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Eloquence Will Not Say a Few Words: The Textual Record of Republican Oratory and the Purpose of Cicero's *Brutus*

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It is not hard to see that Cicero's *Brutus*, though ostensibly occasioned by the death of Hortensius in 50 BC, is a response to what Cicero perceived as the demise of the Republic and more specifically of Republican oratory.[1] Indeed, the work constructs a parallel between the death of Hortensius and that of the Republic on the understanding that both involve silencing: *Q. Hortensi vox exstincta fato suo est, nostra publico*.[2] The *fatum publicum* that silenced Cicero's voice is a reference not simply to the civil war, but to its increasingly apparent outcome, Caesar's dictatorship.[3] After leaving the Republican cause owing to Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus in 48 BC, and awaiting Caesar's arrival and pardon for the greater portion of 47 BC in Brundisium, Cicero returned to Rome to find that the normal functioning of the courts had been suspended, and that the pressures of civil war, the curtailing of *libertas* under the dictatorship, and the existence of an autocrat with most offices and honours in his gift, who was rarely resident in the city, had rendered the traditional, competitive oratory of the Republic, which had made his own career possible, moribund.[4] In the *Brutus*, Caesar's autocracy heralds the end of Republican *libertas* and thus the silencing of true oratory: *subito in civitate cum alia*

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[1] This article sketches some of the arguments offered in my paper at AMPAL 2012 which focused on how orations are imagined as bodies in Cicero's *Brutus*. My thanks go to the organisers, the audience, and the participants in the post-paper discussion. I am especially thankful to Emily Gowers as my supervisor, and to Andrew Sillett for chairing the panel and reviewing drafts of my paper. I am also grateful to *Rosetta*'s two anonymous reviewers, who have helped me tighten my argument and greatly improve this article's structure.

[2] *Brutus* 328: 'The voice of Quintus Hortensius was snuffed out by his own death, mine by the death of the Republic.'

[3] Though the composition of the *Brutus* may have begun much earlier, its publication in the form which we now possess must have come after the Battle of Thapsus (6th April 46 BC) owing to the fact that the work describes both L. Manlius Torquatus and P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther as deceased (265; 268). See Douglas 1966: ixf.; Gowing 2000: 62–4. The announcement of Caesar's victory presumably made the Republican cause seem close to death and his dictatorship appear secure, at least for the time being.

[4] At *Brutus* 6, Cicero claims that, even if Hortensius had lived, it would have pained him to see the *forum populi Romani… voce erudita et Romanis Graecisque auribus digna spoliatum atque orbatum* (the Forum of the Roman People, robbed and deprived of that learned voice, worthy of Roman and Greek ears), thereby demonstrating the general silence falling on both the living and the dead. Equally worth consideration in this regard is *Pro Marcello* 23 where Cicero's eager wish for the *constituenda iudicia* suggests that the courts had ceased to function, or at least ceased to function to Cicero's satisfaction, under Caesar.

ceciderunt tum etiam ea ipsa… Eloquentia obmutuit.[5] As a result, it has often been observed that the work acts as a textual *laudatio funebris* not for Hortensius alone, but for oratory itself.[6]

The transition of the *laudatio funebris* from oral and public performance in the Forum to this textual dialogue held within Cicero's private garden on the Palatine reflects the much wider impact of Caesar's dictatorship on oratory as a whole. The implication of the paradoxical statement that *Eloquentia obmutuit* is that oratory had ceased to be a spoken and performed art, and thus that Republican oratory was now a matter of historical record, a collection of texts. This article argues that the purpose of the *Brutus* is to mitigate this sudden confinement of oratory to a purely textual existence by preserving an understanding of the performative and competitive dimensions of Republican oratory.

