In general these letters have been read at face-value: Marcus, weighed down by his duties, acknowledges that Fronto would not approve of his working so hard;[78] Fronto expresses concern for his former student and urges him to get some

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[74] using a word from an old sacral formula, *prosperare alicui rem* (van den Hout 1999: 24).
[75] *OLD* s.v. *prodormio*, 'to prolong one's sleep', a neologism; see van den Hout 1999: 24; cf. *M.Caes*. 4.6.1 (62,9); 5.37 (75,13).
[76] See *M.Caes*. 3.16; Fronto's approach to philosophy in the letters is also discussed above, p. 119.
[77] van den Hout 1999: 508-509.
[78] Champlin 1980: 129.

rest;[79] Marcus is moved by his former tutor's concern, and, depending upon the scholar, either does or does not take Fronto's advice.[80]

Fronto's desire to persuade Marcus to value sleep becomes the focus of the former tutor's side of the exchange. He fashions a Marcus who goes to resorts to enjoy them, and uses forensic oratory and historical *exempla* to do it. Fronto holds up to Marcus several mirrors reflecting former rulers and philosophers – models on whom Marcus might model himself. Marcus, on the other hand, projects an image of himself as the busy emperor, with little time for writing letters, much less a frivolous holiday. Sender and addressee continue to exchange selves and versions of their relationship back and forth, and in the end, Marcus manages to take his tutor's advice in a form that suits him and his schedule.

It is in these letters that we first see the shift in Marcus' management of the epistolary discourse. After his accession, Marcus (*I*) the busy emperor writes Fronto (*You*) his *magister*, two selves that no longer fit either the student-teacher relationship or that between Stoics. The title *magister* is a generic term, which conveys respect, used during the imperial period to address learned men. When used of a nameless addressee this and other generic terms seem to be neutral, but are marked when used to address someone who could have been called by name.[81]

Like Pliny's use of the term *dominus* in relation to Domitian and Trajan,[82] Marcus' use of *magister* in relation to Fronto is potentially ambiguous: on the one hand, it could be read as a polite or even deferential way to address his former tutor – the word itself entails authority (which is, of course, Fronto's aim) and to use the title *magister* is to acknowledge the existence of an authority relationship between sender and addressee; on the other hand, because Marcus defines himself in these letters as emperor, whatever power or authority is embedded in the title *magister* is utterly trumped by that of the emperor (sender). At the same time, like Trajan, Marcus oftens uses *mi* and an adjective conveying affection (e.g. *iucundissime*) along with *magister*, and therefore combines a generic title of respect with an

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[79] See n. 36.
[80] At *de fer. Als*. 4 (below, pp. 143-146).
[81] Dickey 2002: 203-204.
[82] As described by Roller 2001: 257-258 (see ch. 3, p. 94).

indication of a connection between sender and addressee, a form of positive politeness.[83] The result is a tone of distanced affection towards Fronto combined with a constant reminder that he no longer stands in a position of authority in their exchange.[84]

We have already seen how epistolary discourse attempts in various ways to make the addressee present, to bridge the gap between separated sender and receiver.[85] However, because the letter is a product of absence, a sender may also choose to emphasize the distance between himself and his addressee and even use the letter as a barrier between them.[86] This aspect of epistolary mediation becomes recognizable in the exchange between Fronto and Emperor Marcus Aurelius.[87] Marcus begins to put up barriers, across which Fronto may or may not attempt to reach.

de fer. Als. 1, AD 162 (Marcus to Fronto)

In the first of the Alsium letters Marcus creates such a barrier. The letter is very brief and may be included in its entirety (226,9-14):

Ferias apud Alsium quam feriatas egerimus, non scribam tibi, ne et ipse angaris et me obiurges, mi magister. Lorium autem regressus domnulam meam antea sanam febricitantem repperi. medicus dicit b[....]si cito nobis melius [..]tenstu quoque viso [..]dius [.], mi magister etiam [...] valetudinis [....] certior sim, nam oculis spero tecum tandem sanis et n[...]c[....] uti. vale mi magister.

The barrier between sender and addressee is created within the first half of the first sentence of the letter. Marcus mockingly refers to his stay at Alsium as a 'holiday' twice within the first clause, emphasizing what his trip is not. This representation of his activities at Alsium is paired with a characterization of the displeased Fronto (described by two second person verbs) that Marcus does not want sent back to him;[88] the two are separated by the clause *non scribam tibi*, which separates sender and addressee syntactically. Marcus withholds the

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[83] See ch. 3, pp. 105-106 and n. 96.

[84] Like *domine*, (*mi*) *magister* may be contextualized and recontextualized so that either the affectionate/respectful or distanced tone is emphasized by Marcus; for an emphasis on distance see *de fer. Als*. 4 (below, p. 144); *Ant*. 1.1.1 (86,12-14) (below, p. 158); *Ant*. 2.2.1 (95,22); for the opposite emphasis see *Ant*. 1.4.1-2 (92,3-10); 3.6 (103,7-16); *de Nep. Am.* 1 (235,4-10).

[85] Aur. *M.Caes*. 1.4.2 (6,3-7) (above, p. 125); 1.4.6-7 (7,15-8,2) (above, p. 125); see also 3.17.2 (49,9-17); Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.5.1-2 (8,11-16) (see above, p. 128); see also 3.18.1 (50,9-11).

[86] See Altman 1982: 13-15.

[87] Cf. Aur. *Ant*. 1.1.3 (86,20-24) (see below, p. 158); Fro. *Ant*. 1.2.8 (89,25-90,2) and 1.2.10 (90,9-10) (see below, p. 166)

information that would enable Fronto to scold him, and as reciprocity is fundamental to epistolary exchange, this explicit silence acts as barrier.[89]

Each of the letter's three topics is concluded with the vocative *mi magister*. This contributes to the distance between them: Marcus calls Fronto by a title no longer valid from a context no longer appropriate to their exchange; there is a disjunction between the label and the content, between fiction (*magister*) and reality (former *magister*). At the same time, the elements of the letter that emphasize distance also invite response. Aside from the invitation to the addressee (*You*) to become the sender (*I*) of another statement inherent in any letter, Marcus acknowledges in the first sentence that the way in which he has spent his time at Alsium would displease his addressee and anticipates the tone of Fronto's half of the exchange: anxious and scolding. Likewise the vocative *mi magister* has an affectionate tone with the intimate form *mi* and invites Fronto to take up his former role and in turn address Marcus as student once again. Marcus playfully challenges Fronto to teach him a lesson, and that is precisely what Fronto does. Marcus again characterizes their exchange as a game, and, by anticipating his addressee's self-definition, Marcus heads off Fronto's claim to *auctoritas*.

de fer. Als. 3, AD 162 (Fronto to Marcus)

In van den Hout's Teubner edition of the correspondence, Marcus' letter above takes up seven lines, or about one third of a page; Fronto's response takes up nearly seven full pages. There is insufficient space to deal with the whole of this lengthy letter in detail, but I shall focus on examples of the different self-fashioning techniques that he employs. While Marcus was putting up barriers in the previous letter, Fronto attempts to reach across them in his response, by means of a conversational tone and the construction of vivid images to grab the attention of his addressee, and to persuade his former student that leisure and sleep (or eloquence) have value. The first half of the letter consists of a series of mirrors held up to the emperor; Fronto constructs two images of Marcus himself and then provides several historical

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[88] Cf. *M.Caes*. 3.22.2 (52,12-13); see n. 56.

[89] Complete silence is perhaps the ultimate barrier; see, e.g. the letters entitled *de Eloquentia* and *de Orationibus*, addressed to Marcus, to which there are no responses in the correspondence. Referring to *de Eloquentia*, van den Hout 1999: 313 describes Fronto's as 'a voice crying out in the wilderness'. On the role of the unanswered letter in open-ended epistolary closure see Altman 1982: 155f.

models on whom the emperor ought to model his behaviour. The second half is taken up with Fronto's epistolary oration in praise of sleep, as he transforms the letter into the courtroom and takes up the role of advocate. As in the previous pair, Fronto uses jokes to disguise his corrective agenda, participating in the game suggested by Marcus.

Fronto begins his letter in a mocking tone, and constructs a ridiculous image of Marcus on holiday; this image is conjured by means of conversational features and from the addressee's self-presentation in the previous letter (3.1 [227,6-8]): *Quid? ego ignoro ea te mente Alsium isse, ut animo morem gereres ibique ludo et ioco et otio libero per quattriduum universum operam dares?* The opening sentence of the letter reads with spontaneity; it is as if the two men were speaking face to face, as we see from the colloquial *quid?*, which could be taken for an abrupt conversational intervention. Fronto exaggerates the extent to which Marcus is indulging himself, emphasized by the abundant phrase, 'in idle leisure'[90] and by the use of *universum*, which contributes to a sense of incredulity. The sender pokes fun at his addressee, while attempting to bridge the gap between them by means of his conversational tone.[91] Fronto has begun with Marcus' construct of himself, and over the course of the first half of the letter he will offer alternative selves to the emperor.

Fronto completes his picture of the vacationing Marcus by providing a detailed schedule for the emperor's typical day at Alsium, including a mid-day nap (a habit associated with 'bad' emperors[92] and not mentioned elsewhere in reference to Marcus),[93] reading (Plautus, Accius, Lucretius and Ennius), an outing at sea, and a sumptuous banquet (3.1

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[90] Cf. Hor. *Ep*. 1.7.36: *nec otia divitiis Arabum liberrima muto*; Catul. 68.104; Ov. *Ars* 2.729.

[91] Fronto uses similar strategies (rhetorical questions, direct address) throughout the letter to bridge the gap between correspondents. In order to maintain the conceit that the epistolary exchange is a conversation over the course of a long letter like this one, the voice of the addressee must be heard (see Altman 1982: 137-138). In this particular case, Fronto has the added challenge of overcoming the barrier raised by Marcus in the previous letter. Cf. Fro. *Ant*. 1.2.5 (88,11) (see below, p. 161).

[92] Dio 67.17.1 (Domitian); Hdn. 1.17 (Commodus); see Weidemann 2003: 134-136; control over sleep is, on the other hand, a standard item in panegyric and associated with high moral character, e.g. Plin. *Pan*. 49.8; Suet. *Aug*. 78.

[93] Wiedemann 2003: 135: 'In his letters to Fronto, Marcus Aurelius gives the impression that he was far too hardworking to waste time on sleep during the day: he does spend two hours in bed after mid-day, but he uses the time to read [*M.Caes*. 4.5]'. Wiedemann seems to read the present passage as an accurate account of Marcus' time as Alsium, rather than Fronto's own imagery, as he goes on: '[Marcus] only admits to sleeping at mid-day during his holidays at Alsium'.

[227,8-228,4]).[94] The mocking tone continues, as the sender shifts from a characterization of the vacationing Marcus to the 'real' one (3.2 [228,9-16]):

nam qua te dicam gratia Alsium, maritimum et voluptarium locum et, ut ait Plautus, 'locum lubricum' delegisse, nisei ut bene haberes genio utique verbo vetere faceres animo 'volup'? qua, malum, 'volup'? immo, si dimidiatis verbis verum dicendum est, uti tu animo faceres 'vigil' (vigilias dico) aut ut faceres 'labo' aut ut faceres 'mole' (labores et molestias dico). tu umquam volup? volpem facilius quis tibi quam voluptatem conciliaverit.

The first half of this passage is packed with echoes of Plautus: *qua gratia*, 'why?', is a common Plautine introductory phrase;[95] '*locum lubricum*' is taken from Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*;[96] *genio meo multa bona faciam* appears in the *Persa*;[97] and *suo animo fecit volup* at the end of the *Asinaria*.[98] Fronto uses these references to texts dealing with pleasure in order to create a humourous, ridiculous image of his addressee.

The 'slippery spot' in the *Miles* refers to the wine-cellar in a passage where the (tipsy) slave Lucrio claims that a pot in the cellar got drunk, slipped and knocked over the smaller jars of wine. In the *Persa*, the slave Sagaristio has received money from his master for the purpose of buying oxen, but instead will give it to his friend and fellow-slave Toxilus so he can buy his sweetheart from a pimp and at the same time swindle him out of even more money: 'here's where I both prosper a friend and contribute a lot to my personal comfort'.[99] The quotation from the end of the *Asinaria* suggests in reference to Demaenetus (the *senex amans*) that no man is so harsh as to not enjoy himself every once in a while. The idea that Marcus is such a man induces mock horror, expressed with the exclamation, *qua, malum, volup?*, 'how, shocking!, pleasure?'.[100]

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[94] Brock 1911: 132-133 defends Fronto's vision of the ideal holiday against critics, who have characterized it as 'ridiculous'. Brock and the scholars with whom she disagrees take Fronto's description as reflecting his 'genuine' preferences regarding how to spend one's holiday, but in fact he is constructing a ridiculous image of his addressee, which will be balanced by an equally extreme image of Marcus working too hard.

[95] e.g. Pl. *Aul*. 435; *Rud*. 90; *Men*. 150; *Am*. 664; *Ps*. 1289; *Cist*. 496; *Mer*. 223; *Bac*. 97; *Cur*. 454; *Truc*. 9; cf. Aur. *M.Caes*. 4.2.1 (54,23).

[96] *Mil*. 853: *in cella erat paulum nimis loculi lubrici*.

[97] *Per*. 263; cf. Pl. *Aul*. 725; *Truc*. 183; Ter. *Ph*. 44.

[98] Pl. *As*. 942: *Hic senex si quid clam uxorem suo animo fecit volup, / neque novom neque mirum fecit nec secus quam alii solent; / nec quisquam est tam ingenio duro nec tam firmo pectore, / quin ubi quicque occasionis sit sibi faciat bene*. *OLD* s.v. *volup* 1c: *~facere* (with dat.) 'to cause pleasure (to)'; cf. *Cas*. 784. On the use of *volup* by late antique authors as an archaism, see van den Hout 1999: 515.

[99] Nixon 1924(iii): 453.

[100] *OLD* s.v. *malum*(1) 8 (added parenthetically to emphasize a question), 'the deuce!', 'the devil!'; cf. *de Nep. Am.* 2.3 (236,8); Pl. *Am*. 403; *Bac*. 672.

This image of a Marcus indulging in pleasures, getting drunk and hatching schemes,[101] is undone in the second half of the passage. There are three phrases in antithesis and parallel construction with *faceres animo 'volup'*, in which Fronto creates his own abbreviated forms of the nouns describing what Marcus is actually giving his attention to: *animo faceres 'vigil'*, *faceres 'labo'* and *faceres 'mole'*. The first and third are are followed by explanatory parenthetical phrases containing 'I mean' and the complete form of each word that has been shortened. These parentheticals draw out the description of Marcus and contribute to the patronizing tone of the passage. The final sentence contains a pun on the word *volup*, suggesting that Marcus would more easily be joined to a *volpis*, 'fox' (considered an unpleasant animal)[102] than to pleasure. Throughout the passage the sender creates a sing-songy sound, using assonance in *maritimum et voluptarium locum* and alliteration in *locum lubricum*, *verbo vetere*, *verbis verum* and *volup volpem voluptatem*, which contributes to the ridiculous tone.

The activities Fronto attributes to this Marcus recall the Stoic approach to sleep: *vigiliae*, *labor* and *molestia* are all used by Cicero and Seneca of devoting periods of wakefulness to study (*labor*) and of enduring 'toils and troubles'.[103] The Plautine Marcus is replaced by the Stoic Marcus; each is presented as an extreme example of indulgence on the one hand and deprivation on the other. The conceit that the correspondents are playing a game allows Fronto to present the Stoic Marcus as something quite ridiculous in an image as absurd as its opposite. Then Fronto proceeds to correct these extremes, offering models that fall somewhere between the two, and demonstrating that one may both be a good ruler and occasionally enjoy oneself.

Fronto takes up past emperors, specifically Marcus' ancestors, as *exempla*: he attributes to Marcus' great-grandfather, grandfather and father both credit for strengthening the Empire and a reputation for enjoying some element of Marcus' 'holiday' at the beginning

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[101] See Gratwick 1982: 103-115 on Plautine characterization and the characteristics of Plautine stock characters (including the slave and *senex amans*). Immoderate drinking is frowned upon by the Stoics; see, e.g. Sen. *Ep*. 83.

[102] van den Hout 1999: 515; cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.7.4 (16,1-2); Suet. *Ves*. 16.3.

[103] Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 8.1 (see n. 31 above); 27.4; 69.5; *Prov*. 3.9; 5.9; *Tranq*. 3.5; Cic. *Fin*. 5.57; *Parad*. 5; *Cael*. 45; for a combination of the words: *Att*. 1.5.7 (SB 1); *Fin*. 5.95; *Tusc*. 2.51; Sen. *Ep*. 27.4. See Dowden 2003: 153-154.

of the letter. Marcus' great-grandfather was a *summus bellator*, but also enjoyed the *histriones* and *praeterea potavit satis strenue* (3.5 [229,13-14]). His grandfather was a learned and diligent ruler, but also took time to study music and *praeterea prandiorum opimorum esorem optimum fuisse* (3.5 [229,15-230,2]). Finally, his father surpassed all rulers in the virtues, but also went to the gymnasium, laughed at the *scurrae*, and *hamum instruxit*, 'baited a hook'[104] (3.5 [230,2-5]).

The clauses following *praeterea* in the first two *exempla* recall the banquet at the end of Marcus' day at Alsium (3.1 [227,18-228,4]), which included wine and an array of different foods. The phrase *hamum instruxit*, in the last *exemplum* echoes a Plautine phrase in the description of the same banquet: *piscatu hamatili*, 'a catch hook-taken' (3.1 [228,1-2]).[105] These *exempla* serve as mirrors held up the to addressee; they conjure up the image of the emperor presented at the beginning of the letter but with Marcus' ancestors substituted for Marcus himself. The selves of Marcus' predecessors have been blended with the one of the vacationing Marcus and represent what Marcus ought to be.[106]

Fronto goes on to cite several rulers from the distant past,[107] and two philosophical *exempla*: Chrysippus and Socrates.[108] Marcus has leisurely philosophers as well as leisurely rulers on which to model himself, but aside from having offered the emperor a series of desirable selves to adopt, Fronto has also constructed for himself an agreeable addressee for the second half of his letter, in which he takes on the role of advocate and delivers an oration on behalf of sleep. It is perhaps no mistake that the sender begins his letter in this way – the mirrors held up to Marcus reflect images of men who indulge in pleasure, who enjoy food and drink, and who allow themselves to relax, and so Marcus has been fashioned (according to the

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[104] Haines 1919(ii): 9; see also van den Hout 1999: 519.

[105] Pl. *Rud*. 297; the translation is Haines' (1919(ii): 7).

[106] Symmachus uses the ancestors of Valentinian II in a similar way, exhorting the emperor to follow the precedent of Constantius and especially of Valentinian I, who had accommodated the pagans; see ch. 5.

[107] 3..6 (230,6-14); Julius Caesar, Augustus, Romulus and Numa are cited; cf. Cicero's use of Scipio Africanus as a model for Pompey; see *Fam*. 5.7 (SB 3) (ch. 1, pp. 14-19).

[108] 3.6 [230,14-19]. Like Marcus' ancestors, these philosophers enjoy pleasure, or in Socrates' case at least associate with people who do, while being good philosophers. Elsewhere in the correspondence Fronto uses philosophers to argue that Marcus should give attention to pursuits other than and in addition to philosophy; Chrysippus and Socrates are cited as examples of eloquent philosophers: Chrysippus at *Eloq*. 2.14 (141,20-142,7); Socrates at *M.Caes*. 3.16.1-2 (48,2-25); *Eloq*. 1.3 (134,7-15); cf. Cic. *Inv*. 1.3; *de Orat*. 1.47-50; Quint. 12.2.9. On Plato's attacks on rhetoric and its defence at Rome, see Levene 1997: 93-99.

image of the emperor constructed by Marcus himself in the previous letter) into an amenable audience before Fronto launches into his forensic speech.

As Marcus had placed his arguments against sleep within a legal context, so Fronto takes his turn as *recitator* and 'delivers' a forensic speech before his audience/addressee. He begins by telling Marcus to imagine a lawsuit (3.8 [231,7-9]): *at tu, obsecro, vel ioco vel serio te exorari a me patere ne te somno defraudes utique terminos diei et noctis serves. agere de finibus avide et graviter deos claros et nobiles, Vesperum et Luciferum, puta*. In the opening of this passage the sender identifies two Frontos: the joking one and the serious one.[109] The two adjectives also describe the two halves of this letter. The tone of the first half is humorous and mocking; that of the second half is more formal, in keeping with the forensic setting. The sender continues to create vivid imagery and in this case demands attention (through the imperative *puta*) to the fiction hiding Fronto's coercive purpose.

Having set up the lawsuit, Fronto casts himself as Sleep's advocate, and immediately undermines his own argument, as Marcus did in his forensic letter[110] (3.8 [231,12-15]): *vellem autem tantum mihi vigoris aut studii adesse, quantum adfuit cum illa olim nugalia conscripsi 'Laudem fumi et pulveris'. ne ego somni laudem ex summis opibus conscripissem! nunc quoque, si tibi fabulam brevem libenti est audire, audi*. Whereas the force of his *exempla* in the first half of the letter was downplayed by joking, in this half the seriousness of his argument in favour of sleep is downplayed by means of an epistolary *captatio benevolentiae*.[111] At the beginning of this passage Fronto expresses the wish that he still had the vigour or 'literary ambition' that he had had more than twenty years earlier.[112] The second sentence expresses another unfulfilled wish, in this case, regret that Fronto did not write a *laus* of sleep when he was still at the height of his skill.[113] While he laments the loss of his former skills, relegated to the past by the perfect and pluperfect forms of the verb *conscribo*, Fronto

[109] Cf. *M.Caes*. 2.2.7 (21,10-11).
[110] See above, p. 124.
[111] Cf. *Orat*. 1-2 (153,4-10); Cic. *Fam*. 4.4.1.1-11 (SB 203) (see ch. 1, pp. 66-67); see Anderson 2001.
[112] van den Hout 1999: 524; see van den Hout 1999: 487 on the chronology of the *Laudes fumi et pulveris* (215-217), which he dates to 139.
[113] van den Hout 1999: 524; cf. Fro. *Ver*. 1.8.2 (113,16-17).

downplays the quality of both the past and present undertakings: the *laudes* of smoke and dust are called 'trifles',[114] and the discourse on sleep to follow a 'brief tale'.

What follows is an account of the origins of sleep, and Fronto explains why the god Jupiter created it and welcomed Somnus as one of the gods. The tale is meant to persuade the addressee that sleep is to be valued, because it is divinely sanctioned as the proper activity at night, but also because Jupiter made sure that sleep would be both pleasing and useful to mankind. Towards the end of his story, Fronto explains how Jupiter created sleep and how he envisioned it would work. It is in these passages that there are hints of the sender's earlier debate with his addressee and of his previous association of sleep with eloquence. In the letter above, Fronto made it clear that he did not expect Marcus to sleep in such a way as to never wake up, or to devote himself entirely to eloquence, leaving no room for philosophy, but only to give sleep/eloquence some of his attention.[115] That message is subtly woven into his account of sleep's divine origins.

The first passage of interest is a description of Jupiter mixing the potion Somnus would use to put men to sleep (3.10 [232,22-24, 233,2-5]):

herbarum quoque sucos, quibus corda hominum Somnus sopiret, suis Iuppiter manibus temperat; securitatis et voluptatis herbae de caeli nemore advectae…'hoc' inquit, 'suco soporem hominibus per oculorum repagula inriga: cuncti quibus inrigaris ilico fusi procumbent proque mortuis immobiles iacebunt. tum tu ne timeto, nam vivent et paulo post, ubi evigilaverint, exsurgent.'

Some scholars have read in this passage a reference to the use of a soporific by Marcus, who is thought to have been a chronic insomniac. T. W. Africa has suggested that Fronto has in mind Marcus' use of theriac,[116] to which Galen would have added opium.[117] P. Grimal argues that Africa's reading, though tempting, is highly improbable, and instead characterizes the passage as veiled advice, asserting that because the use of soporifics was common in antiquity,

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[114] van den Hout 199: 524: *nugalis* here for first time; cf. Gel. 1.2.6; 4.1.1; 6.17.3.
[115] *M.Caes*. 1.5; see above, pp. 130-131.
[116] Africa 1961: 102.
[117] Africa 1961: 99-100 and 102 n. 78. Africa (reprinted in German by Klein 1979: 133-143) argues that Marcus insulated himself from the realities of politics and from family disorders with a 'wall of narcotics' (1961: 97); followed by Stanton 1969: 587. But see Witke 1965: 23: '[Africa] may be right. But apart from Galen nowhere does he cite an unambiguous contemporary statement that Marcus Aurelius was ever thought to be under the influence of drugs'. Witke goes on to suggest that during Marcus' life there was a rumour that the emperor was regularly under the influence of mandragora, a soporific (1965: 23-24).

the idea of advising Marcus to do so would have come to Fronto spontaneously.[118] Van den Hout describes Africa's suggestion as 'out of the question',[119] pointing out that there is no trace of theriac use in the letters,[120] but does not offer an alternative interpretation of the passage.

