could press their stylistic and performative innovations. The declaimers are symptomatic of Augustus's social experimentation, his simultaneous appropriation of republican *auctoritas* and development of an indeterminate political role. If Augustus experiments with and explores the construction of a new, constantly shifting, evanescent *auctoritas*, the declaimers experiment with Ciceronian practices of political subjectivity, transforming the fashioning of the self to respond to the altered pressures of Augustan society. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill comments, "All Augustus' reforms, the 'political' ones too, are aimed at *mores*."[44] The declaimers redefine republican definitions of *libertas* in terms of personal *licentia*, exploring new concepts of *libertas* in the wake of the demise of the old one, in response to Augustus' own redirecting of affairs from the public sphere to the private one.[45] Augustus's strategy was taken in another direction by members of the senatorial order, who, when encouraged to give aid to the state by the very material means of rebuilding roads and regulating the grain supply, thought better of supporting and refurbishing the *res publica* that Augustus had restored. Their refusal discloses a turning aside or self-distancing from Augustan public policy in favor of what we might call his "private" policy": the new emphasis on personal *auctoritas* gained primarily through morals and maintenance of propriety. These nobles and provincials invented a new kind of phantasmatic Rome, one that had more to do with the trappings of personal dignity and the upholding of intangibles such as language than the tangible *cura viarum*, the reconstruction of buildings and temples, and the *cura annonae* of the *populus Romanus*.

Quintilian : A republican education for autocracy

The desire to order language in rhetorical discourse reflects a desire to reform the order of human life. Indicative of this is the tendency for rhetorical, social, and moral lexica to overlap, as in Cicero's choice of *decorum* and its verbal cognates to frame his discussion of eloquence. His favorite question, *quid decet?* (what is fitting)?, assimilates the regulation of language to the maintenance of social hierarchy. The Latin terms for rhetoric's formal parts resonate with the language of Roman political order: *dispositio*, *partitio*, *distributio* all carry the sense of legal governance and administration. *Deminutio*, the slighting style, also means the formal financial deduction from an estate, and the deprivation of civil rights; *propositio*, the announcement of what is coming next in the argument, also refers to

[44] Wallace-Hadrill, "*Mutatio morum*," 9.
[45] Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 55.

the posting up of notices of proposed bills; *reditus*, the "return" to a topic, has the same connotation as tax return, that is, revenue; *repetitio*, or repetition, also means a legal action for reclamation of property, and *deprecatio* means a formal appeal for mercy and a plea of mitigating circumstances, as well as the orator's plea to the audience for attention. *Rogatio*, posing a question, means proposing a measure to the assembly of the people; *praeteritio* means not only saying one will not say more on a topic, but also a refusal to select candidates for office. *Coercitio*, or pausing to stop interruptions from the audience, also means the infliction of summary punishment by a magistrate; *conciliatio*, an example of which is *captatio benevolentiae*, also refers to bonds of union that link social groups.[46]

Quintilian's twelve-book *Institutio Oratoria* is a system-generating machine. His habit of categorization—the parts of speech, types of argument, figures and tropes, proper and improper gestures—compellingly models a social order reinforced through language. In the late fourth century, Libanius exhorted his neglectful students to memorize tropes and figures laid out in texts already more than seven hundred years old: "Move closer to the classic orators; purify your language!" (*Or.* 35.18).[47] Quintilian's project is the commingling of the Hellenistic codification of rhetoric with a Ciceronian emphasis on the liberty of the well-educated man. To Cicero, the orator's place is in the public gaze, the center of an event that calls citizens together for a common purpose, giving the republic a visible form—a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly habit of spectation during which the gaze of the *populus* evaluates its leaders. In Arendt's notion of the enlarging discourse of the public sphere, spectacles induce the "thoughtful suspension of thought" in the beholder, driving the imaginative action necessary to "regenerate" political will—precisely the orator's job.[48] Quintilian does not expect his students to participate in the ruling practices of Cicero's age. In 14 CE, Augustus abolished the *contio*, the elite-mass encounter whose key role in instantiating republican *libertas* we explored in chapter 1; not long after, Tiberius transferred electoral powers to the senate. Other spectacles, such as the triumph, were legally limited to the emperor's family. The "imperial council" (*consilium principis*) was closed to the participation and indeed the gaze of many senators.[49] The senators did not lose all their traditional opportunities to compete for *dignitas*, but the political order no longer rested on that competition, as they believed, as good readers of Cicero, the republic had done—a belief whose elements of fantasy do not negate the social effects that arise from it.