The problems posed by this shift to a purely textual existence for oratory are gestured to by a Platonic intertext in Cicero's closing address, in which he urges Brutus to guard *Eloquentia* with himself:

> nos autem, Brute, quoniam post Hortensi clarissimi oratoris mortem orbae eloquentiae quasi tutores relicti sumus, domi teneamus eam saeptam liberali custodia et hos ignotos atque impudentis procos repudiemus tueamurque ut adultam virginem caste et ab amatorum impetu quantum possumus prohibeamus.[7]
>
> But, since we have been left after the death of Hortensius, our illustrious orator, as the guardians of orphaned eloquence, let us keep her at home enclosed in our unoppressive custody and repel these impertinent suitors without credentials. Let us guard her like a virgin who has grown up with her purity intact and keep her away as much as we can from the advances of lovers.[8]

[5] *Brutus* 22: 'Suddenly in our state, not only did other elements of public life collapse, but Eloquence herself also fell silent.'
[6] Haenni 1905: 52 first terms the *Brutus* 'the great political eulogy (*Grabrede*) of Roman eloquence'. This insight is acknowledged and variously developed in Douglas 1966: xi; Gowing 2000: 58f.; Dugan 2005: 173; Stroup 2010: 253–5.
[7] *Brutus* 330.
[8] Though all translations of the *Brutus* are my own, I am nevertheless indebted to Hendrickson 1939 and Douglas 1966. Translations of other texts are my own unless specified otherwise.

Eloquentia and the grand inheritance of Republican oratory have to be protected from Caesarian suitors, lest they should 'prostitute' both to their own ends. As Stroup has argued, this confinement to the house is an appeal to protect *Eloquentia* in the private and textual domain of *otium*, until the *libertas* of the Forum is restored and oratory can safely return without serving the dictator's interests.[9] Though I broadly agree with this claim, I think we gain further insights into this metaphorical guardianship of the orphaned *Eloquentia* and its concern with the textual record of Republican oratory, if we appreciate its Platonic origin.

In the *Theaetetus*, Socrates has been refuting Protagoras' observation 'Man is the measure of all things',[10] only to admit that his eristic attacks have worked because the father of this μῦθος is absent:

> οὔ τι ἄν, οἶμαι, ὦ φίλε, εἴπερ γε ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ ἑτέρου μύθου ἔζη, ἀλλὰ πολλὰ ἂν ἤμυνε: νῦν δὲ ὀρφανὸν αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς προπηλακίζομεν. καὶ γὰρ οὐδ' οἱ ἐπίτροποι, οὓς Πρωταγόρας κατέλιπεν, βοηθεῖν ἐθέλουσιν, ὧν Θεόδωρος εἷς ὅδε.[11]
>
> This wouldn't have happened, I suppose, my friend, if the first story's father were alive; instead, he would have defended it a great deal. As things stand, we are abusing the orphan, since even its guardians, whom Protagoras left behind and of whom Theodorus here is one, are not willing to help it.[12]

Socrates' point is that, separated from the person who formulated it, this observation's original meaning has become liable to misapprehensions or wilful distortion, especially in the absence of those 'guardians' to whom Protagoras explained his thought-process. Moreover, Plato's figurative language associates the helpless state of this isolated statement with the *Phaedrus*' observations on writing:[13]

[9] Stroup 2010: 260–5.
[10] *Theaetetus* 152a.
[11] *Theaetetus* 164e.
[12] This translation is a free adaptation of that of MacDowell 1973.
[13] Ford 1994: 205.

> πλημμελούμενος δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἐν δίκῃ λοιδορηθεὶς τοῦ πατρὸς ἀεὶ δεῖται βοηθοῦ: αὐτὸς γὰρ οὔτ' ἀμύνασθαι οὔτε βοηθῆσαι δυνατὸς αὑτῷ.[14]
>
> Whenever [the written word] is wronged or unjustly rebuked, it always needs its father's help, since it is unable to protect or help itself.