The arguments of both Africa and Grimal reflect a biographical approach to the letters.[121] What has been overlooked is the reference to oratory and style, as well as to the correspondents' earlier exchanges concerning sleep, which in any case these scholars would take at face-value.[122] This passage does contain a veiled message, which is revealed when considered within the context of Fronto's ongoing epistolary efforts to fashion for Marcus an ideal oratorical self. The noun *sucus*, the 'juice' of a plant,[123] is used elsewhere in the context of sleep; for example, Ovid too describes the herbs in an infusion, distilled and used to induce sleep.[124] But Fronto himself uses the word *sucus* in the letter entitled *de Orationibus* (the only occurrence of the word in the correspondence other than that cited above),[125] where he instructs Marcus that he must use words 'steeped in their own juices': *revertere potius ad verba apta et propria et suo suco imbuta*.[126] It is also used several times by Cicero in reference to style, for example, in the *de Oratore*: *ornatur igitur oratio genere primum et quasi colore quodam et suco suo*.[127]

The end of this passage also recalls one of Marcus' arguments against sleep from *ad M. Caesarem* 1.4.[128] Towards the end of that letter, he reminds Fronto that while Homer regularly praises sleep, he also says that it is death's counterfeit: *quid autem tu de eo existimas, quem qui pulcherrime laudet, quid ait?* νήδυμος ἥδιστος θανάτῳ / ἄγχιστα

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[118] Grimal 1991: 286.
[119] van den Hout 1999: 528.
[120] van den Hout 1999: 178, comment on *M.Caes*. 4.8.2 (64,4).
[121] On similar approaches to the 'holiday' letters in general, see above , p. 131 and n. 79.
[122] Grimal 1991: 284-287 traces Marcus' insomnia, which he argues becomes more acute over time, with no consideration of style, tone, rhetoric or epistolarity. Everything is taken at face-value, and as a result the scope for interpretation is limited.
[123] *OLD* s.v. *sucus* 2a, 'juice' put to special uses (as medicine, healing lotion, poison or magic drug).
[124] Ov. *Met*. 11.605f; cf. (*soporem…inrigia*) Lucr. 4.907f; Hom. *Il*. 14.164; Verg. *A*. 1.691; 3.511; Serv. *Aen*. 1.692.
[125] *de fer. Als*. 3.10 (233,3); see above, p. 140.
[126] *Orat*. 13 (159,7-8).
[127] *de Orat*. 3.96; cf. *Orat*. 76; *Brut*. 36; Quint. *Inst*. 1. pr. 24; *OLD* s.v. *sucus* 3c, 'vitality', 'sap' (esp. with ref. to style).

ἐοικώς.[129] Fronto did not address this argument directly in his response, but does so in the present passage. The final emphatic position is given to two verbs in assonance, stating emphatically 'they *will* wake up' and 'they *will* get up'. This reinforces Fronto's emphasis in their previous exchange on going to sleep in the first place, in response to the implication that Fronto would bid Marcus remain asleep.

There is a further reference to Fronto's earlier rhetorical instruction in the following passage, in which it is explained why Jupiter fitted wings upon Sleep's shoulders rather than his ankles like Mercury (3.11 [233,7-10]): '*non enim te soleis ac talari ornatu ad pupulas hominum et palpebras incurrere oportet, curruli strepitu et cum fremitu equestri, sed placide et clementer pinnis teneris in modum hirun|dinum advolare nec ut columbae alis plaudere*.' Sleep must operate without the 'outfit attached to the ankles',[130] which is then described further as causing noise similar to the 'clamor of the chariot' and 'the rumbling of the cavalry', in antithesis with the description of how he must move about men, 'quietly' and 'slowly'. The key word in this passage is *ornatus*, which echoes Fronto's earlier instruction on the ornamentation of a speech. It appears in *ad M.Caesarem* 3.17, where Fronto has suffered from insomnia, anxious about Marcus' rhetorical progress, and describes epideictic rhetoric, in which 'there must be embellishment everywhere'.[131]

In the present passage Jupiter's description of the noisy equipment attached to the ankles of Somnus could as easily be a description of rhetorical *ornatus*, used to amplify and embellish a speech. Elsewhere, while Fronto calls for embellishment where the context of a speech requires it,[132] he consistently gives greater priority to careful word-selection.[133] When decoded, the account of sleep's origins provides for the emperor a summary of Fronto's instruction: eloquence (sleep) need not be brash or over-the-top (like the *talaris ornatus*), but

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[128] Discussed above, pp. 123-127.
[129] *M.Caes*. 1.4.7 (8,2-4); cf. Hom. *Od*. 13.80; Cic. *Tusc*. 1.92; 1.97; 1.117; Cic. *Div*. 1.115.
[130] van den Hout 1999: 529.
[131] *ubique ornandum* at *M.Caes*. 3.17.2 (49,17); see also 3.17.3 (50,1). Descriptions of Mercury elsewhere include the word *talaria*; see Verg. *A*. 4.239; Prop. 2.30.5; Hyg. *Fab*. 64.2.
[132] See *M.Caes*. 3.8.1-2 (41,3-13); 5.53 (80,6-9); *Ant*. 3.1.1 (97,10-13); cf. Cic. *de Orat*. 1.49; 3.16; *Rhet. Her*. 4.18; Quint. *Inst*. 8.3.5-6.
[133] See *M.Caes*. 4.3.3 (57,11-18).

the right words (those with *herbarum suco*) will soothe an audience (as Somnus *corda hominum sopit*).[134]

In this letter Fronto takes up the self created for him in the previous letter, that of the worried and scolding *magister*. Broadly speaking he uses two techniques of self-fashioning on his addressee, one in each half of the letter. He begins by creating two extreme images of Marcus: the indulgent man on holiday and the workaholic who denies himself every pleasure. The rest of the first half consists of a series of mirrors, reflecting various models of leisurely rulers and philosophers, whom Marcus ought to emulate. In the second half of the letter Fronto attempts to persuade by means of oratory, taking up the role of advocate and pleading sleep's case. In the course of this discourse he recalls the earlier exchange on the topic and subtly reiterates the connection between sleep and eloquence; in this letter as in previous ones, to value one is also to value the other.

In the closing sentence of the letter, Fronto advises Marcus to sleep so as to dream (3.13 [233,16-17]). Having been fashioned into a leisurely addressee/audience, relaxed after a feast of food and especially drink, and therefore one more likely to fall asleep readily,[135] the Marcus addressed here is likely to take this advice. And the advice itself, like the models held up for Marcus, is moderate: it advocates both eloquence (sleep) and philosophy, for dreams were thought to be one source of philosophical knowledge.[136] At every turn in this letter Fronto treads carefully with the emperor, attempting to win and maintain the goodwill of his addressee/audience through strategies of downplay: joking and denying rhetorical skill. But as in the previous exchange, Fronto's coercive agenda and his attempt to fashion his ideal Marcus is discernible behind the playful veneer.

de fer. Als. 4, AD 162 (Marcus to Fronto)

Marcus responds to his former tutor in the fourth and final of the 'holiday' letters, though it may not be a direct response. It appears to have been sent after receiving Fronto's *de Bello*

[134] Cf. *M.Caes*. 3.16, in which Fronto argues that men are more easily convinced by subtle, kind words than by force.
[135] See D.C. 8.23; Thgn. 1.469-478.
[136] See above, p. 125 and n. 52.

Parthico in 161.[137] Marcus' response to both letters is only slightly longer than the first of the holiday letters, and throughout the emphasis is on how busy the new emperor is. Thus, of the various selves represented in Fronto's lengthy letter, Marcus takes up the one concerned with toils and troubles.[138]

The extent to which the emperor is weighed down by his duties is conveyed especially through Marcus' treatment of time (4.1 [234,2-5]): *Modo recepi epistulam tuam, qua confestim fruar. nunc enim imminebant officia* δυσπαραίτητα. *interim quod cupis, mi magister, breviter ut occupatus parvolam nuntio nostram melius valere et intra cubiculum discurrere*. In the opening lines the tense shifts from perfect to future to imperfect to present: these shifts create the illusion that Marcus writes as he is receiving Fronto's letter.[139] Marcus has received Fronto's letter 'just now' and 'will enjoy it shortly'; the conjunction *nunc* is given the first emphatic position in the next sentence and is followed by the imperfect describing his duties hanging over him. Then Marcus reports his news *interim, breviter* and *occupatus*, apparently in a moment away from his work.

He then responds to Fronto's letter, and emphasizing the weight of his work, anticipates his former tutor's response (4.2 [234,6-9]):

Dictatis his legi litteras Alsienses meo tempore, mi magister, cum alii cenarent, ego cubarem tenui cibo contentus hora noctis secunda, 'multum,' inquis, 'cohortatione mea.' multum, mi magister, nam verbis tuis adquievi saepiusque legam, ut saepius adquiescam. ceterum verecundia offici, quae quam sit res imperiosa, quis te magis norit?

This is the sum total of Marcus' response to Fronto's lengthy letter urging him to take time out for leisure and relaxation. As in Marcus' previous letter, he puts up a barrier between himself and Fronto; this time he has dictated his letter. This contributes to the busy, frantic tone, but also means that Marcus was more removed from his addressee than if he had written the letter himself; he had a mediator managing the epistolary mediation between sender and

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[137] See van den Hout 1999: 531. At the end of *de fer. Als*. 4 Marcus asks after Fronto's health, hoping that the pain in his hand has subsided; Fronto refers to such pain at the end of the *de Bello Parthico* (11 [226,1-3]); Champlin 1974: 155 agrees that the connection is possible but cautions that several letters refer to pain in Fronto's hands, eliminating the possibility of a firm date for this group.

[138] *de fer. Als*. 3.2 (228,12-16); see above, p. 137.

[139] On the strategies by which epistolary discourse attempts to create an impossible present, see ch. 1, n. 65; cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.3.2 (3,7-10) (see below, pp. 153-154); 3.17.1 (49,2-9); Plin. *Ep. Tra*. 10.15 (see ch. 3, pp. 98-99).

addressee.[140] Elsewhere Fronto asks Marcus to write his letters in his own hand, because he delights in each individual character.[141]

As for Marcus' direct response to Fronto's message, its ambiguity is confirmed by the two ways in which scholars have read it. He has read the letter in the evening and presumably writes at the same time in a moment he had to himself. Marcus anticipates Fronto's reaction to that, utilizing epistolary dialogue: *'multum,' inquis, 'cohortatione mea'*. In response Marcus repeats *multum* and assures Fronto that he has rested upon the letter.[142] The phrase *verbis tuis adquievi* is ambiguous itself: it may mean both 'I have obeyed your advice' and 'I have found comfort in your words'.[143] Van den Hout repeats Haines' translation, 'I have rested upon your advice', and asserts that it may be a pun, meant both literally and metaphorically;[144] however he also says in his introductory remarks about the letter that 'Fronto had advised Marcus to have a good night's rest (233,16), an advice Marcus followed (234,7ff.)'.[145] Grimal also reads Marcus' response as a positive one, arguing that he does indeed begin to use a soporific, as Fronto had advised.[146]

Champlin, on the other hand, emphasizes the disjointed structure of Marcus' letter (the time lag between receiving and reading Fronto's), which he argues reveals the emperor's 'obstinate addiction to work'.[147] Champlin also rightly notes that Marcus only found time to read the letter while his companions were eating and that the only argument he offers is that Fronto surely understands the demands of duty.[148] I would add that 'I have rested upon your words' refers to the act of reading itself and characterizes the time in which Marcus did so as a

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[140] Cf. Fro. *Ant*. 1.2.10 (90,9-10) (see below, p. 166); for further references to dictation see Aur. *M.Caes*. 4.7.1 (63,14-15); 5.62 (83,3-4); *de Nep. Am*. 1.2 (235,9-10).
[141] Fro. *M.Caes*. 3.3.4 (38,3-4): *ego vero etiam litterulas tuas* δίs *amo, quare cupiam, ubi quid ad me scribes, tua manu scribas*; cf. 1.7.4 (15,4-11). Champlin 1980: 105 interprets Fronto's sentiment at the end of *M.Caes*. 3.3 as concern that the dictation of Marcus' letter (*M.Caes*. 3.2) indicates 'regal displeasure'.
[142] See n. 47 on epistolary dialogue.
[143] *OLD* s.v. *acquiesco* 5b, 'to obey willingly'; cf. Suet. *Vit*. 14.5; *B. Afr*. 10.4; meaning 4, 'to find comfort or relief (in)'; cf. Cic. *Att*. 7.11.5 (SB 134); *Mil*. 102; Plin. *Ep*. 6.7.2.
[144] van den Hout 1999: 532.
[145] van den Hout 1999: 531.
[146] Grimal 1991: 286.
[147] Champlin 1980: 129.
[148] Champlin 1980: 129.

restful break; likewise his promise to read the letter often so as to rest often indicates that Marcus will take time to re-read the letter, no more than that.[149]

As in the first 'holiday' letter, Marcus defines the sender as busy emperor and the addressee as *magister*. In the quotations above, *mi magister* occurs three times, and there are two further occurrences.[150] Marcus got the Fronto that he asked for in the previous letter, but when *magister* is paired with the emperor, the epistolary discourse becomes incongruous. Marcus neutralizes the force of the *auctoritas*, which Fronto reclaims, by placing himself out of reach. Now that he is emperor, Marcus maintains a tone of respect and affection by recalling Fronto's former position of authority but also asserts his current position of greater authority.

The Healing Power of the 'Love-letter'

In the index to his edition of the text, Haines provides a list of Fronto's ailments discussed in the correspondence: at one time or another he suffers from pains in the arm, elbow, foot, toes, shoulder, knee, ankle, hand, neck, eyes, groin, loins, back, spine, side, and at one particular time pain in all of his limbs, has neuritis (*nervorum dolor*), rheumatism, sore throat and fever, cough and insomnia, a gastric attack, and possibly cholera.[151] Given the sheer number of health problems Fronto seems to have suffered and the intensity with which they are often discussed by both Fronto himself and Marcus, scholars have concluded that Fronto was either chronically ill throughout the whole of his adult life, or that he was a hypochondriac.

These arguments are used to support conclusions about the date of Fronto's death.[152] Those who argue for the earlier possible date are certain to point out Fronto's ill-health.[153] On

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[149] Cf. *Ant*. 2.2.1 (96,1-2) where Marcus' use of the phrase *secundo iudicio tuo* in response to Fronto's exhortation concerning the case of (the emperor's great-aunt) Matidia's will is similarly ambiguous. As it is, it could be taken 'with your opinion following', as well as 'in line with your opinion'; the use of *secundum*, 'in accordance with', with the accusative *iudicium* would have clearly indicated that Marcus wished to follow Fronto's judgment.

[150] 4.2 (234,12 and 13).

[151] Haines 1919(ii): 333.

[152] See van den Hout 1999: 378-381. There are two proposed dates: 166 or shortly after, since it is the date of the latest firmly dateable letters in the collection – *Ver.* 1.3-4 and *Princ. Hist.* (see van den Hout 1999: 268-269, 463-464; Champlin 1974: 159) – and 175-180. Those who advocate the later date, point to *Orat*. 13 (159,12) where Fronto mentions *nummum Commodi*. Following Mommsen 1874: 216, they argue that he refers to Marcus' son, which means the letter must have been sent after Commodus' first coins appeared in

the other hand, some of those who argue for the later date point out that it is important to take into account the broader fascination at this time with the body and its ailments. G. W. Bowersock argues that hypochondria was characteristic of Antonine Rome, and he cites Fronto's correspondence as a text reflecting 'an inordinate obsession with bodily ailments'.[154] As a contemporary example, Bowersock points to the sophist Aristides, whose hypochondria was more advanced. In the *Sacred Tales*, the account of his time at the Asclepieum at Pergamum, Aristides takes particular pleasure in detailing his symptoms as well as the cures prescribed by the god in dreams during a long illness at the age of 26.[155] Aristides is relevant to the discussion about Fronto's death since he 'went on for years and years,' providing support for the claim that Fronto was also a hypochondriac.[156]

Neither the scholars who read these letters as a straightforward accounting of Fronto's ills, nor those who characterize him as a hypochondriac, consider the possibility that they might contain meaning beyond physical experience, real or imagined. Aristides wrote his *Sacred Tales* in retrospect several years after his time at the temple of Asclepius. H. King has suggested that by going back and recounting his illness in minute detail, Aristides finds meaning in his suffering. The focus in Aristides' text is on his relationship with the god, who appears in dreams to instruct the patient on treatment, so he finds a way in which chronic suffering can be a reminder of the continual presence of the god.[157] Asclepius also helps Aristides with his oratorical career; the god understands his anxieties about oratory and brings him back to it.[158] So as a result of his illness and treatment, his career is saved.

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175. The others argue that Fronto refers to Marcus' brother Verus, who had been called L. Ceionius Commodus until his adoption by Hadrian in 138 and then L. Aelius Aurelius Commodus until 161.

[153] Holford-Strevens 2003: 131; van den Hout 1999: vii; Birley 1987: 226; Champlin 1980: 141; 1974: 138; Haines 1919(i): xl; Brock 1911: 12; on Gellius' descriptions of an ill Fronto (Gel. 2.26.1; 19.10.1), see Holford-Strevens 1997: 96.

[154] Bowersock 1969: 71-72; followed by Whitehorne 1977, who would refine the argument by asserting that Marcus should not be included with Fronto and Aristides under the label 'hypochondriac' (cf. Birley 1987: 89; Africa 1961: 99). Ballér 1992: 22 argues that for Fronto it is a matter of expressing himself rhetorically: 'Fronto – as I see – is not the real hypochondriac; he only describes and makes hidden and unseen causes visible with the whole-heartedness of the true rhetorician …'

[155] Bowersock 1969: 72.

[156] Bowersock 1969: 124.

[157] King 1999: 282.

[158] King 1999: 280. See also Pearcy 1977: 391: 'To heal Aristides' body and to inspire his literary efforts are for Asclepius the same activity, the same illustration of his special favor and providence through the creation of a text'.

M. Foucault recognized a general increase in the occupation with the regime of one's own body in Greek and Latin literature during the first and second centuries.[159] There was a general shift from a concern for public opinion in ethical matters and towards self-scrutiny, which Foucault sees as a response to the increasing difficulty of exercising control over external circumstances. However, Foucault's model is applied rather broadly – C. Edwards points out that Foucault treats the Roman Empire as part of a homogeneous worldview, descended from the concerns of the classical Greeks. Examining the approach to pain found in Seneca's letters, she argues that there is something particularly Roman about the forms of internalization found.[160] For Seneca, the suffering body is made to become an aid to self-knowledge and the route to philosophical progress.[161] The spectacle of suffering, for example in the Roman arena, where there is a close connection between masculinity and the ability to endure pain, is internalized.[162] In facing pain, the Stoic wise man has turned his body into a battlefield on which he might prove his *virtus*.[163]

In reference to the supposed hypochondria of Fronto and Aristides, Swain warns: 'Before diagnosing social anxiety, we must worry about transposing our culturally specific notion of individual psychological neurosis into another world and time'.[164] As noted earlier, Swain identifies problems of health (along with expressions of affection) as one of the codes in which Fronto and Marcus communicate, obscuring the realities of their unequal political relationship.[165] Indeed for these correspondents, there is something beyond the physical experience of symptoms in their discussions. Health and illness also provide another context for the debate between rhetoric and philosophy and for exploration of self.

Fronto and Marcus use (ill-)health as a vehicle for self-fashioning, as they continue to shape and reshape the selves of sender and addressee and the relationship between the two. These letters reveal the same pattern that emerged from the others we have examined: Fronto consistently defines himself as *magister* addressing his student within the context of

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[159] Foucault 1990.
[160] Edwards 1999: 256.
[161] Edwards 1999: 253.
[162] Edwards 1999: 252-253.
[163] Edwards 1999: 263-264.
[164] Swain 1997: 16.
[165] Swain 2004: 19; see above, p. 121.

eloquence; Marcus, while a student in fact, defines himself and his addressee as something other than student and teacher, in this case as lovers, but as emperor Marcus instead defines himself according to his imperial position and, paradoxically, addresses Fronto as *magister*.

Two aspects of epistolarity come to the forefront in these letters: the role of the letter as bridge or barrier between correspondents and the letter as a physical substitute for the sender. I shall examine two pairs of letters, one from the period before Marcus' accession to power and one from the period afterwards. In the first pair the correspondents use the conventions (or coded language) of a 'love-letter',[166] and each sends a letter to stand in for himself with the other. In the second pair the letter acts as barrier, and the correspondents fashion selves between which is maintained an intentional distance.

M. Caes. I.2, AD 144-145 (Marcus to Fronto)

The focus of this letter is, ironically, Marcus' own condition rather than that of his ill addressee; Marcus is separated from his tutor, unable to be with him and attempts to bridge that gap by means of his letter. This bridging is of a different order than the type we have already examined in the context of epistolary dialogue. In those instances the sender conjures up the image of his addressee in order to converse, a sort of verbal bridge.[167] In this exchange, on the other hand, the correspondents write as if absent lovers attempting to be with each other in person, creating a sort of physical bridge. Altman identifies two figurative levels on which the letter functions as a mediator of desire: (1) the epistolary situation in which one writes to an absent lover fosters the generation of substitute images of the lover; and (2) the letter as a physical entity emanating from, passing between, and touching each of the lovers functions itself as a figure for the lover.[168] Each Marcus and Fronto sends a letter to stand in for himself in the physical presence of the other.

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[166] In her forthcoming translation of the correspondence between Fronto and Marcus, A. Richlin approaches these as 'genuine' love-letters reflecting a real romantic relationship. I would argue instead that the correspondents use the 'love-letter' form as another technique in *persona* construction. Unfortunately, Richlin's book will not appear in time to be taken account of here.

[167] See n. 61.

[168] Altman 1982: 19; for a similar approach to Pliny's 'love-letters' see de Pretis 2003 (on the letters to Calpurnia) and Gunderson 1997 (on the letters to Clarus and Corellia Hispulla).

From beginning to end of the long opening sentence Marcus projects himself from a position away from Fronto to one in which he is beside Fronto (1.2.1 [1,10-16]):

Quid ego ista mea fortuna satis dixerim vel quomodo istam necessitatem meam durissimam condigne incusavero, quae me istic ita animo anxio tantaque sollicitudine praepedito alligatum attinet neque me sinit ad meum Frontonem, ad meam pulcherrimam animam confestim percurrere, praesertim in huiusmodi eius valetudine proprius videre, manus tenere, ipsum denique illum pedem, quantum sine incommodo fieri possit, adtrectare sensim, in balneo fovere, ingredienti manum subicere?

This sentence begins with a characterization of the sender as he is, and the undesirability of his current condition is overstated by means of two parallel pairs. The first refers to the circumstances keeping Marcus away: *ista mea fortuna* and *istam necessitatem meam durissimam*; the second describes the effect of those circumstances on Marcus: *animo anxio tanta* and *sollicitudine praepedito alligatum attinet* –' bound with anxious mind, it holds me bound with such great anxiety'. The sentence ends with a characterization of the sender as he would like to be, and he offers a vivid image of Marcus beside his tutor clutching his hand, massaging the injured foot, helping him into the bath. The transition from what Marcus is to what he would like to be, and in effect the bridge between sender and addressee, is effected by *confestim percurrere*. Because Marcus cannot drop everything and go to Fronto, he sends as surrogate his letter, and the self of which it is an image is the Marcus at Fronto's side, caring for him.

After restating his problem, in abbreviated form, with another bridge constructed between correspondents (through juxtaposition of *tu* and *me* and another verb describing what Marcus would like to do, *pervolo*) (1.2.1 [2,1-2]), Marcus turns to a characterization of his addressee and sketches the self of the Fronto with whom he wishes to be. He praises Fronto's ability to endure his various ills in life, something which the sender himself does not do as well (1.2.1 [2,3-6]): *nam tu quidem me omni modo conisus es iocularibus istis tuis ac lepidissimis verbis a cura amovere atque te omnia ista aequo animo perpeti posse ostendere*. Marcus' description of the way in which Fronto endures his ills as *aequo animo* is in direct contrast with his description of himself as *anxio animo* (1.2.1 [1,11-12]) above. It is also used

by Seneca to describe the way in which the Stoic should approach whatever happens to him, especially grief, the material possessions of others, his own death, and illness.[169]

Marcus then expands upon this phrase and advises Fronto on how to get better, in equally Stoic terms (1.2.1 [2,6-10]): *at ego ubi animus meus sit, nescio; nisi hoc scio, illo nescio quo ad te profectum eum esse. cura, miserere, omni temperantia, abstinentia omnem istam tibi pro tua virtute tolerandam, mihi vero asperrimam nequissimamque valetudinem depellere et ad aquas proficisci*. Another bridge is constructed between sender and addressee: Marcus' 'courage' has gone to Fronto, which accounts for the sender's own agitated state and perhaps for Fronto's Stoic approach to his illness.[170] Having been endowed with this Stoic nature, Fronto tolerates adversity (*tolerandam*),[171] like any good Stoic with *temperantia*, listed by Seneca among the cardinal virtues,[172] and *abstinentia*, listed by Seneca among the tools with which one fights illness.[173]

Towards the end of the letter Marcus makes a request of his addressee (1.2.1 [2,10-12]): *si et quando et, nunc ut commode agas,*[174] *cito, oro, perscribe mihi et mentem meam in pectus meum repone. ego interim vel tales tuas litteras mecum gestabo*. The urgency with which Marcus asks Fronto to respond is conveyed by the emphatic position of *nunc*, the adverb *cito* and two present imperatives. The juxtapositon of first and second person verbs represents another bridge between sender and addressee. By the end of the sentence it becomes clear that what Marcus is asking for is a new Fronto – a healthy Fronto to replace the one represented by the letter ('such as it is') which he received about his tutor's illness.