[46] I am drawing here from the thirty-nine figures of thought listed in Cicero's *Orator*.

[47] Cited in Gleason, *Making Men*, 164.

[48] Coleman eloquently recounts Arendt's influential vision of the public sphere, *Rousseau's Political Imagination* (Geneva, 1984), 36–37.

[49] Crook, *Consilium Principis*, 48.

If the republic Tacitus laments was always a fantasy, it was one shared by his republican forebears—increasing, perhaps, the sense of loss among the imperial senatorial order.[50]

Quintilian responds to this loss with an act of translation: he transposes Ciceronian public performative ethics into a domestic key, and redefines the enlargement of thought encouraged by Ciceronian rhetoric as the project of becoming a *vir bonus*, a "good man." His vision should be understood as another iteration of the ethical training described by the younger Seneca:

> When I looked into myself, Seneca, certain faults appeared to me to be located on the surface, so that I could lay my hand on them; but others were more hidden away in the depths; and others still were not there all the time, but returned from time to time—and these I would call the most troublesome, for they are like patrolling enemies who pounce on you at the first opportunity. . . . Anyway, the state I most find myself in (for why shouldn't I admit the truth to you, as to a doctor?) is that I am not really free of the faults which I fear and hate, but, on the other hand, I am not exactly subject to them either. . . . I am neither ill nor well. Now there is no need for you to say that all virtues are fragile to start with and acquire firmness and strength in time: I know that things take time to mature. (*Tranq.* 1.1)

This passage opens *de Tranquillitate Animi*, a dialogue between Seneca and his (probably fictional) friend Serenus. In their quest to live virtuously, the two are typical of men interested in philosophy in the imperial period, which focused on the self's relation to itself, a relation understood and mastered via a variety of disciplines, mental and physical. Serenus tells Seneca that he is troubled and upset, but he cannot identify the source of his anxiety; all he can do is describe his symptoms. His confession represents a key moment in the developing disposition of Western thinkers to view the self as a moral practitioner, an entity defined, day by day, through his ethical beliefs and practices. Subjectivity, in Seneca's view, does not simply come into existence at birth, and it is not immutable: we must labor to maintain the virtuous parts of ourselves and root out the vices that menace the self. Seneca treats the self as an embodied entity—as Serenus says, he feels that he can touch his faults with his fingers. Seneca's diagnosis brings to light another important issue. Serenus's real trouble is not some innate weakness but a flaw actually *resulting* from the process of self-construction. "What you need

[50] Roller, *Constructing Autocracy*, traces the articulation of aristocratic ethics in the new and changing conditions of the principate (see esp. Seneca's rewriting of Cicero and well-known exempla, 64–126). Gowing, *Empire and Memory*, explores the construction of the idea of republican Rome in a range of early imperial authors; his discussion of Pliny is particularly relevant to my concerns (120–31).

now," Seneca says, "is not those more radical remedies which we have now finished with—blocking yourself here, being angry with yourself there, threatening yourself sternly somewhere else—but the final treatment: confidence in yourself, and the belief that you are on the right path." Serenus's problem is that he has worked so hard to develop himself that his efforts have led him to self-revulsion (*fastidium sui*) and self-dissatisfaction (*sibi displicere*).