Writing, unable to explicate its meaning, must silently suffer those who interpret it at several removes from its intended meaning or entirely misinterpret it. As thought's bastard, writing plays second fiddle to its legitimate brother (ἀδελφὸν γνήσιον), speech, as a mere image (εἴδωλον) of the living discourse (λόγον...ζῶντα καὶ ἔμψυχον) provided by a person.[15] This creates an uncomfortable gap between the author and his writing, denying the reader access to the author's thoughts, and complicates any claims for writing's ability to preserve, and provide immortality to, its author. Moreover, writing suffers in that is characterised by the absence of any speaker who might clarify, preserve, or defend its meaning, and thus requires its author or a 'guardian', i.e. someone familiar with the author's thought processes, to protect it from distortion.

A weak reading of this Platonic guardianship with regard to the *Brutus* would suppose that guardianship requires the preservation of Hortensius as a living presence within his texts. Such a reading may be too weak in light of the observation above that the death of Hortensius is closely associated with the death of the Republic. Cicero's exhortation to Brutus that they both should be active guardians of *Eloquentia* may not simply be a request that they protect Hortensius' orations from distortion and denigration, but that they imbue oratory's textual tradition with the presence of the Republic and its orators, preventing its distortion or oblivion at the hands of these Caesarian suitors.

The evocation of this Platonic scepticism may appear to some readers to be at odds with Cicero's attitude to writing elsewhere in the *Brutus*. Though Cicero makes a distinction between the skills of writing and speaking well,[16] oratory is by no means presented as part of an oral culture of performance that can be safely differentiated

[14] *Phaedrus* 275e.
[15] *Phaedrus* 276a.
[16] *Brutus* 92.

from a separate, literary culture, nor is the only role of texts within oratory to record orations after their delivery. Instead, knowledge of literature and practising one's writing are presented as important aspects of an orator's development. In the case of Gaius Titius, a man of equestrian rank, Cicero emphasises that his success as an orator was hampered by the fact that he could progress no further without knowledge of Greek literature (*sine Graecis litteris*).[17] By contrast, the entirety of Marcus Pupius Piso's success as an orator is confidently attributed to his training, with an emphasis placed upon his pre-eminence in Greek learning (*Graecis doctrinis*).[18] Furthermore, Cicero claims that nothing improves an orator's ability to speak as much as writing.[19] The *Brutus* does not represent the silence of *Eloquentia* as a dramatic shift from a purely performative phenomenon to a purely literary one, but as the sudden confinement of oratory to its textual aspects alone.

Beyond the importance of writing to the orator's training, the *Brutus* places considerable faith in the potency of writing.[20] As Gowing has demonstrated, the *Brutus* regularly emphasises that its history of oratory depends upon evidence derived from the careful interrogation of texts.[21] To take one example, Cicero's identification of the emergence of oratory as a recognised pursuit depends upon Ennius' lines on Marcus Cornelius Cethegus.[22] Even in this case, he observes that, if Ennius had not mentioned him, *hunc vetustas, ut alios fortasse multos, oblivione obruisset*:[23] writing is the principle means by which we gain knowledge of the past and cheat the ravages of time. That writing enjoys this power almost exclusively in the *Brutus* is further accentuated by the fact that the *Brutus* itself is akin to a textual *laudatio funebris*. Its textual nature and fictional setting in Cicero's private garden reinforce the demise of public, oral methods of transmitting and preserving the past, such as the *laudatio*.

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[17] *Brutus* 167.
[18] *Brutus* 236.
[19] *Brutus* 92.
[20] For Cicero's (non-Platonic) faith in writing see Gowing (2000) 43 n.21.
[21] Gowing 2000: 43–6.
[22] *Brutus* 57–9.
[23] *Brutus* 60: 'The long expanse of time would have consigned this man to oblivion, as it has perhaps done to many others.'