In the closing of the letter the sender describes this new Fronto (1.2.2 [2,13-17]): *vale mihi Fronto iucundissime, quamquam ita me dispositius dicere oportet (nam tu quidem*

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[169] On the approach to life see *Ep*. 76.23; to illness 66.36-38; to grief 9.5; 99.22; to possessions of others 73.14; to one's own death 102.27; cf. on the approach to death Cic. *Tusc*. 1.93; 2.39; 3.72; to the loss of the throne 3.26; to evils (*mala*) 4.60; on the approach to his task Lucr. 1.42; to death 3.938; to life 5.1119.

[170] van den Hout 1999: 21 suggests that Marcus did not know where Fronto was staying (*nescio quo*), in which case he usually sent letters to Fronto's address in Rome; in a sense this would add to the distance being bridged by the sender, if Marcus did not know where to send himself; cf. Catulus fr.1 (see Courtney 1993: 70); Callim. *Epigr*. 42.

[171] Sen. *Ira* 2.12.4; 2.25.3; *Ep*. 16.1; Cic. *Off*. 1.79; 2.45; (on enduring illness/pain) Cic. *Tusc*. 5.74; *Fin*. 2.46; 4.52; Sen. *Ep*. 78.7,12.

[172] Sen. *Ep*. 90.46; cf. 88.29; Cic. *Fin*. 2.51; 5.67; *Tusc*. 2.31; *Off*. 1.121; 3.116.

[173] Sen. *Ep*. 78.11; cf. 108.16, 22; *Ira* 1.4.2; 2.27.3; cf. Fro. *Ver. Imp*. 2.5.2 (110,5); on *abstinentia* as a medical term (since Celsus; see 1.2.8), see van den Hout 1999: 6.

postulas talia): o qui ubique estis, di boni, valeat, oro, meus Fronto iucundissimus atque carissimus mihi, valeat semper integro, inlibato, incolumi corpore, valeat et mecum esse possit. homo suavissime, vale. Two characteristics are emphasized: the new Fronto is healthy and is dear to the sender. The first is conveyed with *vale* in emphatic positions at the beginning and end of the sentence, repetition of *valeat* and a string of adjectives in alliteration and asyndeton: *integro, ilibato, incolumi*, all of which mean 'well' or 'unimpaired'.[175] The second characteristic is conveyed through the repetition of 'my Fronto', the repetition of *iucundissimus* and the use of *carissimus* and *suavissimus*.

Marcus writes to Fronto in this letter as if an absent lover, desperate to be with his beloved and using the epistolary medium to bridge the gap between the two. The strong expressions of affection in this letter (and elsewhere) have at times been taken at face-value,[176] but the language of love obscures Marcus' definition of the ideal Fronto with whom he wishes to be: a steady Stoic, facing adversity with temperence and abstinence. Furthermore, at the end of the letter this ideal Fronto is healthy, and Marcus expresses the hope that this ideal, healthy Fronto will replace the unwell one he carries with him: *mecum esse possit*. Over the course of the letter, Fronto is healed, by means of his Stoic approach to illness.

M. Caes. I.3, AD 144-145 (Fronto to Marcus)

In his response, Fronto's focus is on the relationship between sender and addressee. As in Marcus' half of the exchange, the letter acts as a bridge between the absent friends/lovers, and Fronto sends back to Marcus a self remade for each of them. That in turn becomes the basis for a refashioning of their relationship and of the role played by Stoicism. Fronto's starting-point in his investigation of the origins of their friendship is the Stoic definition.[177] The Stoics classed friendship among 'things beneficial', not to be cultivated for the sake of some pleasure

[174] Cf. Aur. *M.Caes*. 2.7 (28,3-4), where the same question is asked in a similar tone.
[175] van den Hout 1999: 7: such synonyms in alliteration and asyndeton are typical of a solemn prayer; *integer* with *inlibatus* is a common combination; see Sen. *Ben*. 2.4.3; Plin. *Pan*. 25.1; Min. Fel. 15.1; for *integer* and *incolumnis* see Sen. *Const*. 6.5; Gel. 6.18.7; 15.31.4; Apul. *Met*. 2.24.2-3; for *inlibatus* and *incolumnis* see Aur. *M.Caes*. 5.22 (72,20).
[176] e.g. Brock 1911: 42-45; Mackail 1913: 235.
[177] On friendship in Roman Stoicism, see Reydams-Schils 2005: 69 and 75-77.

or advantage; rather the friend should be loved for his own sake.[178] Furthermore, genuine friendship is only possible between the wise and good,[179] which perhaps accounts for Marcus' Stoic definition of Fronto, and Fronto's taking up this Stoic self at the beginning of his response.

In the opening of the letter Fronto sets out his subject (1.3.1 [2,19-3,3]): *tu, Caesar, Frontonem istum tuum sine fine amas, vix ut tibi homini facundissimo verba sufficiant ad expromendum amorem tuum et benivolentiam declarandum. quid, oro te, fortunatius, quid me uno beatius esse potest, ad quem tu tam fraglantes litteras mittis? quin etiam, quod est amatorum proprium, currere ad me vis et volare*. As in the previous letter, juxtaposition brings sender and addressee together: the pair *Caesar Frontonem* is given emphasis through position. This pair also reflects the content of Fronto's letter, as he will characterize first Marcus (the Marcus for whom the previous letter acted as surrogate), then Fronto, or Marcus' image of Fronto ('that Fronto of yours'), and finally the nature of their connection.

In characterizing the addressee, Fronto echoes Marcus' own words.[180] The rhetorical question in the second sentence mirrors the construction of Marcus' question in the previous letter (*quid dixerim*).[181] The two infinitives at the end of this passage echo the verbs used by Marcus to describe what he wishes to do: *currere* for *percurrere* and *volare* for *pervolo*. Marcus is defined as a lover; the phrase 'appropriate to a lover' sums up his description in the first sentence of how much Marcus loves him. There Marcus is characterized as 'most eloquent'.

Having sketched the self of the addressee, Fronto then reveals the result of Marcus' exercise in self-fashioning on himself (1.3.2 [3,7-10]): *putasne ullus dolor penetrare sciat corpus aut animum meum prae tanto gaudio? procedo <iam>, babae, neque doleo iam quicquam neque aegre fero: vigeo, valeo, exulto; quovis veniam, quovis curram*. This passage gives the impression that Fronto's relief of the pain in his foot is simultaneous with the act of writing. The reaction of Fronto's body to his rhetorical question is to be healed

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[178] See D.L. 7.124; Cic. *Leg*. 1.18.49; *Fin*. 3.21.70; *Off*. 3.118.
[179] D.L. 7.124.
[180] A technique used elsewhere by both correspondents; see n. 61.
[181] At 1.2.1 (2,1-2) Marcus also asks *quid dicam*?

immediately. The present tense, the adverb, 'already', the interjection *babae*![182] and the string of verbs in asyndeton, 'I am whole, I am well, I leap for joy',[183] all lend a sense of immediacy to this passage.

Aside from the fact that it seems unlikely that one's foot could be healed by the words of an absent student/friend/lover, there is another indication that the apparent spontaneity of this passage should not be taken as a reflection of Fronto's 'true' reaction to Marcus' letter. In the following passage Fronto explains the timing of his written response (1.3.2 [3,10-11,12-13]): *crede istud mihi, tanta me laetitia perfusum, ut rescribere tibi ilico non potuerim … sequentem autem tabellarium retinui, quo ex gaudio resipiscerem*. The tense shifts from present to perfect and pluperfect, and there is a clear reference to the difference between the experiencing self and narrating self of the sender.[184] Fronto had first to recover from the joy he experienced at reading Marcus' letter before he was able to sit down and give an account of it in writing.[185]

Therefore, the self presented by Fronto in the previous passage is a construct; he sends a healed Fronto back to Marcus to replace the impaired one he carries with him, just as Marcus had hoped. However, Fronto has made a slight adjustment to the selves constructed by his addressee in the previous letter. Marcus presented a Fronto healed through a Stoic approach to illness, with whom his frantic, anxious lover longs to be, but has sent a surrogate self along with his *animus* in his place. Fronto, on the other hand, presents a self healed by the loving words of the 'very eloquent' Marcus. As in previous exchanges, Fronto undoes the Stoic fashioning performed by his student and replaces philosophy with eloquence as the basis for their relationship.

Although Fronto has already refashioned the selves created by Marcus, for the remainder of the letter he takes up the self with which he was presented in the previous letter. He plays the Stoic and uses the Stoic model of friendship to describe the relationship between

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[182] See Hofmann §18 and 60.
[183] Haines 1919(i): 85.
[184] See ch. 1 n. 65. On the role of mentioning the messenger in closing the gap between event and narration see Altman 1982: 136.
[185] On the temporal aspects of epistolary discourse see ch. 1, p. 15.

Marcus and himself.[186] However, the conclusions drawn at the end of this exploration of Stoic friendship are distinctly un-Stoic. Fronto takes a second opportunity to refashion Marcus' images, this time focussing on the connection between the correspondents.

Fronto begins with a series of rhetorical questions (1.3.4 [3,20-23]) asking what he has done to deserve Marcus' love. In the first question Fronto makes explicit again which 'Fronto' he means (1.3.4 [3,20-21]): *quid iste Fronto tantum boni fecit, ut eum tanto opere tu diligas*? The Fronto under discussion is 'that Fronto of yours', the one created by Marcus in the previous letter. Fronto then names specific duties that might win him such regard (e.g. leading an army), none of which Fronto has performed. The idea that Marcus does not love Fronto for the sake of some expediency is in keeping with the Stoic model. The reversal of Fronto's Stoic starting-point requires two further steps, summed up in statements introduced by *omnino*.

Having established the boundaries in which he is operating, Fronto shifts back into the first person and into the self constructed for him by Marcus (1.3.5 [4,2-7]):

at ego nihil quidem malo quam amoris erga me tui nullam extare rationem. nec omnino mihi amor videtur qui ratione oritur et iustis certisque de causis copulatur. amorem ego illum intellego fortuitum et liberum et nullis causis servientem, inpetu potius quam ratione conceptum, qui non officiis ut lignis apparatis, sed sponte ortis vaporibus caleat.

Fronto sets up an opposition between what 'true' love is not in the second sentence and what it is in the third. There are two pairs in antithesis: *ratione oritur* with *fortuitum et liberum* and *iustis certisque de causis* with *nullis causis*. Precisely what is meant by each pair is potentially ambiguous. In the first pair, the word *ratio* has several meanings, and could be taken one of two ways here: either as 'explanation', 'justification'[187] or as the 'exercise' or 'faculty' of reason.[188] The adjective *fortuitus* also could be taken more than one way: either, as of material objects, 'spontaneous', 'that happens to arise or present itself',[189] or 'determined by chance', 'accidental'.[190] Likewise the meaning of the second pair depends upon what is

[186] For Marcus' use of this model see *M.Caes.* 3.18.
[187] Cf., e.g. Cic. *Rep*. 1.15; Tac. *Hist*. 2.3; Gel. 16.17.2.
[188] Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 66.12; *Ben*. 4.7.1; Cic. *Dom*. 146.
[189] Cf. Plin. *Nat*. 15.78 (self-sown tree); Cic. *de Orat*. 1.150; Sen. *Ben*. 7.31.3.
[190] Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 90.2; Cic. *Fam*. 7.5.2 (SB 26); Tac. *Hist*. 1.16.

meant by *causae*: does Fronto mean to indicate 'ground', that is, an identifiable motive for Marcus' love of his tutor, or 'causal agency', referring to broader causation in nature?[191]

The first possibility in each case would fall within the bounds of Stoic friendship; the second possibility, on the other hand, would render Fronto's conclusion in opposition to Stoic beliefs about the nature of the universe. They held that as the universe is a rationally organized structure, embodying *logos* (the faculty that enables man to think, plan, speak), one should act in a manner that wholly accords with human rationality,[192] and that there is nothing 'accidental' about the universe or events.[193] Towards the end of the letter, this ambiguity is cleared up in the second statement introduced by *omnino* (1.3.7 [4,21-22]): *et omnino quantum fortuna rationi tantum amor fortuitus officioso amori antistat*. Here Fronto links the superiority of fortuitous love over obliging love with the superiority of fortune over reason.[194] Later he draws the same conclusion, but this time in the specific case of Marcus' love towards himself (1.3.8 [5,2-4]).

In the closing of the letter Fronto offers a final definition of sender and addressee (1.3.11-12 [5,15-20]):

sed iam hora decimam tangit et tabellarius | tuus mussat. finis igitur sit epistulae. valeo revera multo quam opinabar commodius. de aquis nihildum cogito. te, dominum meum, decus morum, solacium m<al>i, quam multum amo! dices: num amplius quam ego te? non sum tam ingratus ut hoc au<deam> dicere. Vale, Caesar, cum tuis parentibus et ingenium tuum excole.

Fronto echoes the close of his addressee's previous letter: *valeo* in response to Marcus' wish *valeat*, and *commodius* in response to *ut commode agas*. The sender is healed, as his addressee had hoped. Before defining the addressee, Fronto inserts a bridge, through the juxtaposition of the pronouns *ego* and *te*. The last phrase of the sentence is given to defining Marcus, and he is characterized as a student of eloquence.

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[191] Cf. ('justificatory principle') Cic. *Inv*. 2.63; Sal. *Jug*. 14.7; ('motive') Ter. *Hec*. 426; Cic. *S.Rosc*. 92; Liv. 9.3.9; Plin. *Ep*. 1.13.6; Tac. *Ag*. 15.5; ('causal or metaphysical principle') Cic. *Div*. 2.47; Sen. *Ep*. 65.2; (of 'valid' reasons, excuses) Cic. *Fam*. 11.27.7; Sen. *Ben*. 2.22; Ov. *Pont*. 1.5.25; Luc. 5.580.

[192] Long 1974: 108.

[193] See Long 1974: 164: Stoics 'held strictly to the view that for everything that happens, there are conditions such that, given them, nothing else could happen. Chance is simply a name for undiscovered causes'.

[194] He goes on to support this claim by pointing out that while reason is a human capacity, Fortuna is a goddess (1.3.8 [4,22-5,2]). This undoes another fundamental tenet of Stoicism: that humans are endowed with reason by Nature, and that man relates to cosmic Nature as a rational agent; see Long 1974: 108 and 179-184.

Fronto sent Marcus the healed self he had hoped for, but with a twist: Stoicism is eliminated, and Fronto is healed by the eloquence of the friend who loves him thanks to *fortuna* rather than *ratio*. The Marcus fashioned by the sender approves of these new selves: it is in his question *num amplius quam ego te?* that sender and addressee are brought together. The clause in which the new Marcus is defined is given the last emphatic position and gives the last word to eloquence, which Fronto has re-established as the foundation of their connection. Fronto's final act of self-definition is of a *magister* addressing his student.[195] When discussing illness, as when discussing sleep, Marcus and Fronto exchange versions of their relationship, each making the desired adjustments to produce the desired ideal Stoic and eloquent selves, and in this case disguise their corrections with the language of lovers and of friendship.

Ant. Imp. I.1, AD 161 (Marcus to Fronto)

In this letter Marcus writes Fronto on the occasion of his birthday to wish his former tutor well. The focus of this brief letter is Marcus' hopes for Fronto's future, and chief among these is that he have good health for many years to come. As in the previous pair of letters, Marcus expresses a strong affection for Fronto.[196] However, whereas in the last pair Marcus' love was expressed as a deeply-felt longing to be at Fronto's side, in this pair that longing is absent, and the letter acts as a barrier rather than a bridge between the correspondents. Like the 'holiday' letters, Marcus' tone is affectionate but distanced, and, defining sender as emperor and addressee as *magister*, he creates a disjointed relationship.[197]

In the opening of the letter Marcus lists his birthday wishes for his *magister*, in a tone very different from that in his letter from the previous pair (1.1.1 [86,9-12]): *Bonum annum, bonam salutem, bonam fortunam peto a dis die mihi sollemni natali tuo compotemque me voti fore confido; nam quem sponte dei iuvisse volunt et dignum ope sua iudicant, eum commendo benignitati eorum*. This letter is filled with religious language. Marcus as an individual (*mihi*) considers the occasion of Fronto's birthday a sort of religious feast day, and his requests to

[195] Cf. Aur. *M.Caes*. 3.18.2 (50,25); Plin. *Ep. Tra*. 10.18.2-3 (see ch. 3, pp. 106-107 and n. 99).
[196] See 1.1.1 (86,12-14).
[197] See above, p. 132.

the gods on his former tutor's behalf are characterized as solemn prayers. The use of the future infinitive contributes to a more distant, abstract tone. Whereas in the previous letter Marcus emphasized the helplessness of his and his Fronto's condition in the present and a frantic need to change it, here his prayers involve the unknown future condition of his addressee.

In the second half of the letter Marcus twice reiterates his wish that Fronto have good health. Each is overstated in one way or another: the first time by means of abundant vocabulary (1.1.2 [86,15-16]): *Vale et perennem multis annis bonam valetudinem, mi magister, obtine laetissimus incolumitate filiae, nepotum, generi*. The *vale* is echoed in *valetudinem*; the *perennem* alone expresses the idea of *multis annis*. The second time the overstatement comes in the form of unnecessary adverbs and the repetition of *vale* (1.1.3 [86,18-19]): *iterum atque iterum ac porro in longam senectam bene vale, iucundissime magister*. Marcus tacks on *ac porro* to the phrase *iterum atque iterum*, which serves to draw out the wish farther into the future.[198] This passage is at once intimate and formal. Marcus' affection for Fronto is expressed by means of the intimate form of address, *mi*, and the *iucundissime*, but at the same time that intimacy is undermined. Paired with *mi* and *iucundissime* is *magister*, invoking their student-teacher relationship, whereas in the previous pair Marcus consistently referred to his addressee as 'my Fronto'.[199]

In the closing of the letter, its role as physical barrier between sender and addressee becomes clear.[200] Marcus makes another solemn prayer, this one addressed to Fronto himself (1.1.3 [86,20-24]): *peto a te, sed impetratum sit, ne te ob diem natalem Cornificiae Lorium vexes. dis volentibus Romae paucis diebus nos videbis. sed post diem natalem tuum, si me amas, nox quae sequitur fac iam placide quiescas sine ullius instantis officii cogitatione. hoc Antonino tuo da sollicite et vere petentei*. The *peto a te* echoes *peto a dis* from the beginning of the letter, and strengthens the sense of distance between Marcus and Fronto: the former addresses the latter in the same manner as he addresses the gods.

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[198] Haines 1919(ii): 33 translates 'Next year and the year after and right on into a long old age …'.
[199] *M.Caes.* 1.2.1 (1,13) (see above, p. 150); 1.2.2 (2,13-17) (see above, p. 151); for further occurrences of *mi magister*, see n. 84.
[200] Cf. *de fer. Als*. 1 (226,9-14) (see above, p. 133), another barrier put up by Marcus.

Furthermore, he explicitly asks Fronto to stay away from the imperial family, currently at Lorium, for the sake of his health. Instead their meeting is delayed for 'a few days', and that meeting will happen 'gods willing'; that they will meet soon is not a certainty but a vague possibility. One of the adverbs used to describe Marcus' request, *sollicite*, echoes *sollicitudine* from the opening of Marcus' letter in the previous pair.[201] There it was used to describe Marcus' state of mind at being unwillingly kept from Fronto's side; here it is used to describe Marcus' desire that Fronto stay away and look after himself.

The tone of this letter, respectful and affectionate, but also very distant, is in stark contrast to the frantic, longing letter addressed to an ill Fronto earlier. The difference in tone accompanies the shift in Marcus' definitions of sender and addressee from Stoic 'lovers' to emperor and *magister*. In this letter the barrier between correspondents is more acutely effective, because in addition to the technique we have already seen (addressing Fronto by an inappropriate title) the sender explictly tells Fronto to stay away; nor is there an anticipation of Fronto's response or the playfulness of the 'holiday' letters, but a formal, solemn tone.

Ant. Imp. I.2, AD 161 (Fronto to Marcus)

In this lengthy response to Marcus' birthday wishes Fronto takes up the selves of sender and addressee constructed by Marcus, and reshapes them. However, while in the previous pair he focussed on their relationship, which was refashioned so as to eliminate the role of Stoicism, here he focusses on the self of Marcus, and fashions an orator-emperor, whose skill and dedication to eloquence would allow for the realization of the happy, healthy Fronto fashioned by his addressee in the previous letter. Fronto uses a technique we have already seen put to use by Cicero: he uses time, blending past, present and future in order to provide for Marcus a future self from the distant past. Just as Cicero fashioned Pompey as the new Scipio,[202] Fronto fashions Marcus as a new Cato, by similar means. Sender and addressee are moved from past to present to future, and in the end, the future looks very much like the past.

In the opening of the letter, as in the previous pair, Fronto echoes Marcus' words, laying out the self Marcus had fashioned for his former tutor (1.2.1 [86,26-87,4]): *Seni huic et,*

[201] *M.Caes*. 1.2.1 (1,12); see above, p. 150.

ut tu appellas, magistro tuo bona salus, bonus annus, bona fortuna, res omnia bona: quae tu scribis ea te mihi ab dis die tibi solemnissimo natali meo precatum: omnia mihi ista in te tuoque fratre sita sunt, Antonine meo cordi dulcissime ... Fronto immediately establishes the context for his letter, giving the first emphatic position to *seni* and reminding Marcus that he had called the sender *magister*. These characteristics highlighted by Fronto reflect both the subject of his letter and his self-definition in addressing Marcus. Birthdays are a natural occasion for looking back on one's life, perhaps especially once we reach a certain age (Fronto was about 65 at this time).[203] This letter is a sort of birthday retrospective, the focus of which is the oratorical education and career of the emperor, a subject appropriate to Fronto's identity as *magister*.

After defining the sender, Fronto quotes the emperor's prayers on the sender's behalf from the opening of Marcus' letter, and states that he has already found these things in Marcus and Verus.[204] The extent to which that is true will become the subject of the rest of the letter, as Fronto tests this statement and ultimately proves it to be so, but only after some self-fashioning applied upon his former student. The sender, already defined as *magister*, goes on to define the *te*, in which he finds *res omnia bona*. Fronto does this by interrupting his direct response to the previous letter with a long reminiscence, in which he recalls Marcus' education in eloquence, assesses his progress along the way and fashions his ideal emperor as an accomplished orator; then, having defined the *te*, he returns to his direct response. As in the holiday letters, Fronto conjures up a series of images of the addressee, but instead of constructing ridiculous, extreme images of Marcus, they are images of the emperor from different periods of time, and the sender chooses the most desirable one as his fellow correspondent.

This interruption is structured in a repeating chronological pattern, in which are embedded a number of other repeated elements: eloquence is represented as the destination reached at the end of a journey (three times);[205] Fronto's predictions/promises about Marcus'

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[202] *Fam*. 5.7 (SB 3); see ch. 1, pp. 30-43.
[203] van den Hout 1999: 227.
[204] See n. 61 for further examples of paraphrase/quotation of the addressee.
[205] At 1.2.3 (87,25-29); 1.2.5 (88,18-22); 1.2.7 (89,15-19).

oratorical skill move him along his journey from past to present to future; and a connection is drawn between *ingenium* and good oratorical practice.[206] I shall focus on the second of two movements through time,[207] in which three images of Marcus are framed by three comparisons between Marcus and others in terms of oratorical ability.

A History of Marcus' Education

Each of the first two images of Marcus occupies a different space in time (one past and one present), and these images lay the groundwork for the culmination of this letter in the construction of Marcus' future self. From the past, Fronto offers a specific example of oratorical practice to illustrate that Marcus has the *ingenium* he needs to be a successful orator (1.2.5 [88,11-18]):

Meministin eius orationis tuae, quam vixdum pueritiam egressus in senatu habuisti? in qua, cum imagine utriculi ad exemplum adcommodandum usus esses, anxie verebare, ne parum pro loci et ordinis dignitate τὴν εἰκόνα *usurpasses, meque primam illam longiusculam ad te epistulam scripsisse, qua id, quod res est, augurabar, magni ingeni signum esse ad eiusmodi sententiarum pericula audaciter adgredi, sed quod eo opus esset, tuo te studio et nonnulla nostra opera adsecuturum, ut digna tantis sententiis verborum lumina parares.*

He goes back to the beginning and invites Marcus to recall an early speech in the Senate and his anxiety at the time, picking out a particular analogy used by the young prince. We have seen the correspondents use rhetorical questions in order to conjure up the image of the addressee, an important technique for maintaining the notion that an epistolary exchange is an ongoing conversation.[208] The rhetorical question here appears to serve a similar purpose, except that, rather than attempting to reach across the barrier put up by Marcus in the previous letter by conjuring up his current addressee, the image of Marcus conjured up is one from the past, the one *vixdum pueritiam*. This *past* Marcus is then characterized from his own perspective: he 'was anxiously afraid' that he had used an image inappropriate to the dignity of the Senate.

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[206] At 1.2.3 (87,25-29).

[207] The aim of the first (1.2.2-3 [87, 12-29]) is to establish the extent of Marcus' progress as an orator; Fronto makes the first connection between *ingenium* and oratorical practice, arguing that anyone born with ability and given the proper training in eloquence is able to follow the path to success, but stops short of asserting that Marcus himself will complete this journey.

[208] On the need to 'hear' the addressee in a lengthy letter see n. 91.