Seneca's awareness of the complexity of the self's development, and his willingness to address the problem of how to talk about the conscious construction and situation of a self when a person is already alive, is what drew Michel Foucault to look back to classical antiquity in his *History of Sexuality*.[51] Foucault began by noticing that ancient society did not look to an institutionalized moral code for guidance, regulation, or discipline of its daily life. To say such a thing, he decided, would be putting the cart before the horse. Before the idea of regulating moral practices could come into existence, a concept of the self as primarily an ethical practitioner whose identity arises from his or her ethical disposition had to develop. Foucault finds in Seneca an aesthetics of self-care that focuses on the body, its sensations, and their interrelationship with states of mind and that takes shape in practical exercises shared among a group. Seneca perpetually discusses the shaping of character, the molding of self, as a program designed by individual men communally linked by their interest in ethical philosophy. At no time does Seneca abandon his attempt to refine himself: the divisions Cicero makes between leisure (*otium*), the time he allots to self-introspection, and business (*negotium*, *labor*) have in Seneca dissolved into a never-ending effort to build, and rebuild, the self. The letters of Pliny, Marcus Aurelius, and Fronto exhibit a similar preoccupation, and the four *Sacred Tales* of Aelius Aristides, which document his struggle with his ailing body and his never-ending effort to cure it, are typical of this period's preoccupation with bodily functions and their effect on the psyche.[52] In this context, the constraints on rhetoric in action provided an opportunity for orators to use their speeches as acts of self-constitution in the very mode of "self-intensification" that so captivates Foucault. In other words, Quintilian intensifies what was already there in Cicero: the attention to the self as the object of self-care. The self Quintilian

[51] This is not to deny the existence of other ethical trends: cf. Riggsby, "Self and community in the younger Pliny," for discussion of more reactionary writings.

[52] Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales*, is the most thorough study of the writings in their social context; but see also Perkins, *The suffering self*, 115–16, 176–94. Rousselle, *Porneia*, devotes the bulk of her study to the analysis of the medicalization of the body in the early imperial period.

invents is less rigidly articulated, if not less strictly policed, than the stylization of repression Foucault finds in Greek and Latin medical and philosophical texts: Quintilian's self is Ciceronian, decidedly embodied, taking shape through the performances of talk, gesticulation, and emotional display.[53] Its strict scrutiny of bodily *hexis* and the eradication of behavioral elements incommensurate with conventional ideals of masculinity and Roman identity exemplify the ceaseless action on and toward the self that Foucault calls self-fashioning.

The republican context, of course, had anchored the construction of this self in political competition. We remember Cicero's insistence that the eternal labor on the self that constituted the virtuous life be directed outward, in the *vita activa* of politics (*De Rep.* 1.2). Unmoored from this network of rewards and dangers, from a system that correlated virtue with the survival of the republic, Quintilian's project of self-making through rhetorical training fuels a new version of the same engine, one that looks back to Caesar's *de Analogia*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Cicero's *de Inventione*: the rationalization and codification of the educated body for (universal) imperial use. When Quintilian reclaims the rhetorical school as a site for moral improvement, appropriating the smallest aspects of speech and deportment, he leaves nothing to chance: what Cicero had covered in three books, Quintilian expands to twelve. One chapter, in the book on delivery, virtually anatomizes the good orator's body (11.3): breathing through the nose (56), eyebrow jutting, eyelid blinking (77–78), lip curling (81), gesticulating with the elbow (not recommended, 93), bending the knuckle joints in just the right way (94–102), and so on. Bodies are marked through and through by this training. As Kafka writes in a different context:

> Our sentence does not sound very severe. Whatever commandment the condemned man has disobeyed is written on his body. "Honor your superiors.". . . When the Harrow . . . finishes its first draft of the inscription on the back, the layer of cotton wool begins to roll and slowly turns the body over, to give the Harrow fresh space for writing. Meanwhile the raw part that has been written on lies on the cotton wool, which is especially prepared to staunch the bleeding and so makes all ready for a new deepening of the script. . . . How quiet he grows at just about the sixth hour! Enlightenment comes to the most dull-witted.[54]

[53] Miller, "Pedagogy and pederasty," complains of the repression and silence seductively reenacted in Foucault's reading of ancient ethical formation. It is worth noting that rhetoric disrupts central tenets of the Platonic tradition that so deeply preoccupies Foucault, with its dualist hierarchy of mind and body, its critique of emotion and verbal style, and its treatment of the self as an essentially autonomous entity.