Nevertheless, Cicero's observation that the skills of speaking and writing well are not identical means that the textual record of oratory may distort the relative merits of orators, either by having them write better than they speak or worse than they speak. Cicero is most explicit about the failed preservation of rhetorical excellence within the textual record in the case of Servius Sulpicius Galba: his speech became excited, weighty, and forceful (*incitata et gravis et vehemens*) through some natural passion (*naturalis quidam dolor*), but his speech lost its vigour (*flaccescebat oratio*) when subsequently written down, as the emotions which inspired his performance had died down.[24] Despite being considered the pre-eminent orator of his age,[25] as a result of the failed preservation of his style and vigour in the textual record, Galba remains absent from his orations. Moreover, Cicero makes it clear that Galba is not a mere anomaly: the inability to write as well as one speaks often happens to *peringeniosis hominibus neque satis doctis*.[26] Cicero draws an unfavourable comparison with his contemporary, C. Laelius Sapiens, whose *videtur... mens spirare etiam in scriptis*;[27] his style of oratory, depending on rational faculties (*prudentia*), meant that *eodem modo possit et dicere et scribere*:[28] rational oratory lends itself to textual reproduction much more easily than its impassioned counterpart.

Cicero is drawing attention to the fact that not all texts offer a reliable record of an orator's performance: for every Laelius whose presence inheres in a text, another Galba is lost forever. It is this tension between our dependence on texts for knowledge of the past and the failure to preserve every aspect of every performance within the textual record that the *Brutus* aims to resolve. Cicero's account of Galba's *vis*, for all that it bears witness to its absence from the text, simultaneously encourages any reader of Galba's speeches to supplement the purely textual oration before them with knowledge of Galba's *actio*. The *Brutus* repeatedly shows interest in the aspects of individual orators' *actio* that have eluded textual representation, ranging from those which have disappeared owing to the disparity between the orator's delivery and his writing, such as Galba's *vis*, to those which cannot easily be

[24] *Brutus* 93.
[25] *Brutus* 82.
[26] *Brutus* 92: 'men of prodigious natural talent and insufficient learning.'
[27] *Brutus* 94: 'the mind [of Laelius] still seems to breathe in his writings.'
[28] *Brutus* 93: 'he could speak and write in the same manner.'

preserved or represented in textual orations, such as Hortensius' prodigious *memoria*.[29] By preserving such elements of oratory in a sort of 'companion' to the texts of orations, the *Brutus* ironically fulfils the purpose of the guardianship of *Eloquentia*, namely preserving the aspects of an orator's presence that have not been fully preserved in the textual record.

The opposite side of the coin to Galba is that some orators' writing may be better than their performance. In the case of Calvus, Cicero comments that, out of a fear of producing any error (*vitiosum*), Calvus lost any real vitality in his oratory (*verum sanguinem deperdebat*), and that his orations, though their quality was clear to learned and careful listeners (*doctis et attente audientibus*), were swallowed whole (*devorabatur*) by the vast majority of people in the Forum.[30] Cicero is subtly directing his readers, who would have probably liked to think themselves *docti*, to mistrust any positive assessment of Calvus' text. The destruction of the *verus sanguis* articulates the artificiality of Calvus' orations, suggesting that the verbal content of the speech and the oratorical self constructed by Calvus lacked the vitality of the real body, which the audience saw before them. Furthermore, the swallowing whole of Calvus' oratory by most of his audience implies that the finer and more delicate aspects of his orations proved irrelevant in performance, owing to the audience's lack of discernment and of attention to detail. This representation of Calvan *actio* encourages us to interpret any of his texts, which might have otherwise appeared faultless to a reader, not as an example of rhetorical perfection, but as an example of artificiality. An assessment of Calvus' oratory based exclusively on and interested purely in his textual output might have interpreted a lack of faults, a painstaking attention to detail, and a high level of polish as virtues. Instead, Cicero opens up the performative dimension of the oration and prompts us to 'restore' Calvus' presence as a performer to the text before us. In doing so, Cicero encourages us to read Calvus' texts as performances and to interpret his textual virtues as performative vices.