In the final lines of this passage Fronto calls up his own past self and *that* Fronto's response to his student's fears. The 'rather long letter' to which he refers has been identified as *ad M. Caesarem* 4.3,[209] a letter in which Fronto explains the importance of searching out words proper to the thoughts one wants to express. The present passage is a synthesis of the sender's earlier message, and serves as a prediction made about Marcus in the past, indicated by *augurari*.[210] Nowhere in *ad M.Caesarem* 4.3 does Fronto make such a prediction in so many words; rather its various elements are scattered throughout that letter, and the sender weaves them together here, revealing the full signficance of the early correspondence with his student.[211] In summary, because Marcus may learn to search out words if he takes Fronto's corrections to heart, and has shown boldness in his use of metaphorical expression, a characteristic desirable in an orator, he will come to be adept in expressing his opinions in the Senate with the proper words, or *verborum lumina*, 'the sparks of words'.[212] Thus, in *ad Antoninum* 1.2 Fronto uses a strategy employed by Pliny at *Letters* 6.16:[213] the sender uses temporal shifts to endow his *past* self with the knowledge of his *present* self.[214]

Nowhere in this early letter does the word *ingenium* occur; it must be supplied by Fronto in the present, and the claim that Marcus' performance as a young prince was a *magni ingeni signum* echoes the general principle expressed earlier, that one with *magno ingenio* and proper training will reach the destination on the road to eloquence.[215] Fronto has now shown that long ago he believed that this principle was true in Marcus' particular case. The sender makes this connection explicit in the next passage, where he shifts back into the present and claims that his prediction from the past has come true, though he continues to hold back from

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[209] Sent in 139; see van den Hout 1999: 229; scholars have not come to a definitive conclusion about the speech to which Fronto refers in this passage (van den Hout lists the various suggestions that have been made).

[210] The first such predicition in *Ant*. 1.2 occurs at 1.2.2 (87,12-16); cf. Fro. *M.Caes*. 2.2.3 (19,8-11) (another prediction about Marcus' oratorical future based on his *ingenium*); Cic. *Orat*. 41 (Socrates' prophecy about Isocrates' future as a great orator).

[211] The *pericula* refers to Fronto's characterization of the business of word-selection as dangerous at *M.Caes*. 4.3.2 (56,18-20), 4.3.3 (57,22-27) and 4.3.7 (59,7-9). The word *sententia* occurs in reference to Marcus' thoughts (4.3.6 [58,21-22]), and when Marcus is praised for using a bold metaphor (4.3.7 [59,12-14]). The second half of his prediction, about Marcus' training, refers to a passage that suggests that Marcus will learn how to search out proper words with Fronto's help (4.3.6 [58,25-60,3]).

[212] van den Hout 1999: 230: *verborum lumina* is a rhetorical term for the choosing and arranging of words; cf. Fro. *Ver*. 2.1.4 (119,9); *Rhet. Her*. 4.32; Quint. *Inst*. 8.5.34; Tac. *Dial*. 22.3.

[213] As described by Eco 1985.

[214] See ch. 3 n. 77.

claiming that Marcus will certainly reach the pinnacle of oratorical greatness (1.2.5 [88,18-22]).

The second image of Marcus, from the present, is conjured up by means of paraphrase. Fronto reveals that it was more than the occasion of his birthday that prompted his reminiscence (1.2.6 [88,23-25]): *haec ut scriberem productus sum proxuma epistula tua, qua scripsisti exolescere paulatim quaecumque didicisse; mihi autem nunc maxime florere quae didicisti atque adolescere videntur*. The sender conjures up another image of his addressee, this time by using Marcus' own words,[216] but these words appeared in a letter other than the one to which Fronto is responding, and that letter is lost.[217] The *You* defined here is a Marcus concerned about his waning oratorical abilities. Marcus' opinion about the state of his skills in the past is set in antithesis with Fronto's opinion in the present. Both infinitives with the root *-olescere* refer to the passage of time and are used of living things 'growing up': whereas Marcus sees his lessons as having faded away, Fronto sees them as mature and flourishing.

Having come back to the present, Fronto makes another prediction, this one about the future. First, though, he conjures up the third image of Marcus (1.2.6 [88,25-29]): *an parum animadvertis, quanto studio quantoque favore et voluptate dicentem te audiet senatus populusque Romanus? et spondeo, quanto saepius audierit, tanto flagrantius amabit: ita multa et grata sunt ingeni et oris vocis et facundiae tuae delenimenta*. The sender uses another rhetorical question concerning Marcus' public speaking to conjure up the image of his addressee, but this time of the *present* Marcus – the second person verb has shifted tense, from *habuisti*[218] to *animadvertis*. This shift is also reflected in the following sentence, by *spondeo*, which echoes *spopondi* from the first prediction made by Fronto in the past.[219] In the second half of this sentence Fronto makes a connection between the emperor's *ingenium*, established in the previous passage, and his future success.

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[215] See n. 207.
[216] See n. 61 for further occurrences of this technique.
[217] See van den Hout 1999: 230.
[218] 1.2.5 (88,11); see above, p. 161.
[219] See n. 210.

The images of the addressee are framed by two passage in which Fronto makes three comparisons between Marcus and others, each of which is more specific than the previous one: Fronto begins with a broad comparison focussed on ability and then narrows down his scope to individuals and particular elements of rhetorical practice. The first two comparisons occur back to back (1.2.3 [87,29-88,3]):

crede autem hoc mihi omnium hominum, quos ego cognoverim, uberiore quam tu sis ingenio adfectum comperisse me neminem. quod quidem ego magna cum lite Victorini nostri et magna eius cum bile adiurare solebam, cum eum adspirare ad pulchritudinem ingeni tui posse negarem.

Fronto's first comparison is general and sweeping: in the first sentence he deems Marcus' *ingenium* richer than that of every man he has met. The relative clause is descriptive (it tells not *what* men but *what sort of* men) and contains a generalizing generic subjunctive. As if to confirm this statement immediately, he then names an individual, Victorinus,[220] whom he used to compare with Marcus in terms of ability.[221] Within this short passage, Fronto's comparisons move from the very broad to the very specific in terms of the parties being compared with Marcus, while both concern *ingenium* in general; and each is located in a different time – one past and one present.

Before moving his addressee firmly into the future, Fronto makes his third comparison, this time in the present, with reference to another speech delivered in the Senate (1.2.6 [88,29-89,6]):

nimirum quisquam superiorum imperatorum (imperatoribus enim te comparare malo, ne viventibus compararem) quisquam illorum his figurationibus uteretur, quae Graeci schemata vocant? ne longius repetam, vel proximo senatu, cum Cyzicenorum gravem causam commemorares, ita orationem tuam figurasti, quam figuram Graeci παράλειψιν *appellant, ut praetereundo tamen diceres et dicendo tamen praeterires.*

As the letter goes on, though the addressee is moved through time from past to present to future, the parties with whom Marcus is compared are taken from further and further back in the past. Fronto makes this pattern explicit in this passage, stating in the parenthesis that he prefers to compare the emperor to former emperors rather than to 'contemporaries'. This is

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[220] Fronto's son-in-law and friend and fellow-student of Marcus; see Fro. *M.Caes*. 2.2.1 (17,19); 2.2.6 (20,18); Aur. *M.Caes*. 4.13 (67,17f).

[221] Fronto also mentions that Rusticus, Marcus' philosophy tutor, relunctanly acknowledged Marcus' ability (1.2.3 [88,3-5]); see above, p. 118 and n. 14. For further praise of Marcus' natural ability see Fro. *M.Caes*. 1.1 (1,8); 1.3.12 (5,20) (above, p. 156); 2.2 19,9; 3.8.3 (42,1-2); 3.12.1 (44,9); 3.17.1 (49,5); *Ant*. 1.5.2 (93,1); *Eloq*. 4.5 (148,15-16); *de Bello Parthico* 9 (224,17).

emphasized through the repetition of *comparare* and through the use of *ne*, which stands for *nedum*, 'Heaven forbid that ...'.[222] This is a strong objection to the very thing Fronto did in the first comparison, between Marcus and Victorinus, which highlights the increasing chronological distance between the emperor and those with whom he is compared. Likewise, there is a shift in the nature of the comparisons in the letter; the comparison with Victorinus was based upon native ability, while this one is based upon a particular aspect of oratorical practice.

Moving into the Future

At this point in the letter, the sender has followed Marcus through time twice. His *past* self was proved to have shown *magnum ingenium*, and his *present* self, good oratorical practice. This was accomplished through two comparisons, one occupying the past, and one the present. A general connection between *ingenium* and practice was drawn, and then proved valid in the particular case of the emperor. Though Fronto has made a prediction about Marcus' future success and has suggested that he will reach the heights of skill, the sender has yet to explicitly bring his addressee into the future. Having established the connection between native ability and practice in Marcus' case, Fronto resumes his direct response to the previous letter and constructs a fourth image of the addressee.

The end of Fronto's lengthy reminiscence is signalled by the response to Marcus' concern about his former tutor's health, expressed in the previous letter (1.2.8 [89,25-90,2]): *ut voluisti, domine, et ut valetudo mea postulabat, domi mansi tibique sum precatus, ut multos dies natales liberum tuorum prospere celebres*. We have seen Fronto in another context attempting to reach across the barriers raised by Marcus;[223] in this case the emperor has put up a physical barrier, preventing them from meeting face to face, which Fronto does not attempt to breach.[224] In the previous letter the distance between correspondents was strengthened by a solemn tone and by the use of religious language,[225] and here Fronto

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[222] van den Hout 1999: 231; cf. Cic. *Fam*. 9.26.2 (SB 197); Sall. *Cat*. 11.8; Liv. 3.52.9; Tac. *Ann*. 11.30.3.
[223] *de fer. Als*. 3; see above, pp. 134-135.
[224] In the previous pair of letters examined, Marcus constructs a physical bridge to his addressee (*M.Caes*. 1.2; see above, pp. 149f); on the distinction between a verbal and physical bridge see above, p. 149.
[225] 1.1.1 (86,9-14); see above, p. 157.

confirms that distance by responding in kind. The sender also takes a further step away from his addressee (1.2.10 [90,9-10]): *Me quoque tussicula vexat et manus dexterae dolor, mediocris quidem, sed qui a rescribenda longiore epistula inpedierit; dictavi igitur*. As well as preventing the journey to visit the imperial family, Fronto's ill-health has prevented him writing his letter in his own hand. As in the case of the last 'holiday' letter sent by Marcus, there was a mediator between the sender and his *I*-statement.[226]

This reinforcement of the absence of his addressee is unexpected, since up to this point in the letter Fronto seems to have been using epistolary discourse in order to bridge the gap between himself and Marcus. The apparent contradiction is resolved if we identify precisely the different selves Marcus is assigned. So far, Fronto has constructed four images of Marcus: the *past* Marcus and *present* Marcus were conjured up by means of rhetorical questions; the Marcus concerned about his status as orator and the Marcus concerned about Fronto's health were conjured up by means of paraphrase. The *You* with whom Fronto has attempted to bridge the gap is the Marcus associated with the lost letter.[227] On the other hand, the sender is happy to maintain the barrier between himself and the Marcus presented in the previous letter. Therefore, the *tu*, in whom Fronto finds happiness, is not the Marcus constructed in the previous letter, but the one in the lost letter. He has selected the desired addressee based upon an *I*-statement other than the one to which he is supposed to be responding.

Fronto's letter culminates in a final comparison, by which the successful completion of Marcus' journey to oratorical greatness is confirmed. The pattern continues, whereby Marcus moves forward in time but those with whom he is compared are from further back in time. The basis of the comparison is, as in the last one, a particular aspect of practice. He begins by comparing the usage of paralipsis by a great Republican orator with others (1.2.11 [90,11-15]): *Quoniam mentio* παραλείψεως *habita est, non omittam quin neque Graecorum oratorum neque Romanorum, quos ego legerim, elegantius hac figura usum quemquam quam M. Porcium in ea oratione, quae de sumptu suo inscribitur* …[228] This general assertion about

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[226] Cf. *de fer. Als*. 1 (226,9-14) (see above, p. 133); *Ant*. 1.1.3 (86,20-24) (see above, p. 158).
[227] See above, p. 163.
[228] Fronto proceeds to quote from the speech (1.2.11 [90,15-91,8]).

Cato's superior practice echoes the earlier statement about Marcus' *ingenium*.[229] In Marcus' case, his *ingenium* was richer than that of any man Fronto had met; in Cato's case, he used paralipsis more elegantly than any Greek or Roman orator Fronto has read.[230]

The close of the letter contains a final prediction for Marcus' future, based upon a comparison between the emperor and Cato (1.2.12 [91,9-13]):

Haec forma παραλείψεως *nova nec ab ullo alio, quod ego sciam, usurpata est, iubet enim legi tabulas et quod lectum sit iubet praeteriri. a te quoque novum factum, quod principium orationis tuae figura ista exorsus es; sicut multa alia nova et eximia facturum te in orationibus tuis certum habeo: ita egregio ingenio natus es.*

In the first sentence Cato's usage of paralipsis is characterized as 'original'. At the beginning of the second sentence, Marcus' usage is characterized with the same adjective. Whereas in previous comparisons Marcus came out on top, in this comparison the two parties are put on par with each other. Marcus turns out to be a future Cato, and the consequences of this result are stated in the second half of the second sentence. Marcus' speeches will continue to demonstrate originality; this prediction is expressed as a matter of fact in the indicative and a future infinitive – the first time in the letter that Fronto has made an explicit statement in which Marcus is the subject of a verbal form in the future tense.[231] The final clause, set off from the rest of the sentence by *ita* in the last emphatic position of the letter, confirms the connection between Marcus' native ability and his practice.

Instead of attempting to reach across the barrier raised by his addressee in the previous letter, Fronto by-passes it altogether, and bridges the gap with the Marcus constructed in the lost letter. He is the Marcus anxious about his fading oratorical skills; he is the Marcus who will be the next Cato; and he is the Marcus who has stood out to scholars. Historians have used this letter as evidence both for Fronto's being pleased at how eloquent Marcus has become[232] and for Marcus' concern about the condition of his oratorical ability.[233]

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[229] See above, p. 164.
[230] See Gratwick 1982b: 152-155 on this speech and Cato's oratorical style in general.
[231] In earlier statements about the future, either Marcus is not the subject of the verb: 1.2.3 (87,25-29); 1.2.6 (88,27-29) (see above, p. 163); or the verb is only understood: 1.2.7 (89,15-19).
[232] Birley 1987: 127-128.
[233] Champlin 1980: 93: 'Now that he is emperor, Marcus' anxiety is renewed, and Fronto's letter is intended to soothe his more general fears that he is losing his command of eloquence'.

The conclusion that this letter illustrates Marcus' own genuine concern depends necessarily on Fronto's paraphrase of the lost letter in which that concern was apparently expressed. As we have seen, each correspondent uses the other's words as a mirror to hold up to the addressee, but the image reflected is coloured by the sender's interpretation. Unfortunately we are unable to examine Marcus' own words (nor does the collection contain a response to Fronto's letter), and to depend on Fronto's representation of them may be unwise. These interpretations of the letter demonstrate Fronto's success at fashioning his ideal orator-emperor, obscured by the pretence of looking back on Marcus' rhetorical education.

Conclusion

In order to put Fronto's relationship with his imperial pupil into perspective, it may be useful to compare it with another pedagogical relationship in which the emperor is student. T. Whitmarsh has discussed the relationship between the philosopher Dio Chrysostom and Trajan within the context of *paideia*'s relationship to politics in the Roman Greek world during the Second Sophistic. Usually *paideia* has been seen to relate to politics only to the extent that it worked as an opiate to sedate the restless Greeks: the focus on the past allows them to accept their reduced role in the present.[234] Whitmarsh argues that *paideia* and pedagogical relations could be 'political' in a more immediate sense, though the political situation requires a complex and covert articulation of political ideas. By virtue of possessing *paideia* a speaker has access to rhetorical sophistication, which would allow him to generate nuances and subtexts that may have different meanings to different readers; in order to read power into writings of the Roman Greek world, one must be alert to the potential as well as to the literal meaning of language.[235]

Whitmarsh's reading of Philostratus' biography of Dio (in his *Lives of the Sophists*) demonstrates that, depending upon the perspective of the reader, Dio may be perceived either as a tool of imperial propaganda, whereby Trajan capitalizes upon Dio's return from exile and shows himself a new monarch who pays careful heed to the philosopher banished by

[234] Whitmarsh: 1998: 194.

Domitian,[236] or as having undermined Trajan's power because, not possessing *paideia*, the emperor is unable to follow Dio's rhetorical sophistication.[237] The emperor co-opts Dio's *paideia* in order to validate the 'new age';[238] or the emperor is manipulated because he is ignorant of *paideia*.

Philostratus does not present Dio as directly opposing Roman power, but presents the construction of the pedagogical relationship between philosopher and emperor as an uneasy process of negotiation, not a straightfoward expression of monarchical power. The instruction of the emperor is 'a complex business in which multiple positions are staked out and multiple roles are played'.[239] This reading also highlights the status of Philostratus' own *paideia*: 'Philostratus' prominent emphasis upon Trajan's non-comprehension might be interpreted as a self-referential moment, indicating the stratification of layers of interpretation, from the superficial through to the sophisticated. This constitutes a challenge to Philostratus' readers: can *you* read *this* text?'[240]

I suggest that there is a similar challenge in the letters exchanged between Fronto and Marcus, letters which likewise require close reading in order to reveal the hidden layers of meaning. But what makes this relationship particularly interesting is that Marcus is better able to *read* Fronto's coded language than Trajan is to read Dio's; and Marcus responds with similarly nuanced and manipulative rhetorical skill. As we have seen, for example, the exchange about Fronto's injured foot at *ad M. Caesarem* 1.2-3 is often read at face-value by historians as an outpouring of genuine affection between friends, but behind this coded language, Marcus undermines the authority of his rhetoric tutor by redefining him as Stoic, and Fronto sets things right again from his perspective, reintroducing eloquence as the basis for their relationship.[241] After Marcus' accession, Fronto attempts to reclaim the *auctoritas* of

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[235] Whitmarsh 1998: 194.
[236] Whitmarsh 1998: 202-203.
[237] Whitmarsh 1998: 208.
[238] Whitmarsh 1998: 203.
[239] Whitmarsh 1998: 210.
[240] Whitmarsh 1998: 210 (original emphasis).
[241] There is another pair of letters, not analyzed in detail here, in which the power relations between tutor and imperial student perhaps more closely parallel those between Dio and Trajan. At *M.Caes*. 3.2-3 Marcus Caesar writes Fronto to request that he be kind in court to Herodes, his opponent in an upcoming case. Fronto's response has been characterized by historians as extremely deferential and positively exuding a desire

the tutor behind the pretence of concern for the emperor's well-being or of reminiscing about their past together. But the emperor successfully decodes Fronto's language and deflects his bid for *auctoritas*, by reminding his former tutor that it is Marcus who sits in the position of greater power.

This exchange of selves is at once playful and coercive, which places it in contrast to the exchange between Pliny and Trajan, where, though there are glimpses of the jostle for control of the images of governor and emperor, the correspondents primarily confirm the mutual ideals of sender and addressee. Pliny, like Fronto, constructs images of his addressee with suit him, but unlike Marcus, Trajan happens to be more willing to accept those images. On the other hand, the letters of Cicero to and about Caesar may mean different things depending upon the perspective of the reader, and like Fronto's letters they require close reading to bring out the hidden meanings. For example, *ad Familiares* 13.15, the letter of recommendation sent to Caesar on behalf of Precilius, has been read by scholars either as an attempt to create an extraordinary example of a conventional letter form or as a defence against the charge that Cicero had taken part in an anti-Caesarian plot, meant to assure Caesar that the sender had learned the folly of challenging the dictator and would not do so in the future. However, as I argued in chapter two, one can also read in Cicero's letter an assertion of independence, the message that he will be swayed neither by the anti-Caesarians nor by the Caesarians, but will be his own man.[242]

Similarly, Symmachus' letters traditionally have been seen as overly artificial and reflecting an obstinate refusal to live in the present, or indeed, an obsession with a past which has no relevance to fourth century Roman culture. But beneath the seemingly overly polite language is lurking a political agenda concerned with maintaining the values of traditional Roman culture, including the material support of the state religion. The epistolary relationships between Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and Symmachus and their respective (imperial) addressees all involve a struggle to control the epistolary discourse and the images of sender

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to do what Marcus wants (e.g. Champlin 1980: 104-105), but I would argue that beneath the polite language, the message is in fact that Fronto will not alter the force of his performance in court, and that Marcus is manipulated into agreeing that what Fronto proposes is indeed what he wanted, when in fact it is quite the opposite.

[242] See ch. 1, pp. 78-84.

and addressee, but this struggle is obscured in some way. In the case of Pliny's letter, it is obscured by the strong impression of agreement between correspondents. In the case of the others, it is obscured by means of the features of and language appropriate to the particular letter form in which they write. The attempt to exert (epistolary) influence over the emperor is a complex task, which requires a subtle articulation of political ideas.

5

Letters to Valentinian II

In many practical ways Symmachus' *Relationes*, the collection of his official correspondence with Valentinian II during his tenure as urban prefect of Rome in 384,[1] is most comparable to Pliny's *Letters* 10: Symmachus is writing to the western emperor as an imperial magistrate stationed away from the seat of power; the *Relationes* are usually treated as archival material, as 'dispatches' or 'state papers' or 'reports' rather than as letters;[2] indeed the whole collection of Symmachus' correspondence is modelled on Pliny's, in structure if not in style and content.[3] But, like Cicero's correspondence, we have only one side of the exchange. Like all of our letter writers, Symmachus fashions an ideal self for sender and addressee, in ways both familiar from earlier chapters (e.g. paraphrase or quotation) and not yet seen. Like Cicero and Fronto, Symmachus attempts to enact political change in his letters to the emperor, and he depends in part upon his identity as orator (he was considered the Cicero of his time) to persuade.

What makes Symmachus' collection unique among the others, aside from the drastically different Empire in which he writes,[4] is the absolutely public nature of his official correspondence with the emperor. This creates a situation in which the sender has in mind a wider reading audience in every letter.[5] As urban prefect, Symmachus was expected to report to the emperor on city and Senate business, and so at times he is writing on behalf of the inhabitants of Rome or of the Roman Senate. The combination of this factor and the public status of these letters affords him the opportunity of creating and perpetuating ideological/political propaganda, citing the will of the people or of the Senate, in order to lend strength to his position with the emperor, but also to convince these groups that his stance is

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1 All dates in this chapter are AD unless otherwise noted.

2 I have not come across one reference to the collection as 'letters'; see, e.g. Barrow 1973: 15; Hedrick 2000: 41.

3 Cameron 1965 (against Merrill 1915 and Stout 1955) with 1967 addendum; followed by Matthews 1974: 66 and nn. 40-41; Reynolds 1983: 317; cf. Callu 1972(i): 19-22.

4 The first and second centuries were marked by a low level of centralized power and a high degree of local autonomy. By the end of the third century this pattern was disrupted by the gradual establishment of a centrally organized and expanded imperial bureaucracy. The Empire had been divided between two emperors since the descendants of Constantine came to power. Rome was no longer the capital; the centres of government were at Milan or Trier in the West, Constantinople in the East. See Kelly 2004: 1-7; Cameron 1993: 1-12; on the composition of the Senate and role of the senatorial aristocracy in this period see Heather 1998; Matthews 1975.

5 See Callu 1972(i): 17.

also theirs.[6] At the same time, Symmachus uses his named addressee(s) as a stand-in for others, and uses epistolary techniques to blend the identity of internal addressee with that of the indefinite external reader, thereby reaching out to the wider reading public in order to persuade them of the validity of his ideal definitions of emperor and prefect. Therefore, the *I-You* epistolary discourse is complicated in Symmachus by a multiplicity of parties involved in the communication; at times, he seems to operate in what we might call a *We-You* (pl.) discourse.

Symmachus' ideals are closely tied to the past; his goal, I shall argue, is to create cultural and political continuity between the distant past and present, and the strategies by which he attempts to accomplish this goal are particularly epistolary. Symmachus is primarily known as a pagan, and in general Symmachan scholarship has focussed on the role he may have played in the 'pagan revival' of the late fourth century. Until recently there was general consensus that this period saw a unified pagan resistance to Christianity (an idea supported in part by reference to Symmachus' religious conservatism),[7] the final demise of which was signalled by the defeat of the usurper Eugenius by Theodosius in 394 that resulted in the immediate and universal Christianization of the Roman senatorial class. Furthermore, Symmachus was thought to be the leader of a so-called 'circle of Symmachus', a group of elite western senators concerned with preserving classical Latin literature and the traditional state religion.[8] This account of the late fourth century has since been re-evaluated, and a group of revisionist historians have created a picture at the opposite extreme: of a Roman pagan elite ruled by apathy at the rise of Christianity;[9] of a model for the Christianization of Rome characterized by 'a fluid and relatively amicable coexistence' with paganism, arguing that Symmachus was not typical of his class;[10] and of no 'circle of Symmachus', since the

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[6] See Long 1996: 212-219; the propagandist requires a 'myth' to which the members of the group he aims to convince subscribe. Symmachus and others in his period evoke the 'myth of Rome', whereby mention of the city and its history will strike a particular note with their audiences (1996: 218).

[7] Salzman 2002: 136.

[8] Bloch 1945; 1963.

[9] Alan Cameron was the first to call for the re-evaluation; his argument is developed in Cameron 1977 and 1984.