[54] Kafka, "The penal settlement."

Precisely because the nature of the gaze that had regulated republican practice had changed, because the link between the dynamism of public speech and political decision making was being worn down by the interfering presence of the emperor, it becomes all the more crucial for Quintilian to represent his good orator as the exemplum of free autonomy. In an important passage in the middle of his introduction to rhetorical theory, Quintilian objects to Cicero's characterization of eloquence as the necessary origin of law (*Inv.* 1.2): how can eloquence be the actual origin (*primam originem*) of laws or cities, he skeptically asks, when there are nomadic nations (*vagae gentes*) who have no cities or laws but who send ambassadors, accuse and defend one another, and judge one man a better speaker than another (3.2.4)? If Quintilian frays the threads with which Cicero seeks to tie oratory to politics, however, he is also exploiting a framework established by Cicero's own late rhetorical work. In a letter of 49 BCE Cicero complains that Caesar and Pompey each want power for themselves alone (*Att.* 8.11); in 46 he breaks his long silence in the senate to give three speeches before Caesar; in 44 he begins to deliver and circulate the *Philippics*, choosing the swan song of invective. Quintilian exploits the two sides of Ciceronian rhetoric exemplified by his Caesarian orations and the speeches against Antony: its potential for reifying individual identity (the self that speaks out) is preserved side by side with rhetoric's techniques of polite submission, which, through their claim to form the good man, offer a way to reclaim submission as manly, if not free.

As in Cicero, Quintilian's rhetorical education now bears the whole burden of performative ethics. The consequences of behaving like an actor, a eunuch, a slave, or a woman are correspondingly dire. "Healthy bodies, enjoying a good circulation and strengthened by exercise, acquire grace from the same source that gives them strength, but the man who attempts to enhance these physical graces by the effeminate use of depilatories and cosmetics succeeds merely in defacing them by the very care that he bestows on them . . . tasteful dress lends dignity, but effeminate and luxurious apparel does not adorn the body, but merely exposes the mind" (8 pref. 19–20).[55] Ornament remains an essential part of oratory, but excessive ornament is repulsive: so it must be bold, manly, chaste, "free from all effeminate smoothness and the false hues derived from artificial dyes, glowing with health and vigor" (8.3.6–11).[56] The body that

[55] *Corpore sana et integri sanguinis et exercitatione firmata ex iisdem his speciem accipiunt ex quibus vires . . . ; at eadem si quis volsa atque fucata muliebriter comat, foedissima sint ipso formae labore. Et cultus concessus atque magnificus addit hominibus . . . auctoritatem; at muliebris et luxuriosus non corpus exornat, sed detegit mentem.*

[56] *Sed hic ornatus virilis et fortis et sanctus sit nec effeminatam levitatem et fuco ementitum colorem amet, sanguine et viribus niteat.* Fantham explores the limits of ornatus in "*Varietas* and *satietas*," 275.

was a site for experimentation for the declaimers appears in Quintilian as a Ciceronian entity of self-supervision and discipline. His vision of education upholds the natural order through the retelling of mythic paradigms in declamation: this is the conservative side of the practice in the context of an imperially sanctioned educational program, outside the sphere of the Augustan declaimers' experimentation.[57] During a Quintilianic declamatory performance, the speaker learned to manipulate his body and speech in order to position himself in self-conscious opposition to his social inferiors. And in their content, the declamations helped inculcate attitudes toward social control.