[29] *Brutus* 301. Cf. *Brutus* 218f. where Curio's *memoria* is said to have been so bad that it can still be discerned in his writing, as a rather extreme exception to its usual invisibility within texts. For further observations on the difficulties faced by the textual representation of certain aspects of *actio*, see Gunderson 2000: 29–34, which highlights this problem in rhetorical handbooks.
[30] *Brutus* 283.

Yet, it is not merely the performative presence of individual orators that the *Brutus* attempts to preserve. Cicero is at pains to integrate these accounts of individual orators into a wider narrative of Republican oratory, thereby avoiding another risk associated with oratory's textual existence. One of Cicero's opening salvos against the Atticists accuses them of misreading and misjudging Cato by applying contemporary standards to his work:

> antiquior est [Catonis] sermo et quaedam horridiora verba. ita enim tum loquebantur; id muta, quod non potuit, et adde numeros et ut aptior sit oratio, ipsa verba compone et quasi coagmenta, quod ne Graeci quidem veteres factitaverunt, iam neminem antepones Catoni.[31]
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> "The language of Cato is too archaic and some words are too uncouth." Yes, for that's how they used to speak then. Change that, which he could not, add rhythm, and, to make the speech neater, fit together the words themselves and the joints, so to speak, which even the old Greeks did not habitually do, and now you will place no-one before Cato.

Cicero's point is that Cato must be judged as an orator within the context of his own contemporaries, not according to modern standards which have benefited from the advances in oratory brought about by others after him. If the Atticists gave Cato the benefit of the doubt and 'updated' his texts with all the subsequent rhetorical innovations, he would come out on top. The diachronic history of oratory offered emphasises that each new generation of orators benefits from the advances made by the last and thus that a synchronic comparison is unethical.[32]

The meticulous detail of this diachronic history, enough to bring Atticus to the end of his tether,[33] is designed to provide a correct context for the appreciation of rhetorical genius in each generation, since it provides an impression of how much competition each pre-eminent orator faced and overcame. The danger posed by the transformation of oratory into a collection of texts is that it encourages future generations to read and judge the texts of orations synchronically according to

[31] *Brutus* 68.
[32] Dugan 2005: 190f.
[33] *Brutus* 293–9.

modern, supposedly 'abstract', standards, thereby wrenching those texts out of their context in the cut-and-thrust of Republican politics. The *Brutus* is intent upon memorialising oratory as another aspect of the competitive politics of the Republic before the elites' *libertas* was curtailed by an autocrat. In the closing sections, Cicero turns to Brutus and urges him *ut te eripias ex ea quam ego congessi in hunc sermonem turba patronorum*,[34] to earn his place alongside the victors of each previous generation of orators.[35] The *Brutus* aims to ensure that oratory's transformation into a collection of texts does not result in synchronic judgements which abstract rhetorical excellence from its place as the weapon of a Roman *vir* in free competition with his peers. The memorialisation of oratory also functions as a memorialisation of the competitive *libertas* of the elite.

However, this memorialisation is by no means an objective and disinterested account of Republican oratory, but is a teleological narrative designed to culminate in Cicero himself.[36] Just as Cicero 'restores' the performative dimensions of oratory to other orators' textual output, so he encourages us to understand his own textual orations through the lens of *actio*. The relevant passages occur in Cicero's account of the critical moment of his early career, his eastern journey, which is presented as a triumph in self-fashioning.[37] Though this clearly parallels the eastern journey of *Eloquentia*,[38] the results of her journey are the smearing of herself in foreign oratory's artificial cosmetics (*se externis oblineret moribus*), the destruction of her wholesome Attic diction and health (*salubritatem Atticae dictionis et quasi sanitatem perderet*), and a near-inability to speak (*loqui paene dedisceret*).[39] By contrast, Cicero is *non contentus* with all the Asiatic orators and he returns restored to health, *non modo exercitatior sed prope mutatus*:[40] Cicero encounters all that Asiatic oratory has to offer, but comes to master it, thereby allowing him to triumph over and curtail the excesses of his youthful Asiatic self.