[10] Salzman 2002: 136. For a summary and bibliography of the two views, see Hedrick 2000: 37-88, chapter three, 'Unspeakable Paganism?'. For the important arguments against a sudden and complete Christianization of the Roman senatorial class see Brown 1961; Barnes 1989, 1994 and 1995. For a summary of the various theories of Christianization, see Salzman 1992: 452-455.

primary text on which the idea was based was proved to have been written a generation later than originally thought.[11]

As noted by C. W. Hedrick, there has been a tendency to compartmentalize late fourth century culture,[12] and he rightly argues for a more holistic approach to the period, in which the various aspects of late antique western senatorial culture are treated as part of a comprehensive social system: 'Religion and war and politics and literature should not be treated as quarantined areas; they always impinge on each other and on other spheres of economic and social and political and intellectual behaviour'.[13] 'Compartmentalized' accurately describes much of the scholarship on Symmachus himself. In 1883 Symmachus' editor, O. Seeck, suggested that, though Symmachus would not attract readers for his own sake, one might refer to him on particular points.[14] As noted by J. F. Matthews, subsequent scholars have taken this advice with the result that Symmachus has seldom been treated on his own terms.[15]

This perhaps is true especially of the *Relationes*. The famous third *Relatio*, in which Symmachus argues for the restoration of the Altar of Victory to its original position in the Senate house at Rome, has received far more attention than any other single *relatio* in the collection, and it is treated in isolation from the others.[16] Furthermore, within the third *Relatio* itself, historians are generally interested solely in its religious arguments, to the exclusion of

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[11] Cameron 1966 proved that Macrobius' *Saturnalia* was written in the 430s rather than contemporaneously with Symmachus.

[12] Hedrick 2000: 50-51; Eugenius' usurpation, orginally viewed as a religious conflict, was tranformed into a purely political one. This in turn has affected the view of late antique paganism. In general, scholars have attempted to divide the 'public' practice from 'private' beliefs of the senatorial class, correlating the state cults practiced at Rome with the former and the oriental cults with the latter (see Matthews 1973; 1975: 362-363). Thus whatever attempts were made to maintain the traditional Roman religion are thought by some to have been motivated by non-religious (e.g. financial) concerns. For bibliography on the arguments related to economic self-interest see Salzman 1989: 352 n. 23; Cameron 1993: 156-157.

[13] Hedrick 2000: 50; Salzman 2002: 136 likewise calls for a moderate view between the two extreme accounts of late fourth-century history in the West.

[14] Seeck 1883: lxxiii: 'scriptorem ingenii tam pauperis pauci certe lecturi sunt, sed multi hic illic inspicient, ut singulas res exerpant'.

[15] Matthews 1974: 63-64. For the traditional assessment of Symmachus' works as useless to historian and literary critic alike, see Glover 1901: 150-153 and 165-170; Matthews 1974. The personal letters have been derisively described as no more than 'formal visiting cards' in many cases, but as Matthews 1974 has argued, while Symmachus would probably agree with this description, he would also be surprised at the negative assessment of their signficance. Symmachus maintains through his personal letters a complex system of traditional aristocratic *amicitia*. Salzman 2004 has shown (without reference to epistolarity) that Symmachus uses his letters in part to maintain relationships by means of epistolary mediation – a letter can make a visit for him; cf. Brown 1992: 46-47.

[16] Noted by Matthews 1973: 175, who attempts a fresh interpretation of *Relatio* 3 with reference to epigraphic evidence, but nevertheless is concerned with Symmachus' religious views. Salzman 1989 attempts a more comprehensive study of Symmachus' attitude to 'tradition'.

its broader political implications.[17] Because Symmachus' correspondence is one of the few texts providing evidence for pagan sentiment in the late fourth century, its religious elements have dominated, and as a result there has been no attempt to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the *Relationes* as a whole.

Whether or not Symmachus' letters should be taken as evidence for the religious attitudes of his class (or even of himself)[18] is questionable. The re-evaluation of the late fourth century has led to a more nuanced understanding of religious identity; there was a range of pagan and Christian sentiment and some overlap between the two.[19] Therefore, the label 'pagan' itself is problematic: paganism in this period is an implied reference and opposition to Christianity, and, paradoxically, Christian identity is dependent upon the exclusion and therefore existence of paganism; yet, 'paganism' also relates to a social reality and is more than simply 'not Christian'.[20]

Cultural historians have recently moved away from the idea that 'cultural identity'[21] is innate or corresponds to a 'fixed' reality; rather, (cultural and individual) identity is constructed within a set of relationships.[22] In late antiquity, and perhaps especially so, an important relationship for the construction of identity is that to the past,[23] and texts from this period display an openness in realigning and reappropriating older paradigms in the present, a novel, self-consciously revisionist perspective to constructions of identity and culture.[24] It is widely recognized that Symmachus (along with his aristocratic contemporaries) identified himself and his class with the past and with traditional Roman culture.[25] In fact, Symmachus was for a long time dismissed as irrelevant to his time because of what was perceived as an

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[17] Hedrick 2000: 41: 'This text came to be regarded as the characteristic statement of devotion to paganism in its declining years'. See, e.g. Bloch 1945: 219-220.

[18] See Matthews 1973: 189, who argues (against Robinson 1915 and Bloch 1945), that one must consider the third *Relatio*'s context, and given its public nature, one cannot assume that it provides evidence of the personal beliefs of its author.

[19] Hedrick 2000: 50.

[20] Hedrick 2000: 51-53; cf. Miles 1999: 10: 'Important late antique definitions such as "Roman", "Greek", "Barbarian", "Christian" and "pagan" are all deeply problematic: each has a myriad of potentially different and often contradictory meanings'.

[21] On defining the term see Goldhill 2001: 15-20.

[22] Miles 1999: 4; Hedrick 2000: 52-53. The Miles volume is among a growing body of work dedicated to cultural identity in antiquity; see, e.g. on athletics and Greek identity, König 2005; on Christian identity, Lieu 2004; on ancient views of Greek ethnicity, Malkin 2001; on Greek identity under the Roman Empire Goldhill, 2001 and Whitmarsh 2001; on elite Roman identity, Edwards 1993.

[23] Hedrick 2000: 52-53 refers to paganism's 'memory of identity', which is in conflict with and dependent upon its relation to the present.

[24] Miles 1999: 4-8.

[25] e.g. Salzman 2000; Cameron 1993: 156; Markus 1974: 8-9.

obstinate refusal to live in the present. While recently there has been acknowledgement of Symmachus' attempt to change the present by reference to the past,[26] in general the approach to the *Relationes* has continued to be compartmentalized and 'realist'.

It is misleading, I would argue, to treat the *Relationes* strictly as an 'archive' of the official dispatches sent from Rome to Milan during Symmachus' prefecture; if instead we adopt an approach to the text not concerned so much with 'reality' as with their epistolary form, it becomes clear that this is a text in which cultural identity is articulated. And each text in which cultural identity is articulated creates its own 'world' with its own parameters, which in turn is in competition with other, politically and ideologically charged, versions of the 'world'.[27] T. Whitmarsh sums it up this way:

> I take 'cultural identity', then, to be not the expression through material culture of a performed and self-evident social unit (a 'race' or an ethnos, for example), but a locus of continually evolving and continually challenged patterns of thought and language. It is not a single entity which is refracted through a number of individuals, but an inherently multiple set of languages and discourses: it comprises the vast mass of stories which are told either to give meaning and stability to the exterior world, or to challenge and transform that world.[28]

The aim of this chapter is to show that in the *Relationes* Symmachus makes a contribution to the competing cultural discourses in order to create stability and meaning, primarily by repairing continuity between the past and present. Roman identity, as defined by Symmachus, is articulated through a reconfiguration of Plinian political discourse by means of the epistolary strategies of self-fashioning used by Cicero, Pliny and Fronto. Like Cicero and Fronto, Symmachus' corrective agenda, in this case correction of the recent past, is obscured by something else. But rather than employing the disguise of a particular letter type, Symmachus hides his self-fashioning behind the requests and mundane business naturally contained in his letters to the emperor.

Just as cultural identity does not correspond to a 'fixed' reality, so epistolary image construction is inherently provisional. As noted in the preceeding chapters, epistolary communication is a precarious activity; there is always the possibility that a letter may be lost or intercepted, and as the letter is a product of absence, the addressee is not present to confirm the images created by the sender as in conversation. We have seen that Cicero, Pliny and Fronto all acknowledge this provisionality in one way or another: Cicero and Fronto

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[26] Salzman 1989: 356-357; Markus 1974: 9.
[27] Whitmarsh 1999: 18.
[28] Whitmarsh 1999: 32-33.

deliberately undermine their images, while Pliny builds tentativeness into his self-identity so as to allow Trajan to take the lead in shaping the ideal governor and emperor.

Symmachus likewise displays caution in addressing his emperor, but builds tentativeness into his self-portrayal in an even more pronounced way than Pliny. As noted above, Symmachus employs a *We-You*(pl.) epistolary discourse, claiming to speak on behalf of Rome and its inhabitants. He fashions an ideal prefect who is wholly defined by Rome, or, by 'old' Rome in particular and its community, which respects and values traditional Roman culture and fashions Symmachus accordingly. Thus, Symmachus goes farther than Pliny in depending upon another for his identity; rather than inviting his addressee to define him, he claims that an entire community has already defined him, and what is more, that community is also cited as the source of the ideal images of Valentinian II.

While this tentativeness reflects a strategy of caution, it is also in keeping with the creation of a 'world'. The aim of Symmachus' image construction is on a larger scale than our other letter writers: Cicero attempts to fashion an ideal self as an individual in a position of influence with those in power; Pliny's ideal governor works together with his ideal emperor for the the good of the province; Fronto attempts to reclaim a position of authority in relation to the emperor, likewise as an individual. But Symmachus is not just interested in fashioning the ideal prefect and emperor; he fashions an ideal Rome, the citizens of which value its past and its traditions, and an influential position for that community in realtion to the ideal emperor, who will be influenced and accordingly share Rome's values. As for himself, Symmachus fashions the prefect as the mouth-piece for Rome, and so he does not take a prominent role in his images as an individual.

When we approach the *Relationes* as letters and as a whole, we are able to see the development of this 'world' and the ways in which Symmachus uses the epistolary form in order to create it. The construction of his 'world' and the ways in which it is then enacted will be the subject of the first half of this chapter. In the second half, we shall examine evidence that Symmachus' images have come into conflict with another version of the 'world' and his attempts to reassert his ideals.

Brave New 'World'

The *Relationes* are not arranged in chronological order (one way in which 'reality' is obscured), and it is thought that Symmachus left them in the untidy condition in which we

find them.[29] It is difficult to ascertain what principle of arrangement – if any – may have been used. Letters concerning the same topic may or may not be placed together;[30] the letters addressed to the Eastern emperors are interpersed with the rest.[31] However, whether by chance or by design, the parameters of Symmachus' 'world' are set out at the beginning of the collection. In *Relationes* 1 and 2 Symmachus expresses his gratitude to the emperors for his appointment as urban prefect and establishes that they are responsible at least in part for the success of his tenure (having chosen him, they must support him).

It is in *Relationes* 3 and 4 that the ideal emperor and prefect are constructed. Both letters involve a request made on behalf of the Romans by the prefect, and the circumstances surrounding the request in the fourth *Relatio* parallel those surrounding the request in the third. In each case, the immediate request(s) put forward serves as the disguise, which obscures Symmachus' corrective agenda. In the first of these letters Symmachus introduces the historical paradigms to be taken up in the present, and, while explicitly remaining an obscure figure himself, he (indirectly) fashions the ideal self for Valentinian II. It is in the second letter that he turns to the construction of an ideal self-identity, though here too, Symmachus' self-fashioning is effected indirectly. These letters will be examined in detail, followed by a briefer look at some of the occasions on which Symmachus claims that his ideal is the 'reality'.

Rel. 3, July-September AD 384[32]

The subject of *Relatio* 3 is the Altar of Victory, originally installed in the Senate house by Augustus after the battle of Actium,[33] and the status of the priests and Vestal Virgins at Rome. These topics, I argue, are the pretext by which Symmachus obscures his agenda – he says one

[29] Symmachus' son undertook the publication of his letters shortly after his death in 403; see Vera 1981: lxxxix-xcv; Barrow 1973:15; Callu 1972(i): 18-19. On the editing of the correspondence, thought to have been split between Symmachus himself and his son, see McGeachy 1948; Croke 1976. There is disagreement about whether or not, or to what extent, political passages (potentially embarassing to Symmachus) may have been excised by his son.

[30] e.g. *Rel*. 4 and 20 on the prefect's mode of transport.

[31] The *Relationes* discussed in this chapter would have been of interest exclusively to the western emperor and sent to Milan only; but Symmachus addresses most of his letters to the joint-rulers of the 'united' Empire, Valentinian II (in the West) and Theodosius and Arcadius (in the East). See Vera 1981: lxxxiii-lxxxiv; Barrow 1973: 15.

[32] For each letter, I have listed the date suggested by Vera 1981: xcvii-xcviii. The letters are not arranged in chronological order, but some may be dated by internal evidence; for a general discussion of the chronology see Vera 1981: lx-lxvi; Barrow 1973: 15-17.

[33] Meant to celebrate the triumph of the Roman spirit over all that threatened it; see D.C. 51.22.

thing (restore traditional religious practice to Rome) while doing another: he attempts to create cultural and political continuity between the distant past and the present. As noted above, this is by far the most famous and most read of the *Relationes*,[34] and scholars have taken the text at face-value; that is, they have focussed on the topics disguising his image construction. The particulars of Symmachus' arguments relating to the maintenance of the state cults at Rome are well known and the episode (including Ambrose's response)[35] has received perhaps more than its due attention;[36] thus there is no need for further examination of the letter's account of paganism here.[37] Instead, I would like to consider the parameters in which Symmachus presents his arguments, or rather, to explore the ways in which the epistolary form is used by the sender to create his idealized 'world', a world in which political paradigms from the past are reconfigured and imposed upon the present.

This *relatio*, like the others, has not been treated as a letter,[38] but Symmachus uses particularly epistolary strategies of self-fashioning, some of which we have already seen in the collections of our other letter writers. I shall examine two important features of the letter, which reflect these strategies and contribute to the construction of Symmachus' 'world': first, the constuction of ideal models for the addressee, as images in a mirror; and secondly, the central (and complex) role played by epistolary mediation in this letter. It is by means of these features that Symmachus fashions both sender and addressee, but they also represent a strategy of caution, by which the sender disguises his image construction.

Symmachus creates his mirror images within the context of precedent, both of traditional Roman practice and of the emperor's imperial predecessors. While the sender's focus on precedent has been noted by scholars, the appearance of the emperor's predecessors

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[34] See above, p. 174-175.

[35] Ambr. *Ep*. 17 and 18; see Moorhead 1999: 125-127; Sheridan 1966: 196-205.

[36] Matthews 1975: 210-211 suggests that the episode has taken on greater significance than it merits, noting that it represents an 'uncharacteristically lucid episode in the untidy and unplanned process by which the Roman governing classes abandoned their patronage of the old forms of religion in favour of the new'; followed by Cameron 1977: 1 n. 1; Salzman 2002: 74. According to the reckoning of O'Donnell 1979, the episode stands out within Symmachus' writing as well; having catalogued references to religion in the letters, *relationes* and orations, he cites 100 references in all, and only 16 which he characterizes as 'significant' (see 1979: 169-171); see also Matthews 1974: 86-89.

[37] For the episode, see Edwards 2004: 206-209; Salzman 2002: 74-77; 1989; Freeman 2002: 234; Curran 2000: 206-208; Hedrick 2000: 41-42; Lançon 2000: 93-94; Moorhead 1999: 124-128; Long 1996: 215-216; Bradbury 1994: 128; McLynn 1994: 151-152; Armstrong 1984: 8; Croke and Harries 1982: 28-51, chapter two, 'The Debate on the Altar of Victory, AD 384'; Vera 1981: 12-23; O'Donnell 1979: 72-74; Matthews 1975: 205-211; 1973; Barrow 1973: 32-33; Sheridan 1966; Bloch 1963: 196-197; 1945: 219-220; Glover 1901: 154-155.

[38] Gnilka 1990: 464 refers to it as 'Symmachus' Rede'; see above, p. 172.

has not been examined in light of the letter form, nor explained as a result of anything except the facts of their actions in the past, either reflecting tolerance or intolerance of paganism. However, using a strategy familiar from Fronto's letters to Marcus Aurelius, Symmachus presents the emperor's ancestors as images in a mirror, which serve as models for Valentinian II. But, whereas Fronto blends the images of Marcus' ancestors with the previously constructred image of Marcus himself,[39] the images of Valentinian II's ancestors stand in for the emperor entirely. Symmachus does not construct an image of the emperor himself, instead focussing on his predecessors. This constitutes both a contribution to political continuity (one of Symmachus' main aims) and a strategy for success: by avoiding direct engagement with the emperor, Symmachus avoids creating an incorrect definition of him.

The second important feature of this letter, the role of epistolary mediation, complicates Symmachus' self-portrayal. We have seen the various ways in which Cicero, Pliny and Fronto attempt to bridge the gap between themselves and their addressees either so that the correspondents may have a conversation (verbal bridge) or so that they may be physically present with each other (physical bridge). Symmachus too attempts to bridge the gap (in both the verbal and physical sense) between himself and his emperor, but the parties included in the conversation/meeting are numerous. Once the historical paradigm to be adopted is conjured up in the opening of the letter, Symmachus names a physical setting for the delivery of a speech, and as the letter progresses the sender assembles his audience, which includes the parties whom he represents as prefect and the imperial predecessors of his addressee. Symmachus fashions himself as mediator between Rome and the Romans at one end of the communcation and Milan and the emperor at the other end. This allows Symmachus to address and attempt to persuade the wider public of the validity of his arguments,[40] but also represents another strategy of caution: like Pliny, Symmachus builds tentativeness into his self-portrayal; in fact, Symmachus does not appear in this letter as a distinct individual.

It is in these ways that the provisionality of epistolary image construction is manifest in this letter (and, as we shall see, in other letters). In the case that Symmachus' ideal model for the emperor and his interaction with Rome is rejected by Valentinian II, the prefect has

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[39] *de fer Als*. 3.1-6 (227-230); see ch. 4, pp. 135-139.

[40] As noted above, the inherently public nature of Symmachus' correspondence with the emperor provides an opportunity for persuasion of the wider public in addition to the internal addressee; see above, pp. 172-173.

been cautious not to shape (or challenge) the imperial directly, nor has he claimed his images as his own construction but attributes them to those for whom he speaks.

The dense opening sentence of *Relatio* 3 describes in obscure language the occasion for Symmachus' letter. It will be helpful to identify the historical events to which he refers, before turning to what others have had to say about the passage, and finally to my own interpretation (3.1): *Ubi primum senatus amplissimus semperque vester subiecta legibus vitia cognovit et a principibus piis vidit purgari famam temporum proximorum, boni saeculi auctoritatem secutus evomuit diu pressum dolorem atque iterum me querellarum suarum iussit esse legatum*. The first half of this sentence is a sweeping statement referring to 'vices subjected to the law' after the 'infamy of recent times'. This is thought to be a reference to the *decretum* issued by Valentinian II in the spring of 384, in which he ordered an investigation into alleged thefts from public temples at Rome.[41] It also becomes clear that *vitia* is in reference to the Emperor Gratian's anti-pagan legislation of 382 (including the removal of the Altar of Victory), which Symmachus and the pagans failed to have repealed by petition to the emperor.[42]

In the second half of the sentence, Symmachus describes the Senate's reaction to this development, which led to the present correspondence: in juxtaposition and antithesis with the clause describing 'recent times', is the clause describing the Senate's motivation to speak in the present, 'the precedent of a good era'. The verb *evomo* has an explosive tone, which is enhanced by the following clause, in which 'grief' is delayed until after the phrase 'suppressed for a long time'. The verb may be used in reference to natural phenomena (e.g. volcanic erruptions), and when it refers, as it does here, to speaking, it often reflects anger or enmity.[43] As soon as the Senate felt free to do so, they expressed their grief in an explosion.

The tone of this sentence may strike readers of Symmachus as distinctly uncharacteristic, coming from the man whose style has traditionally been thought of as highly artificial and excessively polite;[44] and Matthews once cited 'great formal courtesy' as the most impressive feature of the debate between Symmachus and Ambrose.[45] In general Symmachus

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[41] The pagan senator and praetorian prefect, Praetextatus, is credited with having convinced the emperor to take this action; see Vera 1981: 25; Barrow 1973: 113.

[42] See Curran 2000: 206; Vera 1981: 26. It was also about this time that Gratian refused the title of Pontifex Maximus. He was the first Christian emperor to do so, and none ever used it again; see Cameron 1968.

[43] *TLL*(v) 1071, 74; 1072, 58-80.

[44] See n. 15.

[45] Matthews 1975: 205.

is supposed to have used bland, timeless conventions of friendship to disguise points of disagreement, even with men of radically different temperment and conviction.[46] Matthews has since re-evaluated his assessment, and concluded that Symmachus also employs a 'language of enmity' (based on words such as *invidia*, *inprobi*, *aemuli*, *insidiae*, *mendacia*, *livor*),[47] by which he controls the impact of enmity by assigning personal motives, diverts blame and distracts attention from issues that might be involved.[48] Characterizing the metaphor in which the Senate vomits up their long-suppressed anger as 'violent,' and identifying the the 'recent times' as the 'harmless reign of Gratian', Matthews points out that Symmachus could not be confident of success in this petition. In the event that he failed (which he did), Symmachus' explanation of his failure in 382 to convince Gratian to repeal his anti-pagan legislation might, to say the least, seem tactless; the suggestion that *vitia* are not after all subject to law is not conciliatory.[49]

Indeed these are harsh words from Symmachus, but this passage contains more than an expression of opinion reflecting 'courage and outspokenness'.[50] Rather, this opening reveals the historical paradigm to be imposed upon the present: the contrast between the vices of recent times and the lawfulness of the present reflects Pliny's contrast between Trajan's predecessors and Trajan himself.[51] In the *Panegyricus* those predecessors (*hos proximos*)[52] are characterized in several contexts as ruled by *vitia*,[53] while Trajan is praised as the only ruler of recent memory not spotted by the proximity of vice;[54] furthermore he is praised for having confirmed the strength of the law, having shown a willingness even to subject himself to its authority;[55] and finally, Pliny asserts that it is the duty of citizens to express their *dolores* (as

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[46] Matthews 1986: 164, summarizing his argument in Matthews 1974; cf. Matthews 1975: 5-9.
[47] Matthews 1986: 175.
[48] Matthews 1986: 165; cf. Matthews 1988: 274-276 on Ammianus' treatment of the eunuchs at court.
[49] Matthews 1986: 167; cf. Barrow 1973: 15-16. Some seem to have difficulty believing Symmachus capable of this kind of forwardness. O'Donnell 1979: 73 characterizes the letter as an 'unusual product of the temperate and timorous pen of Symmachus', and, unwilling to give the sender credit for his apparent bravery, suggests that in fact it was Praetextatus who engineered Symmachus' bid to have the Altar of Victory restored to the Senate house (1979: 74). However, he bases this claim solely on the traditional assessment of the personal letters, arguing that the picture we get there is of the 'real' Symmachus: a 'thoroughly wearisome, fatuous and pompous' individual (1979: 69).
[50] Matthews 1986: 165 of Symmachus' private and official correspondence in general.
[51] Pliny's *Panegyricus* became the model for later panegyricists, as is reflected in Symmachus' panegyrics (see below, p. 210-210) and, as we shall see, in his *Relationes*.
[52] *Pan*. 11.4; cf. 47.1; 55.2; 2.1; 53.6; 72.4.
[53] *Pan*. 45.1; 47.1; 82.9; 18.1; 22.2; 39.2; 45.1; 50.2.
[54] *Pan*. 4.5-6; 83.2.
[55] *Pan*. 65.1; cf. 24.4; 34.2; 36.2; 60.3.

well as their joy) under the rule of a good emperor.[56] Thus, Pliny's ideal model provides the framework for Symmachus' 'world': a contrast between the past and the present, between predecessor(s) and current emperor, and accordingly between 'bad' emperor and 'good' emperor. Symmachus also attributes to Valentinian II's reign some of the characteristics of Trajan's (e.g. freedom of speech, living in a 'good' era).[57]

Into this framework are also incorporated elements of Ciceronian ideals, some of which were discussed in chapters one and two. In this opening passage, there is an echo of Cicero's *in Catilinam*: the presence of Catiline and his men is described as an illness suffered by the city;[58] Catiline is told to leave and 'purge the city' – *purga urbem*;[59] and at the beginning of the second speech, when Catiline has fled, Rome *pestem evomuerit*.[60] Furthermore, the *vitia* of Catiline, and his disrespect of the law, is a prominent theme,[61] in contrast with the virtues of Cicero himself and the city. Matthews has rightly recognized the two systems of language (expressing friendship or enmity) used by Symmachus: like Cicero, the sender categorizes individuals according to 'good' or 'bad' qualities and focusses on character (*ethos*/*mores*) in relation his political circumstances.[62] So, for example, in this passage the Senate has vomited up its illness, *dolor*, which was brought on by *vitia*, now 'purged by pious emperors'; and Valentinian II's reign is referred to as 'health-giving' several times as the collection goes on.[63] The pious, wholesome emperor is set in opposition with those ruled by vice.