On the other hand, Quintilian directs even more attention toward rhetoric's function as a reason-based source of justice. He devotes four books to the invention and arrangement of narration and argument (3–5, 7), and his capstone account in book 12 of the *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, the "good man skilled in speaking," stresses that the laws would be useless (*leges ipsae nihil valeant*) unless defended by the voice of the advocate (12.7.1). His insistence on the orator's political role is subtle: as Teresa Morgan points out, his representation of typically uneducated or illiterate people—barbarians, peasants, slaves, children, and women—does not fit the contemporary evidence for well-educated women and slaves (as well as the children who were Quintilian's own pupils), but it does coincide with those who lacked political freedom, in republican as well as imperial Rome.[58] Quintilian's aim, expressed in the closing words of the treatise, is encouraging "goodwill" (*bona voluntas*) to be directed for the preservation of law (12.11.31). Rebuking those who suggest that oratory decayed after the death of Cicero, Quintilian recovers the value of middling eloquence (*modica eloquentia*) that produces great profits (*magnos fructus*, 12.11.29).

From Gibbon's perspective in *Decline and Fall*, the end of the first century witnessed the demise of the classical age of art and literature. Under the Flavians, he laments, "the beauties of the [earlier] poets and orators, instead of kindling a fire like their own, inspired only cold and servile imitations: or if any ventured to deviate from those models, they deviated at the same time from good sense and propriety. . . . The decline of genius was soon followed by the corruption of taste" (I.84). Gibbon uses gendered language to animate his condemnation of its aesthetic and moral values. To say that imperial orators are "servile" and lacking in "fire" is to impugn their masculine potency: the "coldness" of their speeches recalls a long tradition of Western medical representations of the female body as dank and chill, in opposition to the internal heat of the male

[57] Mythic paradigms: Beard, "Looking (harder) for Roman myth."
[58] Morgan, "A good man skilled in politics: Quintilian's political theory," 260–61.

body.[59] Here the historian rewrites rhetoric as weak and derivative in order to establish a literary dimension to his claim that the Roman empire declined primarily as a result of its own self-indulgence. The servile and unmanly obsequiousness of epideictic becomes an ideal representation of the effeminate languor that, in Gibbon's view, Eastern luxuries fostered in Rome: this is a view we have seen already, in Tacitus. In this chapter, I have sought to rebut the Tacitean and Gibbonian account by showing how so rhetoric reinvents Ciceronian performative ethics in imperial guise. Quintilian, confronted with the ethical challenge of living a virtuous life under autocracy, might have put it this way: to speak out while looking up at the object of one's praise is not the best of circumstances, but doing so at least forces the head to be held up, not to droop down like the head of a slave.

[59] It is true that the language of temperature is a very common term in literary criticism and thus might be expected to be on some level ideologically "free," but like so many other tropes of literary discourse, it retains traces of gender and class ideology. Hanson provides a careful discussion of the competing views on temperature of the female body in the Hippocratic corpus, Aristotle, Soranus and Galen, pointing out that Aristotle was refuting the belief that women's bodies were hotter than men's, and that his argument exerted a decisive influence on later medical and scientific writings ("The medical writers' woman," 332).

Conclusion

THE CICERONIAN CITIZEN IN A GLOBAL WORLD

THIS BOOK HAS ARGUED that Roman rhetoric makes a major contribution to the way the western tradition thinks about politics. It looks forward, almost in spite of itself, to liberal and communitarian theorists who want to conceive a theory of citizenship broad enough to be available to all types of citizens yet one sufficiently strong, unified, and appealing to hold its own in a sea of cultural relativism and intellectual abstraction. No liberal, Cicero uses rhetoric to think through political problems in a fashion relevant to the liberal claim that citizens have the capacity "to act as conscientious interpreters and enforcers" of the public morality, and that this capacity alone is the bedrock of a powerful, shared civic identity. As Stephen Macedo writes in his study of the civic virtues that in his compelling view, underpin liberalism:

> Liberalism stands for "self-government" in a radical sense of that term . . . and calls for critical reflectiveness on public principles, a demeanor that complements the reflective attitude of autonomous liberal agents, shaping, criticizing, revising, and pursuing their personal commitments and projects.[1]

The speaking self that rhetorical texts seek to produce is a body with passions and sentiments, and it speaks a language generated out of and generating communal and reciprocal truth; these texts insist on the importance of the style of the verbal connectives that construct us as political entities in a community. Why? Language gives the self the possession of the virtues Macedo describes: a critical self-directedness, a command of cultural ideals, a capacity to conform to impersonal rules and moral norms, and the required resolve and fortitude to act on the basis of personal deliberations.[2] Civic identity is animated by the kinetic effects of the ideal narratives we tell ourselves, and the narrative Cicero tells falls on the side of eloquence—which is to say, with community. "Can you give yourself your own evil and your own good and hang your own will over yourself as a law?" Nietzsche asks. "Can you be your own judge and avenger of your law?" Cicero answers these questions with both a yes and a no. The virtuous, eloquent man is represented as governing

[1] Macedo, *Liberal Virtues*, 100, 128.
[2] Modified from Macedo, *Liberal Virtues*, 225.

himself, but only under the gaze of the community—a community in which the self itself must ultimately take its place, through the human connection of language, if it is to remain human at all. Yet that connection is fueled by the drama of shared passions, whose power sutures the rifts in the republic but which, Cicero knows from experience, may also rise up to overwhelm it.

In their influential work on hegemony and social formation, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe identify the German Romantics, and especially Hegel, as the authors of the modern conception of the social as a unity of scattered elements originally specified as fragments of an ancient "lost structural or organic totality." This is the starting point of Romantic dialectic:

> The collapse of the view of the cosmos as a meaningful order within which man occupied a precise and determined place—and the replacement of this view by a self-defining conception of the subject, as an entity maintaining relations of exteriority with the rest of the universe (the Weberian disenchantment of the world)—led the Romantic generation of the *Sturm und Drang* to an eager search for that lost unity, for a new synthesis that would permit the division to be overcome. . . . Given that the elements to be rearticulated were specified as fragments of a lost unity, it was clear that any recomposition would have an *artificial* character, as opposed to the natural *organic* unity peculiar to Greek culture.[3]

Ciceronian rhetoric and political theory expose Laclau and Mouffe's version of history as a fantasy constructed to serve modern desires to read the Greek past as natural and transparent and to erase the Roman past entirely. Roman thought has a special capacity to arouse anxiety. The conception of the social order and man's place in it that Enlightenment and Romantic thinkers found in their Latin schooltexts, and Cicero in particular, was not the "organic unity peculiar to Greek [*sic*] culture" but a tense awareness of the blurred borders between nature and self-conscious art.

In the centuries between late antiquity and the twelfth century, scholars of rhetoric focused their energies on the Latin texts most appropriate for school use: prosaic and accessible works like *de Inventione* and *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.[4] One medievalist estimates that up to two thousand copies of these two works survive, making them among the

[3] Laclau and Mouffe. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 93–94 (original italics). Žižek remarks on the significance of the illusory in Laclau's work in *The Ticklish Subject*, 182–84.

[4] From an immense bibliography, I have benefited most from the classic studies by Baron's *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*, Jerrold Seigel's *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism*, Pocock's *Machiavellian Moment*, esp. ch.3, "The *vita activa* and the *vivere civile*," and Skinner's *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*.

most popular Latin works of all time.[5] Easier to copy, circulate, and teach than the sophisticated dialogue *de Oratore* or Quintilian's twelve-book *Institutio Oratoria*, the compilations and digests available in this period fostered a busy industry of etymology, grammar, prosimetrics, figure, trope, and genre. But contrary to the common view still perpetuated in recent histories of rhetoric, the rise of rhetoric as a force in Renaissance political thought did not begin with the discovery and circulation of longer and more ambitious Greek and Roman texts.[6] When Poggio discovered Quintilian's *Institutio* and Asconius's commentaries on Cicero in 1416, a large group of hopeful readers was already eager to hear the romantic account of his hunt through the dusty corners of the St. Gall Monastery library. New editions of Poggio's trove, along with Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and complete manuscripts of Cicero's *de Oratore*, *Orator*, and *Brutus*, mark not the beginning of Renaissance humanism but a crest in the wave that had been building since the mid-1100s.