[34] *Brutus* 332: '[see to it] that you save yourself from the mob of advocates which I have brought into this discussion.'
[35] *Brutus* 333.
[36] Hinds 1998: 64–8.
[37] *Brutus* 313–16.
[38] Stroup 2010: 256
[39] *Brutus* 51.
[40] *Brutus* 316: 'not only more well-trained but almost transformed.'

Cicero introduces this autobiographical section by commenting that Atticus wants to know *totum me non naevo aliquo aut crepundiis, sed corpore omni*.[41] We expect this language to be figurative: Cicero is contrasting knowledge of some arbitrary feature, such as the birthmark or rattle which were both common in New Comedy's recognition scenes, with knowledge of something in its entirety.[42] We may even expect that *corpus* is a jocular reference to his textual body of work, which he will now analyse to reveal the essential features of his own oratory. Instead of finding this general account of his oratorical development, Cicero describes the development of his actual body. If we are to comprehend Cicero's oratory in its entirety, we must understand the body which performed his orations.

If Cicero had stopped here, his bodily narrative would simply reiterate the importance of *actio*. However, the terms in which he describes his body are worthy of our attention, since they are terms which Cicero is equally comfortable using about texts. Cicero claims that his weak body's continual exposure to public speaking meant that he was considered to be close to endangering his life, owing to his excessive slenderness (*summa gracilitas*), his bodily weakness (*infirmitas corporis*), and his tall and thin neck (*procerum et tenue collum*).[43] Cicero never uses *gracilitas* elsewhere, except figuratively in the *Brutus* to describe the preference of Lysias' followers for *gracilitates*, meagre or slender orations, over the amply framed orations of Asianism (*habitus corporis opimos*).[44] Moreover, *tenue collum*, an initially unremarkable description, may also recall the *tenuitas* which is said to delight the Atticists in the same passage. Cicero's description of his actual body in terms which he has figuratively applied to Atticist orations suggests that bodies and orations can be understood in identical terms and are thus comparable subjects: bodies can be understood as verbal constructs and verbal constructs as bodies.

The crisis which threatens Cicero's life is caused by his body and his orations being polar opposites: his Atticist body cannot handle the pressures imposed by the Asiatic style of his oratory modelled after Hortensius. His eastern journey is significant since his tuition under Molo at Rhodes allowed him to reconcile his Atticist body with his

[41] *Brutus* 313: '[to know] all of me, not by some birthmark or rattle, but by my whole body.'
[42] Douglas 1966: 224.
[43] *Brutus* 313.
[44] *Brutus* 64.

Asiatic orations by finding a middle way of moderation.[45] He claims that Molo made it his task *ut nimis redundantis nos et supra fluentis iuvenili quadam dicendi impunitate et licentia reprimeret et quasi extra ripas diffluentis*:[46] essentially, Molo removed his Asiatic redundance and excess, which transgressed the narrow bounds of Cicero's bodily strength. Simultaneously, *lateribus…vires et corpori mediocris habitus accesserat*:[47] his body grows in strength from its meagre Atticist beginnings, achieving a *mediocris habitus* that places it between the *gracilitates* of the Atticists' orations and the *habitus corporis opimos* of Asiatic oratory. In this reconciliation, Cicero collapses any distinction between the 'real', physical self which performs these orations before the audience's eyes and the self constructed by the verbal content of the orations. Under Molo's tutelage, Cicero fashions a single, uniform identity by making his actual body and the figurative body of his orations identical. There is no gulf between his physical self and the verbal content of his orations to prevent his texts from preserving every significant aspect of his oratory and thus Cicero's presence, his real self, inheres in the text of his speeches.[48]