Having established his historical framework, Symmachus begins to assemble his audience, by defining sender and addressee. The last emphatic position in the opening sentence is given to *legatum*, which is how the sender defines himself. This self-definition is elaborated upon in the following passage: (3.1-2): *cui ideo divi principis denegata est ab*

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[56] *Pan*. 53.6; cf. 76.3; 90.5. Freedom of speech is in general an imporant characteristic of Trajan's reign; see *Pan*. 66.2-4; cf. ch. 3, p. 108, 113.

[57] In the form of formulaic praise: (*vestri saeculi bonitas*) *Rel*. 5.1; 35.3; (*felix saeculum*) 7.1; 15.2; 17.2; 42; (*bona tempores*) 8.2; 12.5; 23.1; 46.1; (*saeculi humanitas*) 9.7; (*saeculi aequitas*) 20.1; 34.2; 48.5; (*digna temporibus*) 20.3.

[58] *Catil*. 1.31.

[59] *Catil*. 1.10.

[60] *Catil*. 2.2.

[61] *Catil*. 1.14; 1.22; 1.18; on the ultimate power of virtue over vice, see 2.25.

[62] See ch. 1, pp. 27-28. This opposition between the values of the 'good' and 'bad' is more prominent in *Rel*. 21, in which Symmachus defends himself against accusations of wrongdoing; see below, pp. 200-208. On Symmachus' concern with the *mores* of his correspondents in the personal letters, see Salzman 1989: 352-353.

[63] *salubre* (*praesidium*/*remedium*/*iudicium*): *Rel*. 18.2; 29.2; 40.6; *salubritas*: 8.2; 19.10; cf. *saluberrimus*: 27.1 (of Valentinian I); *salutariter* (*regitis*): 7.3; 8.4; *imperium salutare*: 34.13; 38.1; 9.4 (of Theodosius).

inprobis audientia, quia non erat iustitia defutura, ddd. nnn. imperatores. gemino igitur functus officio et ut praefectus vester gesta publica prosequor et ut legatus civium mandata commendo. This passage demonstrates the letter's capacity for complex communication between a multiplicity of parties, across great expanses of both space and time. Symmachus assigns to the sender a dual self, and each 'self' is located in a different time and addresses himself to a different addressee. The *present* Symmachus is urban prefect, reporting public business to Valentinian II; the *past* Symmachus, associated with the audience 'denied' him during the reign of the Gratian (in 382), is ambassador of the Roman Senate and citizens, delivering their complaints. As Symmachus presents it, neither sender (*I*) nor addressee (*You*) is either the direct source or target of the content of this letter. Rather, this is indirect communciation between the Roman Senate and citizens and Gratian, facilitated by the mediator Symmachus and delivered to a stand-in for the late Emperor Gratian, Valentinian II.[64]

Symmachus attempts to bridge the physical gap between Rome and Milan, between the Roman Senate and the imperial court, and the temporal gap between past and present, between himself and Gratian. Past and present are blended, and Symmachus takes the court of Gratian/Valentinian II as the setting for the delivery of the oration, which he was not allowed to deliver in 382, bringing together the Senate,[65] citizens and emperors as his audience. As we shall see, his claim that he speaks for the Romans is meant both to lend authority to his arguments (in a way comparable to Cicero's claim that he speaks for Pompey)[66] and to convince the very people who are supposed to be in support of Symmachus' message. At the same time, this is the extent of Symmachus' self-definition in this letter; he cautiously avoids laying claim to his message as his own.

Symmachus' characterization of the events of 382 reveals one of the ways in which the Plinian paradigm is reconfigured by means of a strategy used by Cicero for safeguarding

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[64] On this kind of mediation as an obstacle to communication, see Altman 1982: 24-25.

[65] At *Rel*. 3.2 Symmachus claims that the Roman Senate is completely united in support for his petition; this is denied by Ambrose, who claims that the majority of senators are Christians (*Ep*. 18.31). Scholars have attempted to explain the discrepancy between the two claims but have not come to a satisfactory conclusion. Sheridan 1966: 195-196 emphasizes the rhetorical purpose of both letters, pointing out that both may be exaggerating; cf. Jones 1963: 31-32. There is no way to know definitively what portion of the Senate is really represented by Symmachus in any of the *Relationes*; see Harries 1999b: 50; Sheridan 1966: 188-196.

[66] *Fam*. 1.7.4-6 (SB 18); see ch. 1, p. 27; 3.10.10 (SB 73); see ch. 1, pp. 41-42. Symmachus also relies up the emperor's father, Valentinian I, for *auctoritas*; see *Rel*. 3.19-20 (below, pp. 190-191); 21.4 (below, p. 205-206).

the character of the powerful figures with whom he associates himself. Just as Cicero acquitted Pompey and Caesar of blame in several instances of wrongdoing, so Symmachus deflects blame for the denial of his embassy from Gratian himself to the *inprobi*.[67] The 'bad' emperor in Symmachus' world is misled or mistaken. While it was desirable and possible to draw a stark contrast between Trajan and Domitian, Symmachus must find a way to account for the familial relationship between Valentinian II and his predecessor. The syntax in this passage also reflects an element of Cicero's version of the 'good'/'bad' dichotomy; the denial of the audience is expressed in a passive verb with the ablative of agent, in parallel construction and antithesis with the description of the the subjugation of faults to the law in the opening of the letter. The *inprobi* are set in opposition with the *principes pii* (3.1), and as the *Relationes* proceed, persons are associated with one or the other.

Having defined sender and addressee, Symmachus proceeds to hold up a pair of mirrors for the emperor, using the strategy employed by Fronto in the longest of the 'holiday' letters.[68] Each mirror reflects the image of one of Valentinian II's imperial ancestors and serves as model for the emperor. However, while Marcus' ancestors provided desirable models of moderation as they were, some of Valentinian II's ancestors are in need of adjustment before they may become 'good' models. The first predecessor described is Constantius II, who first ordered that the Altar of Victory be removed from the Senate house in anticipation of his visit to Rome in 357 (discussed further below). Because Constantius' decision to remove the altar did not stand (because he did not oppose its restoration sometime after his visit),[69] he provides a parallel to Gratian in Symmachus' 'mistaken' emperor/'good' emperor model.

Symmachus uses the 'correction' of Constantius' mistake to illustrate the benefits of correction of the past in two ways: (1) it demonstrates how Valentinian II can avoid becoming 'mistaken' himself; and (2) it demonstrates how continuity between imperial rulers can be created (3.4,6):

aeternitatem curamus famae et nominis vestri, ne quid futura aetas inveniat corrigendum ... cetera

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[67] See ch. 1 n. 69; cf. *Rel*. 4.1 (see below, p. 193); 21.2 (see below, pp. 202-203). In his *gratiarum actio* addressed to Julian, Mameritius accuses subordinates of 'poisoning the ears' of Constantius II against Julian while he was Caesar, thereby avoiding criticism of the emperor's predecessor (see Long 1996: 93-96); *Pan. Lat*. 3(11).4.4-5.2. According to Ambr. *Ep*. 17.10 it was a group of Christian senators who threated to abstain from Senate meetings if Symmachus and the embassy were allowed access to the emperor.

[68] Fro. *de fer. Als*. 3; see ch. 4, pp. 137-138.

[69] See Curran 2000: 192.

potius illius principis aemulemur,[70] *qui nihil tale esset adgressus, si quis ante se alius deviasset. corrigit enim sequentem lapsus prioris et de reprehensione antecedentis exempli nascitur emendatio.*

Correction of the past is a kind of textual correction: *corrigit*, *lapsus* and *emendatio* all suggest that process. As Hedrick notes, Symmachus proposes that more than the text/precedent is corrected in this instance: 'Symmachus begins with a felicitous reversal of the commonplace idea about correction: it is not only that errors are to be corrected; they also serve to correct those who encounter them'.[71] Thus, if Valentinian II corrects the mistake of Gratian (by restoring the Altar of Victory), he will be associated with the word in the first emphatic position – 'eternity' – rather than the word in the last emphatic position – 'must be corrected', words which place the 'good' emperor, whose decisions are eternal, in opposition with the 'mistaken' emperor, whose decisions are not.[72]

The process by which correction of the corrector works may be illuminated with reference to the role played by correction in the letters of Pliny and Fronto, where the correction of a text also entails the correction of the self of its author.[73] While for Pliny and Fronto epistolary exchange provides the opportuntiy for direct correction of the texts exchanged as well the selves presented therein, for Symmachus, this correction (like communication itself) is indirect. By correcting the erroneous precedent of Constantius, the self of Constantius is likewise repaired, and he becomes an appropriate model for Symmachus' addressee(s).[74]

Having corrected Constantius, Symmachus then creates a physical image of the former emperor and his relationship with Rome, an image to be emulated by Valentianian II/Gratian. He describes the late emperor's *adventus* at Rome in 357.[75] As S. MacCormack explains, the

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[70] On Symmachus' use of the jussive subjunctive in this letter see below, p. 188-188.

[71] Hedrick 2000: 177; this observation is made within a broader discussion of the theme of emendation in the letter rehabilitating the Elder Flavian in 431 (see 2000: 171-213, chapter six, 'Rehabilitating the Text: Proofreading and the Past').

[72] Christian letter writers were averse to addressing an earthly ruler as *aeternitas*, *numen*, or *perennitas*; see O'Brien 1930: 18.

[73] See ch. 3, pp. 111-114.

[74] Symmachus uses the language of textual correction in this context elsewhere; see *Rel*. 8.1: *agit igitur divinis sancitionibus vestris gratias ordo reverendus etiam nomine posterorum, quibus res publica emendata tradetur*; 17.1: *fidem meam convenit amor saeculi vestri et cura rei publicae, ne corrigenda dissimulem, ddd. imppp.* Though Domitian is not able to be corrected in this way, the correction of the evils of the past is a theme in the *Panegyricus*; *Pan*. 53.1; 46.6; 6.2. For Cicero, one of the faults of Catiline is that he would never 'correct' his own behaviour; *Catil*. 1.22.

[75] In celebration of his victories over Magnentius and Decentius and over the Amanni and of his *vicennalia*; for the visit see Curran 2000: 191-193; Edwards 1996: 97-99; Long 1996: 215 and n. 58; Matthews 1989: 231-235; MacCormack 1981: 39-45; Vera 1981: 35-36; Edbrooke 1976.

imperial *adventus* provided an opportunity for the expression of the ideal relationship between the emperor and a representative group of his subjects.[76] The visit traditionally comprised two distinct stages: the ceremonial entry into the city and afterwards an encounter with a group of citizens, by which the emperor was symbolically integrated into the community. A change of conduct on the part of the emperor once present in the city was an inherent part of the ceremonial arrival; in Ammianus' description of this particular *adventus*, Constantius shifts from a dignified, remote, immoble majesty to a more relaxed, friendly air, as he tours the city with members of the Roman Senate.[77]

In his description, Symmachus focusses on the second, intimate component of the imperial visit, which allows him to emphasize the importance of Rome and to create an image appropriately emulated by all of the members of his audience (3.7):

accipiat aeternitas vestra alia eiusdem principis facta, quae in usum dignius trahat. nihil ille decerpsit sacrarum virginum privilegiis, replevit nobilibus sacerdotia. Romanis caerimoniis non negavit inpensas, et per omnes vias aeternae urbis laetum secutus senaturm vidit placido ore delubra, legit inscripta fastigiis deum nomina, percontatus templorum origines est, miratus est conditores, cumque alias religiones ipse sequeretur, has servavit imperio.

Constantius is characterized as one of the community, surrounded (syntactically) by a 'joyful Senate' as he moves 'through all of the streets'; his face is 'calm'; he reads, inquires about and admires what he sees.[78] This reflects Pliny's description in the *Panegyricus* of Trajan's triumphal *adventus* at Rome in 99. Trajan is praised for the method of his entry itself, which was less grand than that of his arrogant predecessors,[79] and for the way in which, once in the city, he moved *sensim et placide*, allowing his subjects to walk and converse with him and for making himself accessible to all.[80] In Symmachus, the image of the citizen-king is not balanced out by what would be the image of a more majestic ruler, emphasizing the power of Rome.

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[76] MacCormack 1981: 40.
[77] MacCormack 1981: 42-43.
[78] He was so impressed, in fact, that paganism at Rome appears to have enjoyed special status following his visit until the measures taken by Gratian; see Curran 2000: 192. Even so, Edbrooke 1976 cautions that the visit should not be taken to signal a 'reconciliation' between the Christian emperor and the pagan aristocracy, as some have argued (for bibliography, see 1976: 40 n. 2).
[79] *Pan*. 22.
[80] *Pan*. 23-24.

It is Constantius' admiration of the city of Rome and her customs which the addressee is to emulate;[81] the city itself, like the decisions of the 'good' emperor, is eternal (*aeternitas*/*aeterna urbs*).[82] But it is not only Valentinian II who is to respect Rome in this way. At the beginning of this passage, Symmachus uses the jussive subjunctive, 'let your Eternity accept...', which parallels the jussive in the earlier passage concerning correction, 'let us emulate...' (*aemulemur*);[83] both refer to the good policies of Constantius. The first person jussive expresses self-exhortation or resolve, and, within Symmachus' *We-You* (pl.) discourse, this is an exhortation reflecting the resolve of the Roman Senate and citizens to emulate Constantius' policies of toleration. The use of the third person jussive, instead of an imperative, to exhort the emperor is likewise in keeping with Symmachus' broader communicative goals: it is an expression of general instructions or precepts to an indefinite addressee. Therefore, his dual addressee, along with his wider reading audience, are urged to admire Rome as Constantius did, and as a fellow-citizen, he is an appropriate model for the entire audience. It is by means of the plural and of the jussive subjunctive in this letter that the address is generalized so that the specificity of the individual addressee falls away.[84] This also reflects Symmachus' caution: the targets of his message are addressed only indirectly, making it difficult to pin down Symmachus or his stake in the message.

Before proceeding to the second mirror-image, Symmachus expands the group for whom he speaks (and his audience) by two parties, but I shall focus only on the first.[85] Having conjured up the physical image of the city, Symmachus bridges the physical gap between Roma herself and the emperor. He calls on the personified Roma (as if present in the

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[81] Amm. 16.10 gives a more elaborately detailed description of the visit and Constantius' amazement at what he saw; it has been suggested that his aim was to convince Theodosius the Great, during whose reign Ammianus' history was composed, to favour Rome and respect its traditions (Laqueur 1930: 35; followed by Edbrooke 1976: 57).

[82] Rome is the only geographical location described in any detail in *Rel*. 3. This is in keeping with the prominence of ancient sites throughout his correspondence; Salzman 2004 has shown that one can identify Symmachus' priorities in his geographical descriptions in the personal letters, where only ancient sites are described in detail, while the contemporary seats of imperial power are at most mentioned. The appropriation of ancient sites is also a feature of late antique literature; on Prudentius' use of the Roman arena within a Christian context, see James 1999.

[83] *Rel*. 3.6; see above, p. 186.

[84] See Altman 1982: 91. The remaining occurrences of the jussive are as follows: *faciat* and *aversentur* (3.3); *aemulemur* (3.6); *accipiat* (3.7); *putemus*, *utar* and *vivam* (3.9) (see below, p. 189); *absint* and *augeatur* (3.12); *dictent*, *sciant* and *delectet* (3.13); *putet* (3.15); *faveant*, *defendant* and *colantur* (3.19). This strategy is also employed in *Rel*. 4 (see below, pp. 194-195); 21.2 (see below, pp. 204-205).

[85] The second is the 'entire Roman people': *cuncta Romani generis* (3.15).

audience) to speak on her own behalf, diminishing further his own role in the communication (3.9-10):

Romam nunc putemus adsistere atque his vobiscum agere sermonibus: optimi principum, patres patriae,[86] *reveremini annos meos, in quos me pius ritus adduxit! utar caerimoniis avitis, neque enim paenitet! vivam meo more, quia libera sum! hic cultus in leges meas orbem redegit, haec sacra Hannibalem a moenibus, a Capitolio Senonas reppulerunt. ad hoc ergo servata sum, ut longaeva reperhendar? videro, quale sit, quod instituendum putatur; sera tamen et contumeliosa est emendatio senectutis.*

Using the first person plural *putemus*, internal and external addressees are blended again, and he bids his assembled audience (Senate, citizens, emperors) to imagine Roma before them pleading her own case.[87] The city of Rome remained conceptually important to imperial ideology in late antiquity, and Symmachus is not unique in depicting Rome addressing the emperor;[88] while these passages may be intended to honour the imperial, they also imply the priority of Rome herself as the repository of authority.[89] By associating himself with the city, Symmachus lends *auctoritas* to his argument, just as Cicero enhanced his own *persona* by identifying himself with the state.[90]

As noted by M. Edwards, Symmachus personifies Rome as Cicero did in the Catilinarian orations, but, he argues, unlike Cicero's strong, angry Roma,[91] Symmachus' Roma reflects an 'enfeeblement of the Roman spirit', this 'white-haired weakling, flaunting the trophies of remote antiquity and pleading the rights of age'.[92] But Symmachus has good

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[86] These are old titles for the emperor; *optimus* was an 'unofficial' title for Trajan (Rees 2001: 160) and *pater patriae* goes back to Julius Caesar (see Roller 2001: 249), while late antique Christian letter writers use *optimus* of bishops and *pater* as a term of respect when used by one of lower rank to one of higher rank, and as a term of affection among those of equal rank (see O'Brien 1930: 85 and 110).

[87] Cf. Fro. *de fer. Als*. 3.8 (231,7-9); see ch. 4, p. 139. On the length of Roma's speech within the text, see Gnilka 1990; I have followed Vera 1981.

[88] Cf. Amm. 20.5.10 (Rome addresses Julian in a dream); *Pan. Lat*. 7 (6).10.5-11.4 (addresses Maximian); 2 (12).11.3-7 (addresses Theodosius); on the importance of Rome see Amm. 14.6.5-6. On the use of prosopopoeia in panegyric, see Russell 1998: 31.

[89] Ando 2000: 45; cf. Long 1996: 212-219, who discusses this passage as an example of Symmachus' evocation of the 'myth of Rome' and gives further examples from other texts; Fuhrmann 1968: 549-550 compares the views of Symmachus and Ammianius on the role of Rome in the Empire.

[90] See ch. 1, p. 10; cf. *Rel*. 2.1.

[91] *Catil*. 1.18.

[92] Edwards 2004: 206-207. He compares Ambrose's image of Rome (*Ep*. 18.7) in the bishop's response to Symmachus' letter (2004: 208). It would be beyond the scope of this study, but worthwhile to examine Ambrose's articulation of Roman identity as Christian in his half of the debate on the Altar of Victory (*Ep*. 17 and 18); for he takes up the same themes as Symmachus (in a point for point counter-argument) in order to redefine *Romanitas*. This letter, like Symmachus' is treated as something other than a letter (see, e.g. Liebeschuetz 2004: 103). Prudentius paraphrases *Rel*. 3.9 at *c. Symm*. 2.83-90; then at 2.649-768 he has Roma deliver the oration Symmachus ought to have had her deliver.

reason to emphasize the age of the city: the last emphatic position is given to the phrase 'correction of old age', described as 'late' and 'insolent'.[93] This echoes the theme of correction from above, and old Rome is placed in opposition with Constantius' decision on a 'new matter' (*in re nova*).[94] Thus, Symmachus refines his model, making a distinction between the distant past (ancient custom – *more*), which is to be emulated,[95] and the recent past, which is in need of correction.

We now turn to the second mirror in Symmachus' pair reflecting images of the emperor's ancestors. This time, the image is of Valentinian I, who provides an image which would be appropriately emulated as it is. Symmachus employs his ideal model at the same time that he plainly states his request that state religion be restored to its former status (3.19-20):

eum religionum statum petimus, qui divo parenti numinis vestri servavit imperium, qui fortunato principi legitimos suffecit heredes. spectat senior ille divus ex arce siderea lacrimas sacerdotum et se culpatum putat more violato, quem libenter ipse servavit.

Pressure is brought to bear on Valentinian II in this request by the vast group from which it emanates; the 'we' in 'we ask ...' includes not only the Senate and citizens of Rome, but also the city of Rome herself and the entire Roman people.[96] Further pressure is immediately applied through the connection drawn between the status of state religion and the success of Valentinian and his heirs, and in turn between that sucess and Valentinian's preservation of state religion;[97] this is reflected in the repetition of *servo*: each safeguarded the other.

The image of Valentinian in a citadel the stars looking down on Rome[98] serves two purposes: (1) Valentinian is held up as the ideal model for the addressee, a figure who recalls the Ciceronian definition of the 'good' statesman (in the *Somnium Scipionis*)[99] and whose status as an elder (*senior*) is emphasized, in keeping with the value attached to age; and (2) Valentinian joins Symmachus' audience and, like Roma and the Romans, is associated with Symmachus' case and with ancient custom (*more*), thereby endowing the sender with further

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[93] Cf. *Rel*. 9.7, where Roma has become young and vigourous again.
[94] 3.6: *fas fuit, ut parens ille clementiae vestrae in res adhuc nova non caveret invidiam ...*
[95] Salzman 1989: 351: 'In short, antiquity alone is adequate reason for continuing pagan practice'. Cf. *Rel*. 5.2; 7.1; 8.1-2; 9.2; 15; 42; 45; 47.1.
[96] See n. 85. The same request is made at 3.3, at which point the Senate and Roman citizens have so far been named as fellow-senders.
[97] On Valentinian I's reputation for toleration see Curran 2000: 198-203; Cochrane 1957: 292-317.
[98] Cf. Amm. 25.3.22 (of Julian); Claud. *III Cons. Hon*. 107, 167 (of Theodosius).
[99] Cic. *Rep*. 6.11; 6.13; 6.16; Macr. *Somn. Scip*. 1.4; cf. ch. 1, pp. 17-18.

auctoritas and persuasion.[100] In order to realize the same ideal as his father and eventually join him among the stars, Valentinian II must respect the precedent of toleration set by Valentinian; and the former emperor is watching. Nor is Valentinian's religious toleration the his only worthy policy; as the collection proceeds, the exhortation to emulate him is extended to a variety of issues.[101]

As we have seen in chapter four, Fronto and Marcus often conclude their letters by defining either the sender, addressee or both, giving emphasis to a self-definiton or to a definition of the other. One might expect Symmachus to conclude *Relatio* 3 with a clear definition of Valentinian II, according to the ideal models he has already presented; instead Symmachus focusses on the remaining predecessor in need of correction – Gratian. (3.20):

praestate etiam divo fratri vestro alieni consilii correctionem; tegite factum, quod senatui displicuisse nescivit. siquidem constat ideo exclusam legationem, ne ad eum iudicium publicum perveniret. pro existimatione est temporum superiorum, ut non dubitetis abolere, quod probandum est, principis non fuisse.

Having built up support for his arguments as the letter progressed, by using the jussive for exhortation, this direct command, expressed in two of the four imperatives in the entire letter,[102] has the weight of the will of the Roman Senate and people, Roma and Valentinian. The direct parallel between Constantius and Gratian is drawn here, as Gratian is afforded the same defence as his predecessor: each was unaware of the unpopularity of his decision in the Senate and among the people.[103] Now that the embassy blocked from Gratian has been able to deliver its message, Valentinian II has the opportunity to do what Gratian would have done had he heard Symmachus in 382. And just as the correction of Constantius' mistake tranformed him into a 'good' model for his successors, the correction of Gratian's mistake will likewise improve the assessment of his reign.[104]

J. Long describes Symmachus' goals in this letter as 'obvious and direct',[105] and certainly, his immediate requests are that. But scholars' narrow focus on the concern with the status of state religion in this letter (i.e. on the sender's pretext) has resulted in a 'flat' reading

[100] See n. 66.
[101] See (in reference to particular decisions of Valentinian I, which ought to remain in force) *Rel*. 14.2-4; 34.4, 6 (below, p. 209 and n. 184); 48.4-5; cf. (praise of Valentinian I) 27.1; 30.3-4.
[102] The others are *praestate* at 3.4 and *consulite* at 3.18; for occurrences of the jussive see n. 84.
[103] See n. 94.
[104] There are other instances in which it is a decision of Gratian in need of correction; see *Rel*. 4.1 (below, p. 193); 29.1.
[105] Long 1996: 218.

of the text, when in fact its goals are multi-layered and complex. Symmachus is doing more than simply stating the 'routine' arguments for maintaining the state religion;[106] he has constructed a 'world' in which those arguments will be successful, (indirectly) fashioning an emperor who will readily oblige him and a *populus Romanus* that does and will continue to emulate the traditions of old Rome. This is accomplished by an complex act of communication, in which sender (*I*) is deliberately (ill-)defined as mediator speaking for large group of supporters, who become co-senders (*We*), and addresses a dual addressee (*You* (pl.)), which allows for delivery of a message to the broader public as well as the emperor(s). Symmachus' tentativeness, in his avoidance of clear definitions of sender and addressee as individuals, reflects caution, but it also serves his goals and bolsters his arguments.

Symmachus has done much in this letter to bridge the physical gap between Rome and Milan, creating the illusion of proximity; this is accomplished through the creation of the image of the delivery of a speech to an audience comprised of the vast group of his supporters. While this letter may appear to be no more than or no different from a speech, it is the letter form and, perhaps paradoxically, the distance between sender and addressee that allows Symmachus to claim such broad support. There are advantages to absence – Valentinian II is not able to look around him during Symmachus' speech to confirm or disprove the presence of the audience assembled along the way. We know that this letter was 'intercepted' by Ambrose,[107] and the vigour of his response perhaps indicates the force of Symmachus' representation of himself standing in for a large and ancient (and therefore authoritative) community.