This idea that the real Cicero is accessible through the texts of his orations is supported by his careful intertwining of his narrative of oratorical development with other narratives of moral, political, and physical development. Particularly intriguing is Cicero's use of the vintage metaphor of his speech simmering down: *quasi deferverat oratio*.[49] This metaphor alludes to its earlier appearance in the *Pro Caelio*, in which the passage from youth, *otium*, and *ludus* to maturity and *negotium* only takes place *cum adulescentiae cupiditates defervissent*.[50] Equally interesting is Cicero's decision to re-use the metaphor in the *Orator*, where in surveying his own texts Cicero comments that *Pro Roscio Amerino* 72, an example of his early speeches, seems *nequaquam satis defervisse*, while *Pro Cluentio* 199 comes *ab*

[45] Cf. Dugan 2005: 225f. for Rhodes as a geographically symbolic midpoint.
[46] *Brutus* 316: 'to curb the redundant and excessive flow of my oratory, which was marked by a certain youthful freedom from censure and lack of restraint, and to keep it from, as it were, overflowing its banks.'
[47] *Brutus* 316: 'my lungs had gained strength and my body some weight.'
[48] One form of oration which Cicero fails to mention in the *Brutus* is the textual, published oration which had never been delivered, possibly because the mention of purely textual orations might have rendered the 'silencing' of oratory less dramatic. However, if Cicero's writing were identical to his performance, perhaps he could make the entirety of his self, even the performative aspects, inhere in a speech that was never even performed.
[49] *Brutus* 316: 'my speech, as it were, had simmered down.' See Douglas 1966: 226 for the vintage metaphor.
[50] *Pro Caelio* 43: 'when the passions of youth had simmered down.'

hac indole iam illa matura.[51] This suggests that Cicero's oratorical development mirrors his personal development and the evolution of his political career, and that his texts in some sense preserve this narrative of Cicero's development. Moreover, the *Brutus* confirms that Cicero's oratory continued to mirror his physical and mental development by identifying the onset of civil war as the moment *cum…ipsa oratio iam nostra canesceret haberetque suam quandam maturitatem et quasi senectutem*.[52] Cicero's oratory can be considered a textual corpus that grows and even ages with him. Cicero's self-fashioning was not a single moment in which he crafted a fixed, static self, but was a fusion of his oratory, his body, and himself into an organic unity. As a result, his oratory continued to develop alongside him, the implication being that we can open any Ciceronian speech and find the real Cicero as he then was preserved within it.

Therefore, Cicero himself becomes the best example of the *Brutus*' fulfilment of the Platonic guardianship of *Eloquentia*, since it is his own presence within his orations for which the *Brutus* subtly argues at its close. The *Brutus*' restoration of the performative presence of individual orators makes it something of a 'companion' to oratory's textual record, repeatedly prompting readers to consider the performative dimensions of oratory, which have either been lost or marginalised in its new textual form, and perhaps preserving oratory's role in elite self-fashioning and competition, in case it should ever find its true place again in a restored Republic. Obviously, this 'restoration' of *actio* does not disinterestedly provide us with an objective account of the details of an orator's performance: it is no accident that the work encourages its reader to cast a critical eye over the texts of Cicero's rival, Calvus, and canonises Cicero himself as the leading orator of his generation. The access offered to the lost world of Republican oratory is entirely on Cicero's terms. Yet, in a sense this partisan history preserves the tradition of Republican oratory better than any purportedly objective account ever could. Rather than viewing the history of oratory as a purely academic matter, the *Brutus* extends the battle for oratorical pre-eminence, beyond the death of Cicero's rivals and even of the Republic itself, into posterity.

[51] *Orator* 107: '[*Pro Roscio Amerino* 72 seems] not to have simmered down enough in any way'; '[*Pro Cluentio* 199 comes] from this same nature/natural faculty now fully matured.'
[52] *Brutus* 8: 'when my own oratory itself was already going white, and was in possession of a certain maturity and, as it were, old age.'

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