Perhaps the lack of engagement with Valentinian II himself is an indication that he is not yet in need of correction, and as noted in the introduction to this chapter, he was a relatively new and certainly very young emperor. But there is another reason for Symmachus' focus on the correction of the emperor's predecessor: Gratian is the missing link between the corrected Constantius and ideal Valentinian and Valentinian II. Symmachus is interested in a future that reflects the past, or in a future in which there is respect for traditional Roman culture, and in order to repair the connection between past and future, the behaviour of Gratian relating to state religion must be corrected. The Altar of Victory is

[106] Bradbury 1994: 128 asserts that blaming intolerant policies on advisers and arguing that toleration was the policy of the best emperors of the past were techniques 'routinely used by pagans'.
[107] See n. 35.

much more than an altar; it is a symbol of respect for traditional Roman cultural values and practices. And Gratian's action in removing the altar, if left uncorrected, creates a breach in the continuity between the time going right back to Augustus and the present under Valentintian II. As we shall see, Symmachus will continue to suggest corrections to the recent past so as to repair that breach.

Rel. 4, AD 384-385

In this letter Symmachus makes another request, the granting of which would reflect the current emperor's respect of Rome and of its traditions and correct a mistake of the late Gratian. Specifically, during the previous reign, Gratian had decided that the urban prefect should ride in a four-wheeled enclosed carriage, a *carruca*, on official occasions. Symmachus writes to ask that the carriage be done away with, as it not in keeping with the dignity of the post of urban prefect. While the demise of the carriage represents his immediate goal, this request also allows Symmachus to attempt another correction of the past so as to repair the breach in continuity, and it provides an opportunity to fashion an ideal identity for himself as prefect. The carriage itself is simply the pretext, or disguise, behind which is lurking Symmachus' agenda of self-fashioning, and it is the sender's self-definition that will be the focus of my attention.

As in the previous letter, Symmachus begins by describing the reason for his letter, and, aside from the details of his request (removal of the carriage instead of restoration of the Altar of Victory), the situation presented in this opening sentence is identical to the one at the beginning of *Relatio* 3. In both cases, Symmachus, for some reason, missed the opportunity to discuss a request with Gratian himself during his reign, and as in the previous letter, Symmachus attempts to bridge the gap between himself and Gratian by means of the late emperor's stand-in, Valentinian II (4.1); blame for Gratian's precedent is deflected from Gratian himself to his advisers (4.1);[108] Symmachus claims to be speaking on behalf of Roma and her inhabitants (4.2-3). In both cases, then, Symmachus employs a *We-You* (pl.) epistolary discourse, and neither sender nor addressee is distinct or well defined as an individual.

[108] For further examples of deflection see n. 67.

The significant difference between the letters is that while in *Relatio* 3 the sender was defined only as mediator, in this letter he is the subject of self-fashioning. At the end of the first sentence, Symmachus sets up an opposition between what the prefect ought to be (honest) and what he ought not to be (a flatterer).[109] However, as the letter proceeds, this assertion of self is filtered through the community whom Symmachus represents – the Roman people and Roma herself. This citizenry and city have been educated by historical *exempla*,[110] which illustrate first what the urban prefect ought not to be (4.2-3), an arrogant tyrant,[111] and finally what he ought to be (4.3), an unambitious, fellow-citizen.[112] Three negative *exempla* are presented from the perspective of these parties, who are said to disapprove of *externa miracula* (4.2) and *inritamentum superbiae* (4.3), respectively. The 'good' *exemplum*, Publicola (sixth century BC consul), is set in antithesis with the 'bad' *exempla* (separated by *at contra*), creating an opposition that parallels the one at the beginning of the letter.

The carriage is associated with the arrogant, flattering prefect, and Symmachus indirectly defines himself as another Publicola, who respects the authority of Rome and her citizens.[113] Thus, even when Symmachus articulates a self-definition, he does not claim it as his own image, and so in the case that the response to Symmachus' ideal prefect is a negative one, the emperor has rejected the defintion constructed by the community of Rome, not by the prefect himself. Here again Symmachus takes advantage of the distance between himself and Valentinian II, constructing an image of Rome, which cannont be disproved by the emperor in person.

That Symmachus *and* his co-senders consider this a matter of 'character' is made explicit in the closing of the letter (4.3): *ergo moribus potius quam insignibus aestimemur. non culpamus novum beneficium, sed bona nostra praeferimus. submovete vehiculum, cuius cultus insignior est; illud maluimus, cuius usus antiquior*. There is a concentration in this

[109] 4.1: ... *qua praefectum vestrum decet fidem praeferre blanditiis*.
[110] Long 1996: 216.
[111] Represented by (1) Salmoneus, who pretended to be Zeus and had torches flung to imitate lightening as he rode in his chariot (Apoll. 1.9.7); (2) Tarquin the Proud (last king of Rome), whose conduct, according to Livy, was worthy of his name (Liv. 1.48-60); and (3) Camillus, who, in 396 BC rode into Rome in a chariot drawn by four white horses; the people thought him guilty of a 'certain anti-republican arrogance, and even of impiety' (Liv. 5.23).
[112] Represented by Publicola, whose lowering of the *faces*, the emblem of authority, before mounting the platform to address the people was seen as an admission that the majesty of power was vested in them rather than in himself (Liv. 2.8).
[113] This self-definition is no doubt constructed as much for the benefit of the parities Symmachus claims to represent as for the emperor; on the importance of maintaining good relations with the *populus Romanus* for the senatorial aristocracy, see Matthews 1974: 70-73.

passage of first person plural verbs,[114] and as Long suggests, the historical traditions cited by the sender have 'expressed and shaped a character shared by Symmachus, his Roma, and the Roman people, probably all included in the first-person plural of the final injunction'.[115] This passage also contains a further three antitheses, to parallel the two already cited: 'character' in opposition with 'oranments'; 'the novel favour' in opposition with 'our good things'; and 'more spectacular' in opposition with 'more ancient'. The order in which the first is presented ('good' then 'bad') is reversed in the last opposition, so as to give the first and last emphatic positions to 'character' and 'more ancient'. As in *Relatio* 3, the ideal Roman character consists of emulating the distant past, and this is valued by Roma and her citizens, as well as by Symmachus himself.

Relationes 3 and 4 work together in order to create ideal selves on either end of the exchange between Rome and Milan and to set out the parameters of Symmachus' idealized 'world'. We might think of this pair of letters as Symmachus' version of one of the coins in Pliny's treasury:[116] each side containing an image of emperor and prefect, to be replicated and sent back and forth between Rome and Milan. Symmachus has provided Valentinian II with a guide for conducting the rest of their correspondence, having shown him who sender and addressee are. Those images, though, have not been constructed by either sender or addressee. Whereas Trajan takes the central role in defining the correspondents in his exchange with Pliny, neither Symmachus nor Valentinian II takes that role in the *Relationes*; instead, it is the community of Rome which is called on to define the ideal prefect and emperor.

Signs of Success: A Cancelled Carriage and 'Strenuous' Strenae

For much of the collection, there is an appearance of success in Symmachus' attempt to impose stability upon the exterior world by repairing continuity between distant past and present. We know, for example that the emperor agreed to dismantle the carriage,[117] but the extent to which this does or does not constitute 'real' success depends in part upon what is meant by 'success'. There are two levels at which it operates within Symmachus' collection:

[114] Four within three lines of text, compared to only one other such verbal form in the whole of the rest of the letter (*moramur* at 4.2).
[115] Long 1996: 216.
[116] See ch. 3, pp. 114-115.
[117] In *Rel*. 20 Symmachus writes about returning the silver already acquired for the *carruca* to its rightful owners.

(1) at the level of his immediate requests (his 'obvious and direct' goals);[118] and (2) at the level of his broader political and cultural goals, whereby the emperor would take up the identity constructed for him and cultural continuity would be restored between past and present.

About *Relatio* 4, Long asserts that Symmachus expected his evocation of Roman tradition to admonish the emperor, and he suceeded.[119] But, from Symmachus' perspective, he did not just convince the emperor to get rid of a carriage; the carriage is a symbol of something much bigger. Just as the Altar of Victory is a symbol of traditional Roman cultural and of respect for that culture, the *carruca* is a symbol of the opposite. Within Symmachus' 'world', doing away with the carriage means that the emperor has approved the prefect's articulation of Roman culture and his ideal identity, both presented through the filter of the larger community at Rome. Whether the emperor is aware of the implications of his relenting or whether he was simply happy to save the expense related to the carriage is anyone's guess.[120] In any case, it creates the appearance (or perhaps illusion) of success; within the parameters set by the sender, the emperor has willingly participated in the corrective agenda aimed at the reign of his predecessor.

In this section I would like to highlight briefly a few instances where Symmachus operates as if his ideal political model has been enacted, confident that the emperor is participating in the traditional political discourse which he favours. There are letters among the *Relationes* in which Symmachus manipulates an exisiting (and in some cases long-established) occasion for communication with Milan in order to demonstrate the ways in which Valentinian II has lived up to the ideal identity constructed for him in *Relatio* 3.

Rel. 13, between May/June and November AD 384; and Rel. 15, end of AD 384

This pair of letters concerns two occasions on which the urban prefect was obliged to communicate with the emperor on behalf of the Senate. These were the celebration of the emperor's *decennalia*, for which the emperor was presented with a gift from the senators,[121] and the traditional exchange of gifts between Senate and emperor to celebrate the new year.

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[118] See above, p. 191.
[119] Long 1996: 216.
[120] In any case Symmachus' 'success' in this matter was short lived: the *carruca* did become the regular conveyance of the urban prefect (Barrow 1973: 9).
[121] Celebrated 22 November 384; see Barrow 1973:82-83.

Relationes 13 and 15 were written to accompany these 'gifts', which were only nominally voluntary. The amount to be paid to celebrate the emperor's *decennalia* was indicated in advance, and regularly increased on each occasion,[122] and in the case of the exchange of *strenae* to celebrate the new year, it was the Christians in particular who were compelled to participate; for they did not approve of the practice's connection with paganism.[123] Symmachus claims that these gifts are bestowed upon the emperor because, as is recognized by the entire Senate, he has lived up to the ideal identity constructed for him by the sender as an emulator of Valentinian and corrector of Gratian.

In *Relatio* 13 Symmachus uses the regular increase in the required payment in order to reiterate the constrast between the emperor and his predecessor, pointing out that the gift being offered to Valentinian II is larger than that offered to either Valentinian and Valens or Gratian *and* claiming that this increase is due to the Senate's love for the current ruler (13.2): *nam divis parentibus tuis ob decennium singulis minor summa decreta est; etiam divus frater mansuetudinis tuae, cum tertium lustrum aevi imperialis exigeret, parciore munificentia honoratus aderitur. nunc in amorem tuum studia nostra creverunt*. Rather than simply stating that Valentinian II has received more than his predecessors, Symmachus constructs a three part comparison: between Valentinian II and his father, between Gratian and his father, and finally between the two brothers. This allows the sender to emphasize the sharp contrast between Valentinian II and Gratian (with *nunc* in the emphatic position between them, following two comparatives between the others), the latter of whom is esteemed less than his father and even less than his brother.

In *Relatio* 15, having emphasized the ancient status of the tradition of exhanging *strenae* in the opening,[124] Symmachus focusses on the word *strena* itself, and uses it to reinforce the continuity between the distant past and the future and to draw a connection between the emperor and the urban prefect. He begins by attributing to the tradition a positive quality shared by the emperor (15.1): *nomen indicio est, viris strenuis haec convenire virtute atque ideo vobis huiusmodi insigne deberi, quorum divinus animus magis testimonium vigilantiae quam omen expectat*. In the relative clause, the adjective *strenuus*, 'keen', 'active', is ascribed to the emperor, and because he is 'strenuous', he is owed *strenae*, which

[122] See Symm. *Ep*. 2.57 and *CTh*. 12.13.
[123] August. *Serm*. 198.2; Salzman 1989: 353; Barrow 1973: 90.
[124] Symmachus attributes the origin of the custom to the Sabine King Tatius (15.1); see Barrow 1973: 238.

in the previous sentence have been associated with the ancient goddess Strenia, who brings luck.

In the closing of the letter Symmachus completes the connection to the future and to the urban prefecture (15.3): *maneat aevum talis circa vos usus officii et honorem clementiae vestrae interminus annorum recursus instauret. libenter strenis sollemnibus praefectura fungetur strenuis deferenda*. He goes so far as to hope that the tradition will go on 'endlessly', and in the last sentence the *strenae – strenuus* connection is repeated, this time in reference to the office of the urban prefect. The prefecture must be entrusted to someone who is 'strenuous' and therefore someone who is in favour of giving *strenae*, and therefore respects the ancient custom of Rome, as does the 'strenuous' emperor.

In these letters, and others like them,[125] Symmachus manipulates an existing situation in order to reinforce his ideals, by claiming 'success' (in the second, broader sense). In both cases, as in the letters already discussed, Symmachus presents his message as emanating from an united Senate rather than from the sender himself, eager to demonstrate their loyalty towards (*promptus obsequii*), affection for (*indicatur adfectio*) and devotion towards (*devotio*) the emperor.[126] This allows him to fashion a Roman Senate that likewise approves of the sender's definitions of emperor and prefect. In Symmachus' 'world' these traditions persist because the Senate respects them and because the 'gifts' are deserved by a worthy emperor.

Things, however, do not always go Symmachus' way. We saw in chapter 3 that at times Pliny does not manage to maintain the balance between tentativeness and confidence, which resutls in a correction from the emperor in response.[127] Likewise, there is evidence that Symmachus does not manage always to tread cautiously enough to avoid correction from Valentinian II. For example, in *Relatio* 17 Symmachus complains that the junior magistrates appointed at Rome before Valentinian II came to power are of a substandard quality and asks that in future better men be appointed. In the response (*CTh*. 1.6.9) Symmachus is reprimanded for questioning imperial judgment, which constitutes sacrilege.[128] This exchange provides an example of an occasion on which Symmachus emerges as an individual in order to give his opinion, and is reproached in response. While often, as in this case, we depend

[125] e.g. *Rel*. 8, in which Symmachus praises the emperor for having restored to Senate proceedings the *vetus forma* (8.2) because he had directed the Senate to propose regulations limiting senatorial expenditures on games.
[126] 13.2; 15.2; cf. 8.3.
[127] See ch. 3, pp. 109-111.
[128] For this and further examples of individuals risking to make suggestions to the imperials, see Kelly 2004: 204.

upon some external source to ascertain how Symmachus' images were received by the emperor,[129] in the remainder of this chapter, I shall examine evidence internal to the *Relationes* of a gap between the images constructed by Symmachus and Valentianian II.

A Clash of Cultures

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, one 'cultural identity' is constructed in opposition to others, and each is one of a multiple set of competing discourses or versions of the 'world'.[130] This does not mean, however, that we should imagine that each individual is able to be whoever he wants to be at all times, free to fashion himself as he chooses at will. There are limits to self-fashioning, which is necessarily done in negotiation with communal norms, as well as with competing ideas of culture.[131] At times individuals 'fall short of the values they aspire to embody or find their own self-imaginings in conflict with the ways in which they are viewed by others; and in some cases they find their own self-presentations in conflict with very different versions of cultural accomplishment'.[132] Nearly half way through the *Relationes* the tension between cultural discourses and the concomitant limits on Symmachus' image construction become discernible, as his 'world' comes under threat and begins to break down.

This tension is revealed within the context of the prefect's judicial powers, when Symmachus is forced to defend himself against charges of corruption. Legal historians of the late Roman Empire have noted the intensity of apparent concern in the evidence about the potential for judicial corruption and a concerted effort to guard against these abuses, by means of harsh punishment.[133] J. Harries has argued that this represents a 'culture of criticism' constructed by the emperors themselves: at the same time there was a proliferation of complex strategies for expression of power, the emperors 'repeatedly stressed the accountability of their officials and openly acknowledged, in the rhetoric of their laws, that there did (in theory) exist lazy, incompetent, corrupt and venal servants of the state, whose

[129] e.g. we know that Symmachus' request that the Altar of Victory be restored failed, but this is not indicated by Symmachus himself (Ambr. *Ep*. 57); in *Rel*. 18 Symmachus requests aid in getting the necessary supplies of grain for the city, but we know from *Ep*. 2.7 that he was forced to expel all *peregrini*; *Rel*. 16 provides an example of another request known to be successful, but from outside of the *Relationes* (*CTh*. 11.30.44).
[130] See above, p. 175.
[131] König 2005: 11; see also Morris 2000: 9-17; on the characteristics of dominant elite culture in late fourth-century Rome, see Salzman 2000.
[132] König 2005: 11.
[133] Adams 2004: 89-95; Harries 1999a; Lewis 1991.

crimes the emperor would severely punish (if he found out). Thus, while asserting his own authority, the emperor, through the language of his laws, encouraged a culture of criticism'.[134]

Moreover, there developed in the martyr-stories of the fourth century the image of the Persecuting or Corrupt Judge, whose abuse of his victims is described in gory detail.[135] This tyrannical and sometimes mad figure would subject his Christian victims to a wide range of maltreatment, including imprisonment, various forms of torture and death in the arena.[136] Christian readers of these accounts were conditioned to skepticism of the agents of the state, and there were those, Christian and pagan, who, skilled in eloquence, would deploy the standard rhetorical attacks on corruption in order to discredit an imperial official of whom they disapproved.[137] There are a number of letters among the *Relationes*, often cited as providing evidence of Symmachus' increasing isolation and dissatisfaction in office,[138] in which Symmachus is defending himself against charges that he has abused his judicial or administrative powers. It is in these letters that Symmachus, perceived in a very different way from the way in which he has projected himself, places traditional political discourse in direct conflict with that of the 'culture of criticism'. Of course, as we have seen, Symmachus has avoided fashioning himself directly, and so this negative portrayal of him is in conflict with the portrayal which was filtered through others, and when defending himself, he continues to depend upon others to provide the images of sender and addressee.

Rel. 21, between May-June and 11 December AD 384

The circumstances surrounding this letter relate to the *decretum* to which Symmachus refers in the opening of *Relatio* 3.[139] That *decretum* instructed the urban prefect to investigate alleged robberies from public temples and to take action against the thieves. The emperor apparently received reports that Symmachus abused the authority granted him by the *decretum*, in order to maltreat the Christians, and has issued an edict condemning the prefect's actions. The events surrounding the letter must be ascertained from the *relatio* itself, as the

[134] Harries 1999a: 231.
[135] e.g. by the historians of the Great Persecution (303-311), Eusebius and Lactantius.
[136] See Harries 1999a: 228-229.
[137] Harries 1999a: 231; cf. Long 1996: 84-90 on invectives delivered against a living minister in order to have him removed (e.g. Lib. *Or*. 33 against Tisamenus; 45; 46 against Florentius).
[138] Barrow 1973: 113.
[139] See above, p. 181 and n. 41.

emperor's edict is not extant;[140] the fact that we are able to get a fairly clear picture of the circumstances from Symmachus' letter of defence is one indication that this is aimed a broader audience than just the named addressee.

This letter resembles the forensic letters of Cicero discussed in chapter one, both in structure and especially in strategy.[141] In response to having been labelled the Persecuting Judge, Symmachus corrects his *persona* by employing strategies familar from Cicero's letters. Like Cicero, Symmachus constructs his letter as a forensic speech on his own behalf delivered before his 'judge', Valentinian II, and constructs for himself a persuasive character (*ethos*/*mores*) by associating himself with an authoritative figure. Furthermore he sets himself and his associates in opposition to his accusers, who are assigned less desirable characteristics and values. At the same time, like Fronto and Marcus, Symmachus refashions or corrects the sender and addressee as they were constructed in the emperor's edict.[142] Each is characterized according to Valentinian II's words in the first half of the *relatio* (in the past), and then re-modelled according to his ideal paradigm in the second half (in the present and future). Symmachus comes closer in this letter than those discussed so far to defining himself and the emperor directly; indeed, he does challenge explicitly the images of sender and addressee constructed by the emperor in his edict, but when it comes time to reshape those images, the sender again depends on others for the ideal definitions, and he continues to avoid direct self-fashioning.

Before getting into the facts of the 'case', Symmachus provides a broader context for the situation at hand, and sets up a 'good'/'bad' dichotomy (21.1):

Scio quidem naturae humanae vitio probitatem subiacere livori, sed miror eo progressas insidias aemulorum, ut crudo medacio insontis fama peteretur, ddd. impp. quid enim non audeant quidve intemptatum relinquant, qui in arce terrarum Christianae legis iniuriis vindicata fana finxerunt?

At the beginning of *Relatio* 3 the *decretum* obtained from the emperor by Praetextatus is identified as evidence that *subiecta legibus vitia* (3.1); at the beginning of this letter, Symmachus echoes his earlier statement, but the positive action taken by Valentinian II has been reversed: the 'fault of human nature' has rendered 'integrity subjected to rancour'. The idealized 'world' constructed at the beginning of the *Relationes* has broken down.

[140] See Barrow 1973: 115 n. 2.
[141] *Fam*. 3.7 (SB 71); 3.10 (SB 73); see ch. 1, pp. 30-43.
[142] See ch. 4, p. 117.

This passage is packed with words associated with Symmachus' 'language of enmity',[143] but they also reflect the sender's focus on character, which is the basis of Symmachus' defence. The sender immediately sets himself, characterized as 'innocent', in opposition to his accusers, characterized as liars, who, because of 'secret plots' fueled by 'rivalry', have 'pretended' that the Christians were harmed. The initial broad statement about the present is followed a vaguely ominous suggestion about the future, based upon the characterization of these accusers, in two open-ended rhetorical questions suggesting that these liars might commit even worse crimes in the future. We have seen that rhetorical questions are one way in which a sender may conjure up the image of his addressee, as if in conversation with him;[144] but these questions are addressed to no one in particular, and as in letters already discussed, the internal addressee is blended with the external reader.[145]

Next Symmachus presents the *narratio*, an account of what allegedly happened,[146] from the perspective of his unknown accuser, and characterizes the accuser, the Persecuting Judge condemned in the imperial edict and the emperor who wrote it[147] (21.2):

flevit, credo, scaenae istius fabricator, cum de ecclesiae penetralibus raptos ad tormenta simularet, cum de longinquis ac finitimis urbibus duci antistites in vincla describeret; neque enim serenum clementiae tuae animum sine his argutiis conpulisset sacro edicto populum convenire, ut asperioribus, quam pietati tuae mos est, litteris praefectum, quem sine ambitu legistis, argueres.

Symmachus creates a vivd image both of the accuser, standing on stage crying,[148] and of what the sender is supposed to have done. The lengths to which Symmachus has apparently gone in order to punish his victims is emphasized in the construction of the two temporal clauses: the syntax follows the Christians from the churches and towns to the torture chamber and prison, with the verb describing their capture separating the two locations.

This description is presented in such vivid terms so as to explain the emperor's belief in the lie; we have seen that Cicero deflects blame from Appius, who was misled by those

[143] See above, pp. 181-182.
[144] See, e.g. ch. 1, pp. 33-34.
[145] For a discussion of the use of this strategy in the forensic letter in the epsitolary novel *La Religieuse*, see Ellrich 1961; this sets *Rel*. 21 apart from the Ciceronian forensic letters discussed in chapter one. Those concerned a private dispute beween political friends, and no such broad context was given, nor any explanation of what had taken place outside of the disputed facts. For a discussion of public, 'open' forensic letters in Cicero's correspondence see Hoffer 2003.
[146] On the traditional parts and arrangement of the forensic speech see ch. 1 n. 104.
[147] Cf. Cic. *Fam*. 3.7.2.1-9 (SB); see ch. 1, pp. 33-34.
[148] Perhaps describing a solo performance of tragedy, which would have been done either in pantomime or song; see Kelly 1979.

who accused Cicero,[149] and here Symmachus does the same: like Gratian, Valentinian II has been misled by others, in this case by the 'trickery' of the 'inventor of that drama'.[150] The reference to the theatre is not out of place within the context of the courtroom, as the orator's art is often compared to that of the actor, and *pathos* is associated with tragedy, in Roman oratorical treatises.[151] But this may be aimed especially at Symmachus' Christian addressee/audience; for the Church disapproved of scenic displays and the games at which they often took place on moral grounds, and saw the continued imperial support for such entertainments and the popularity of them among the general public as evidence of the moral collapse of paganism.[152] The image of an actor on stage lying to the emperor may be intended to rouse the Christian aversion to the theatre.

In the second half of the sentence the imperial edict, and thereby the edict's author, is characterized as 'more harsh than is the custom of your piety'.[153] The self constructed by Valentinian II in the edict is not his 'real' self; the emperor has been tricked into behaving in a way that is out of character (i.e. into behaving like Gratian). Like Fronto, Symmachus takes the addressee's own words as his starting point, sketching the selves constructed in the edict, and, as the letter goes on, will remodel them according to his ideals.[154] At the end of this sentence, Symmachus makes the first correction to his own *persona*, 'without ambition',[155] in opposition with those driven by rivalry (21.1).

Maintaining a dramatic tone in keeping with the theatre imagery, Symmachus then shifts into his *argumentatio*, the refutation of the charge against him and proof on his own behalf[156] (21.3):

reddat nunc, quisquis ille est, causas fallaciae suae, qui sub occasione iustae inquisitionis, qua me cultum spoliatorum moenium investigare iussistis, tragicas quaestiones de ministris catholicae iactavit

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[149] *Fam*. 3.10.7.1-4 (SB 73); see ch. 1, pp. 40-41; for further examples of deflection of blame in Cicero and Symmachus see n. 67.

[150] The *scaenae fabricator* may be an echo of Vergil's *fabricator doli* (*A*. 2.264), describing Epeos, the man who built the Trojan horse (*Danaum insidias* at *A*. 2.36); see Putnam 1989. Cf. Amm. 29.2.6 (*malorum omnium fabricator*); *Vulg. Iob*. 13.4 (*fabricatores mendacii*).

[151] e.g. Cic. *Brut*. 203 where Sulpicius is described as a *tragicus orator* and his gestures *ad forum non ad scaenum*; cf. *de Orat*. 3.30. See Fantham 2002.

[152] Beacham 1991: 193-194; see, e.g. Ambr. *de Off. Minis*. 2.109; Silvianus *de Gub. Dei* 6.39-45; in 425 the Church suceeded in having games banned on Sundays and Christian holidays (*CTh*. 15.5.5). There are several references to the stage in the *Relationes*, reflecting its popularity among the general population: *Rel*. 6.2-3; 8.3; 9.3; 10.2.

[153] Cf. *Rel*. 3.1 (see above, p. 181); 14.1.

[154] See *M.Caes*. 1.5.1-2 (8,11-16); ch. 4, pp. 127-128.

[155] This phrase reflects the importance placed on *otium* in this period by the aristocracy and the (affected?) relunctance to take up office; cf. *Rel*. 1.1; 2.2; 34.9. See Matthews 1974: 77-80.

[156] See n. 146.

agitatas; respondeat litteris episcopi Damasi, quibus adsectatores eiusdem religionis negavit ullam contumeliam pertulisse.

This passage provides another example of Symmachus' use of his official correspondence for indirect communication: using two third person jussives, the sender conjures up the image of his accuser and challenges him to answer the evidence as it is presented. It is as if his opponent stands opposite him in the courtroom, to be called on to testify. In the first jussive, Symmachus simply reiterates that the accuser has lied and reinforces the 'good'/'bad' opposition through the antithesis between 'just inquiry' and 'tragic inquisitions'. It is not until the second jussive clause that Symmachus reveals his evidence, the letter from Damasus.[157] This revelation, delayed until after his general claim, is meant to elicit shock from the audience/addressee.[158]

Indirect communication continues in the following passage, where Symmachus elaborates upon the quality of the bishop as a witness, using another strategy employed by Cicero when addressing Appius (21.3): *non magnopere officii mei praetendo responsa, a quo ideo quaesita est rerum fides, ne factum aliquod recordationem cognitoris effugeret: credatur eius legis antistiti, quae laesa simulatur, credatur populo Romano, qui perennitatis vestrae admonitus edicto miratur in procinctu creditum, quod Roma nescit admissum*. As Cicero calls on one of the *familiares* of Appius as witness,[159] Symmachus calls on one from among those supposedly ill-treated by himself. But because he begins by denying his dependence on the testimony of his own office, Symmachus more closely resembles Fronto than Cicero in his employment of this technique; for Fronto in *ad M. Caesarem* 3.16 states explicitly that rather than calling as a witness one from his own circle (the *oratores*), he shall call on witnesses from the circle of Marcus (the *philosophi*).[160]

Symmachus calls his witnesses in parallel jussive clauses, mirroring the passage above, and conjures up the images of these parties, thereby expanding his audience (in the 'courtroom') as he did over the course of *Relatio* 3.[161] He echoes the language used earlier to describe the fabrication concocted against him, recalling the image of his alleged crimes.

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[157] Bishop of Rome 1 October 366 – 11 December 384; see Kelly 1986: 32-34.
[158] According to Ambr. *Ep*. 17.10 Damasus was instrumental in blocking the embassy to Gratian in 382.
[159] *Fam*. 3.7.4 (SB 71); see ch. 1, pp. 34-35.
[160] *M.Caes*. 3.16.1 (48,1-5): *neque magis oratoribus arbitror necessaria euismodi artificia quam philosophis. in ea re non oratorum domesticis, quod dicitur, testimoniis utar, sed philosophourm eminentissimis, poetarum vetustissimis excellentissimisque, vitae dinique cotidianae usu atque cultu artiumque omnium experimentis*.
[161] See above, p. 184 and 188-191.

That image, of something past (*finxerunt* at 21.1; *flevit* at 21.2), is undone by the testimony of the bishop and of Roman people in the present (*credatur*). While calling upon the Roman people and Rome herself reflects another regular strategy in Cicero's self-defence following his recall from exile (i.e. identifying oneself with the state),[162] for Symmachus it also represents an attempt to persuade the Roman people themselves. Instead of asking the addressee to engage directly with the evidence, he uses a generalized third person jussive subjunctive, exhorting his audience to trust in the judgment of Romans. As in *Relatio* 3, Symmachus cites the judgment of the people in his favour, partially in order to win over public opinion.[163] As in *Relatio* 4, Symmachus filters his identity through others, in this case through the witnesses testifying on his behalf. Whereas Cicero speaks to the quality of his character directly, Symmachus depends entirely on the assessments of others.

At this point, about half way through the letter, Symmachus inserts a brief *digressio*,[164] in which he pauses in order to correct the self of the addressee and in order to endow his own *persona* with persuasion by means of the *auctoritas* of one more powerful than himself (21.4):

omitto iniuriam praefecturae et conscientiae meae, quando eo processit insimulatio, ut vos quoque ipsos auctores honoris mei quadam reprehensione praestringat. nam qui summi loci iudices decolorant, sacri testimonii facilitatem videntur incessere. iam dudum me divus genitor numinis tui praecipuo honore dignatus est, ille meritorum arbiter singularis, cuius imperium cum moribus recepisti. paternum sequere, tuum tuere iudicium: qui praefecturam sine ambitu meruimus, sine offensione ponamus.

Where Cicero associates himself with Pompey in his letters to Appius, Symmachus associates himself with the 'judge', Valentinian II, and with the emperor's ideal model, Valentinian I. In the first sentence, the *praeteritio* emphasizes the connection between sender and addressee by means of the result clause: a false accusation levelled at (any) prefect results in criticism of imperial judgment, specifically judgment of character (*testimonium*).[165] This is analgous to the way in which Fronto uses Marcus' charaterization of Fronto as *magister* – if Marcus was correct in identifying Fronto as teacher, he will learn to sleep from his teacher;[166] if

[162] See n. 90.
[163] See above pp. 172-173 and n. 84.
[164] Traditionally the digression is recommended between the argumentation and epilogue, but in practice most often appears within the argumentation, as it does here; see n. 146. Cf. Cic. *Fam*. 3.7.5 (SB 71); see ch. 1, pp. 35-36 and n. 121.
[165] Cf. Cicero's use of *testimonium* at *Fam*. 13.16.3 (SB 316), the letter of recommendation for Apollonius; see ch. 2, pp. 74-77.
[166] *M.Caes*. 1.5.5-7 (9,10-15); see ch. 4, p. 130.

Valentinian II was correct in thinking Symmachus worthy of office, he will defend his prefect and thereby defend his own judgment.

Symmachus also uses his association with Valentinian I to persuade his audience/addressee, creating a connection between the emperor and his father through a repetition of the words *honor* and *meritum*/*merito*. Cicero argues that Appius ought to trust him because Pompey confides in him;[167] Symmachus argues that Valentinian II ought to trust him, because his father trusted him with an important post.[168] This father-son connection also serves to correct the self of the addressee, whose genuine 'character' is his father's. Thus, Symmachus filters both his self-portrayal and that of Valentinian II through Valentinian.

Having corrected sender and addressee, now realigned with the definitions of 'good' magistrate and 'good' emperor, Symmachus returns to the case at hand. Restating the charges against him in straightforward, sober language, Symmachus refutes each in turn (21.5,6):

suggestionibus viri excellentis et de re publica bene meriti Praetextati praefecti praetorio abusus existimor. quid, si ex illo decreto, quod probabiliter impetravit, necdum a me quaestio ulla temptata est?[169] *... sane laudabili viro episcopo denegante ullum e suis aut carcere aut vinculis adtineri et officio eadem suggerente ignoro, quos potissimum praeceperitis absolvi*.

This second version of the *narratio* and *argumentatio* is distinguished from the first in several ways: the tone is no longer dramatic; the emperor, rather than the unknown accuser, is asked to engage directly with the evidence, as indicated by the rhetorical question in the first sentence and by the second person verb in the second; and the tense of the main verbs is present instead of perfect. Symmachus calls on the emperor for the first time to make a judgment, conjuring up his ideal addressee as 'judge'. The shift in tense, from perfect to present serves to reinforce the distinction between versions of Valentinian II – the original accusation against Symmachus, the Persecuting Judge and the emperor associated with the edict are all relegated to the past.[170]

In the forensic letters addressed to Appius, Cicero is able to conclude with confidence, having invested his own character with persuasion by association with the *auctoritas* of

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[167] *Fam*. 3.10.10 (SB 73); see ch. 1, pp. 41-43.

[168] He was appointed proconsul of Africa, 373-374 (Barrow 1973: 117 n. 4). For further arenas in which Valentinian I is to be emulated see n. 101.

[169] Symmachus goes on to explain the reason for the delay and claims for himself the gift of foresight (21.5), which is another desirable characteristic attributed by Cicero to himself and his allies; see *Fam*. 4.3.1-2 (SB 202); ch. 1, pp. 61-62 and n. 40.

[170] Manipulation of time is a technique used by all four of our letter writers; on the polyvalence of epsitolary time see ch. 1, p. 15.

Pompey.[171] Likewise, at the end of the present *relatio* Symmachus is able to confidently conclude that that the emperor's judgment will be in favour of the sender, having associated himself with the Roman people, Rome herself and the judgment of Valentinian I (21.7):

quid igitur aeternitas vestra decernat, devotus opperior et quaeso, ut fallaciam retundatis, quae divini pectoris tui sollicitavit quietum, quae ad edicti necessitatem venerandi principis curam coegit. me munivit invidia: apud aures enim sacras locum postea non habebit convicta mendacii. si quid tamen denuo obtrectantium murmur ingesserit, opto iudicium: experientur me sub imperiali disceptatione constantem, qui nocentem probare non possunt.

The 'good'/'bad' opposition is prominent in this passage, and the 'good' are associate with the present and future, while the 'bad' are associated with the past. The emperor is asked to repudiate the lie in the present (*decernat*, *opperior et quaeso*); that lie did its damage in the past (*sollicitavit* and *coegit*); ironically, *invidia* served to protect Symmachus, but in the past (*munivit*), and it was 'convicted of lying'; in the future, *invidia* will not trick the emperor again (*habebit*); in the case of a *real* trial, Symmachus' constancy is associated with the future (*experientur*), his unproved guilt with the present (*probare possunt*). The title used to address the emperor, *aeternitas vestra*, evokes the attribute stressed in *Relatio* 3; here, as there, the decisions made by the Valentinian II who emulates his father will be lasting. In effect, Symmachus has fashioned an emperor who will correct his own mistake (whose edict is in need of emendation), which was modelled on the behaviour of Gratian. The *me* who will be found constant at trial is the 'good' magistrate deemed worthy by Valentinian I.

This *relatio* is among those which have won Symmachus credit for bravery. As Matthews points out, he has accused the emperor of being misled by fabrication after the imperial has already declared himself against the prefect in a public edict read out and displayed.[172] Indeed, this does seem to be a bold, potentially risky action, but when considered within the parameters of the 'world' Symmachus has created, it ceases to appear reckless. Symmachus has reasserted the ideal models for the emperor and prefect constructed in *Relationes* 3 and 4, by first characterizing sender (*I*), the harsh emperor, and addressee (*You*), Persecuting Judge, fashioned in the emperor's edict; and then redefining them by means of character witnesses as (*I*), unambitious, worthy prefect, addressing (*You*) the emulator of Valentinian I. And by doing so, Symmachus has guaranteed himself an acquittal. Furthermore, he has re-established the support of the *populus Romanus* and Roma, who are

[171] *Fam*. 3.7.6 (SB 71); see ch. 1, pp. 37- 38.
[172] Matthews 1986: 166.

called upon to speak on Symmachus' behalf this time. Putting aside 'real' success or failure, Symmachus has set things right again in his idealized 'world' under threat. However, as the collection proceeds, the threat posed by the 'culture of criticism' continues to disrupt the ideal model constructed earlier; and Symmachus continues to place his own discourse in opposition to those which undermine his.

Signs of Failure

The pressure exerted upon judges to avoid even the appearance of corruption is reflected in several of the *Relationes* regarding judicial cases that have come before the prefect for judgment. Like Pliny, Symmachus regularly shows himself unwilling to make a decision, even when he has the required information to do so.[173] Symmachus is not alone in this tendency, and it can be accounted for, at least in part, as a symptom of the 'culture of criticism': secular judges could never live up to the ideal judge for the Christians – God – and cautiously referred cases, when in any doubt, for imperial judgment.[174] This was one way of guarding against the charge of exceeding judicial powers. According to C. Kelly, the unwillingness (or inability) of officials to independently resolve legal ambiguities was key to the maintenance of imperial influence in the late Roman bureaucracy. It drew attention to the central importance of the emperors' decisions, and even aristocrats like Symmachus were not prepared to risk wrongly second-guessing imperial intentions.[175]

It also reflects an aspect of the Plinian model of the relationship between governor and emperor, whereby the former shows proper deference to the latter.[176] By referring cases to Milan for judgment Symmachus cautiously avoids the appearance of the Persecuting Judge or Corrupt Official, but the language in which he does so also recalls Pliny's ideal governor: for example, 'disturbed by these perplexing problems I reserved everything for disentanglement by a pronouncement of your Divinities';[177] 'I beg and beseech that my uncertainty of mind may be instructed by an imperial reply'.[178] Furthermore, like Pliny, Symmachus might also give an opinion, often appealing to the emperor's *clementia*, while making clear that the final

[173] See Kelly 2004: 216-219; Harries 1999b: 114-117.
[174] Harries 1999a: 217-218.
[175] Kelly 2004: 217.
[176] See ch. 3, pp. 104-105 and nn. 86-88. Pliny's *Ep*. 10 may have been in circulation in the fourth century as a model for provincial governors on how to write elegant letters to the emperor (Cameron 1965: 292).
[177] *Rel*. 19.10; cf. (also with *servo*) 27.4; 39.5; 40.1; (with *consulo*) 22; (with *digno*) 26.7; see also 30.4; 33.1; 39.1; 38.5.
[178] *Rel*. 25.4; cf. (with *reservo* and *iubeo*) 49.4.

decision is naturally the imperial's.[179] Thus, he incorporates Plinian deference into his 'world' in order to combat the discourse by which he is perceived and labelled as something other than the ideal prefect he has fashioned himself. That is to say, when it comes to legal decisions, Symmachus, like Pliny, invites the emperor to define the sender – an element of distinctly Plinian tentativeness in Symmachus' self-portrayal.

Likewise, Symmachus continues to reassert his traditional Roman cultural identity in the face of further accusations. He denies the identity imposed upon him, that of the Persecuting Judge/Corrupt Official and instead asserts a desirable identity for himself. As in *Relatio* 21, his responds by offering his own, 'correct' version of events,[180] by calling on a witness of good character or of greater authority than himself,[181] by characterizing his opponents as in antithesis with himself and his allies,[182] by drawing a connection between the perceived quality of the man appointed prefect and imperial judgment,[183] by evoking the model set out in the first half of this chapter, in particular emulation of Valentinian I[184] and a concern with safeguarding the reputation of the age,[185] and where necessary by correcting a text or decision of the emperor.[186] Furthermore, when anticipating the emperor's judgment, Symmachus continues to be confident that Valentinian II will see things his way, but he also uses language which conveys respect for imperial wisdom.[187]

It is signficant that despite the correction Symmachus made in *Relatio* 21, his repeated (and indirect) reassertion of an ideal self-identity and his continuous caution in legal matters, there are further accusations of corruption and abuse of power and accusations of incompetence levelled against him. There are two further *Relationes* involving accusations of some kind, which have been brought against Symmachus by unknown accusers. In *Relatio* 23 Symmachus presents several complaints about his authority being undermined by members of his department and of the department of the Vicar of the City.[188] Among these is that a written charge of collusion and malpractice on the part of Symmachus and his staff was

[179] *Rel*. 16.2: *... sed iudicem vestri saeculi decuit vim constitutionis sacro oraculo reservare*; cf. (also with *reservo*) 31.3, a case in which Symmachus requests a severe punishment for someone.
[180] *Rel*. 23.1; 36.2; 34.3-12.
[181] *Rel*. 23.1; the gods at 34.9; cf. Cic. *Fam*. 3.10. 1.14-19 (SB 73).
[182] *Rel*. 23.1; 23.14; 34.9; 34.10; cf. 14.1.
[183] *Rel*. 23.15; 34.10.
[184] *Rel*. 34.4; 34.6; for further exhortations to emulate Valentinian I see n. 101.
[185] *Rel*. 23.1; 34.1; 34.12; cf. 14.1.
[186] This is the case in *Rel*. 34; see also *Rel*. 14.
[187] *Rel*. 23.10; 34.13; cf. 41.8.
[188] On the office, see Barrow 1973: 243.

submitted by an unknown person (*nescio quis*). In *Relatio* 36 Symmachus has been compelled to write and reassure the emperor that he is keen to carry out his judicial duties quickly, because 'others' (*alii*) have reported a delay in the proceedings of a trial. Along similar lines, in *Relatio* 34, though not accused of anything in particular, Symmachus asserts that he is under attack by unknown parties (*alicuius*) harbouring 'private hatred' (*privata odia*) of him, because the prefect's wife and sister-in-law having been required to repay a debt incurred by their father, even though they are not the heirs of his estate. Thus, even within the *Relationes*, there is ample evidence of the limits of individual agency in the construction of identity and the tensions between competing cultural discourses.

Conclusion

The *Relationes* is not the first text in which Symmachus hailed the beginning of the reign of a new emperor as the beginning of a new era of freedom:

> It is quite astonishing to observe how a mouthpiece of senatorial opinion, like Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, could extol Valentinian to the skies during his lifetime, in a panegyric delivered in A.D. 370 – only to insult him bitterly six years later when he was dead, and, at the same time, flatter the son who had succeeded him. Nor is it only the distortion of the literary genre of the panegyric that is to blame: the orator must share the guilt.[189]

Symmachus did indeed fashion Gratian as a saviour bringing the dawn of a new golden age after a dark night.[190] But we should not necessarily explain this shift in loyalties as purely stemming from economic self-interest, as A. Alföldi does;[191] for Symmachus' seemingly hypocritical behaviour reflects the widespread willingness in texts from this period to reconfigure paradigms from the past.[192] Valentinian, Gratian and Valentinian II are each described in Plinian terms during his reign. With each emperor Symmachus sets out to create political and cultural stability in the face of change by presenting a paradigm from the past as the model for the present. And yes, Symmachus treats his own past with selective care; so, for example, there is no hint of the criticism previously levelled at Valentinian in the *Relationes*.[193]

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[189] Alföldi 1952: 5.
[190] Alföldi 1952: 86.
[191] Alföldi 1952: 19, 52.
[192] See above, p. 175; on the reappropriation of themes and language in panegyric from Pliny's *Panegyricus*, see Rees 1998: 99-100; on Pliny's panegyric as a model for later panegyrists, see Radice 1969(i): xxiii-xxiv.
[193] On selective use of the past in the Gallic panegyrics, see Nixon 1990.

It was noted in the introduction to this chapter that late antique definitions of cultural identity are constructed in relation to the past.[194] Christians and pagans alike had to accommodate the Classical past of Rome; how it was to be recuperated for a new present and who owned it became fundamental questions of cultural identity.[195] There are others from this period who share Symmachus' values and who look back to the distant past for the ideal future. T. D. Barnes has described the historian Ammianus as a 'prisoner of the past', who held a profound wish that the contemporary world were otherwise.[196] Likewise the panegyricist and letter writer Sidonius has, like Symmachus, been criticized for obscuring current political and historical events and is known for living in the past.[197] But as L. Watson has shown, Sidonius' aim in his panegyrics is to create political stability – an especially acute need in the fifth century – by providing cultural continuity for concepts of imperial power which are in fact not traditional.[198] Rather than attempting to recreate the ideal past, Sidonius aims to reconcile past and present in order to suggest a future which he hoped would be stronger.[199]

This description could, I think, be applied to Symmachus' aim in the *Relationes*. And our other letter writers share Symmachus' value of the past to varying degrees. In his official correspondence, Pliny, more than any of the others, lives in the present. Though in the personal letters the age of Cicero is emulated and Pliny's success under Domitian is erased, in *Letters* 10 Trajan is presented as having lived up to an ideal, so there is no need to look back.[200] Fronto on the other hand, looks to the past, but linguistically and stylistically, more than politically and ideologically, holding up Cato as the ideal oratorical model for Marcus Aurelius.[201]

In this respect, Symmachus is most like Cicero, who adopts his own paradigm from the distant past to be emulated and enacted in the present, that is, the ideal relationship between Laelius and Scipio, recalling the idealized period of the Republic.[202] Cicero, too, approaches his own past with care, adjusting, for example, his history with Pompey so as to

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[194] See above, p. 175.
[195] Clarke 1990: viii. On Christian appropriation of Roman history, see Cameron 1999.
[196] Barnes 1990: 83.
[197] See Percival 1997.
[198] Watson 1998: 196.
[199] Watson 1998: 178.
[200] See ch. 3.
[201] See ch. 4, pp. 159-168.
[202] See ch. 1, pp. 14-19.

improve his standing with Caesar after the civil war. Cicero and Symmachus both lived during periods of great political upheaval and change; both were members of the Senate at times when its role in the Empire was being diminished. And so it is in their letters that we see an acute need for stability, both personal and social, and a look back to periods perceived as 'better times' for the ideal models for political interaction in the present.

Conclusion

While Symmachus' reappropriation of the past does not make his articulation of Roman cultural identity unique in his period, what does set him apart from Ammianus in his history and Sidonius in his panegyrics is the epistolary construction of the prefect's idealized 'world'. As we have seen, epistolary mediation and Symmachus' attempt to bridge the gap between Rome and the emperor plays a central role in the creation of his definition of what it is to be 'Roman'. At the same time, the absence of the addressee allows the sender to represent himself at the head of a united community concerned with maintaining the traditions of Rome. Indeed, for a long time historians of Late Antiquity were taken in by Symmachus' claims, and believed him the leader of a unified pagan resistance to Christianity.[1]

This tension between presence and absence, always to be found in an epistolary exchange, arises from the distance between correspondents. In many ways that distance presents a disadvantage to our letter writers in the negotiation of their relationships with the emperor: distance is an obstacle to communication, which the sender attempts to overcome by making the addressee present; it is because of this distance that the images constructed in a letter are necessarily provisional – the addressee is not present as in conversation to confirm them; and it is the distance between correspondents that creates the risk of failure of communication in various ways.

Yet, at the same time this distance is also an advantage. Firstly, it allows the sender a certain degree of freedom in constructing his images; the addressee is not present to confirm them, but he is not there to disprove them either, so, for example, Pliny may present an image of himself already working hard simultaneously with his arrival at Bithynia, and Trajan is not there to see whether or not this image reflects 'reality'.[2] Secondly, this distance makes available to the sender strategies of caution: because epistolary images are inherently provisional, the sender may distance himself from his images, building tentativeness into his self-portrayal and thereby avoiding the appearance of undue confidence. So, for example, Cicero subtly undermines the image of himself as the Laelius to Pompey's Scipio, by recognizing that it will be 'real' only if the addressee accepts it as such.[3] Finally, and, I would argue, most importantly, the distance between correspondents allows the sender to remain elusive if he chooses; in other words, the sender may manipulate the provisionality of

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1 See ch. 5, pp. 173-174.
2 *Ep. Tra*. 10.17a.3-4; see ch. 3, pp. 103-104.
3 *Fam*. 5.7. 3.6-11; see ch. 1, pp. 16-18.

epistolary image construction so as to make the image of himself difficult to pin down, a useful tool, perhaps, in the struggle for control of the images between a senator and the emperor.

And distance is manipulated in this third way by all of the letter writers treated in the preceding chapters. The provisionality of Cicero's self-portrayal in relation to Pompey allows the sender to maintain political flexibility and for a relatively smooth transition in his loyalites from Pompey to Caesar. In relation to Caesar, Cicero deliberately creates a contradictory self-identity, so as to keep his addressee guessing when it comes to who the sender is and where his loyalites lie. For Pliny, tentativeness is the prominent characteristic of his ideal governor, and the provisionality of images allows him to ensure that the emperor is, or at least appears to be, in control of the epistolary discourse. Fronto and Marcus create a veneer of playfulness in their exchange by undermining their images, thereby making it difficult to determine how much the exchange is just good fun and how much it is intended seriously. And finally Symmachus, as we have seen, remains a deliberately ill-defined sender, who is both safeguarded and strengthened by his status as one among a like minded community. Thus, because the letter 'straddles the gulf between presence and absence' it is a flexible communicative tool,[4] and as such, ideally suited to express the simultaneously vulnerable and confident varieties of self-fashioning characteristic of communication with emperors.

[4] Altman 1982: 43.

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