At that time the copying and editing of letter-writing handbooks for students and courtiers took on a distinctly political flavor, as rhetoricians mixed advice on proper modes of epistolary address with model speeches and commentary on contemporary political issues.[7] This type of handbook, the *ars dictaminis*, became the model for political pamphlets like Machiavelli's *Il Principe* and Erasmus's "mirror of princes" letter to Philip of Spain, which cast their authors in a traditional mode, as advisors to the powerful. As advice about the subject's self-presentation in a letter to a prince evolved into advice to a prince presenting himself to his subjects, the lines between actor and observer began to blur. By the end of the twelfth century, some scholars turned with new seriousness from the job of teaching princes and nobles to the problem of training non-nobles for civic service, first in the context of the late medieval courts of Europe and gradually in the less exclusive setting of the Italian republics and the English Parliament. In *The Banquet*, Dante praises one such scholar for his criticism of traditional beliefs about nobility and virtue, summarized in the opinion that high birth is no proof of goodness: "wherever virtue is, there is nobility."[8] These rhetoricians saw themselves not only as the interpreters of rhetorical manuals but as the ethical guides of their generation: in their hands, techniques of rhetorical presentation were evolving into practices of the self.

[5] Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 216.

[6] Kennedy's work largely ignores rhetoric's contribution to civic thought in the late Middle Ages; Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, and Barthes, "The old rhetoric." complain of the aridity of medieval rhetoric.

[7] I rely here on the informative accounts of Skinner, *Foundations,* 23–48, 69–101, and Wieruszowski, *Politics and Culture*, 589–627.

[8] Skinner discusses Dante's relationship with the scholar Brunetto Latini in *Foundations*, 46.

Machiavelli's famous letter to Francesco Vettori, describing the way he read the classics, demonstrates how political ideals evolved hand in hand with the rediscovery and circulation of ancient texts, especially Cicero's rhetorical work and the closely related treatise on honorableness, *de Officiis*. When Machiavelli comes home in the evening, he tells Vettori, before he begins to read his favorite classical books, he dresses himself in formal clothing, as though to prepare himself for conversation (*parlare*) with the ancient authors. Dressing for the part, pretending that the conversation is taking place in public view, accustoms Machiavelli's imagination to the habits of active civic participation. It also contributes directly to his growing conviction that a common language and even common cultural tastes—in clothing, for instance—are necessary for citizens to live together in security and virtue.[9] Moreover, he asserts in the *Discorsi*, the language and habits of political life must be common not only in the sense that all the citizens share them; they must also be accessible to all, *volgare*, reflecting what Cicero habitually refers to as the *communis sensus*, common sensibility.

Machiavelli's letter incorporates the five core Ciceronian ideas that are repeated, mantra-like, by the Renaissance humanists responsible for this development in rhetoric.[10] First, they treat speech as that which distinguishes humans from animals, and further, as humanity's highest natural capacity. If speech is a natural human virtue, then eloquence is the sum of human existence, the means by which all other virtues are attained and—crucially—the means by which virtue is practiced in the world, in the course of the *vita activa*.

The emphasis on language as a virtue on its own terms, and more specifically on the virtue of common language, led the humanists to revive the Ciceronian claim that without eloquence, wisdom is meaningless. This is the second point: scholarship that adopts an inaccessible style, or research into topics that do not appeal to a broad audience, exile the scholar from the *vita activa* and hence from human society altogether. As Juan Luis Vives wrote in the early sixteenth century, the study of "difficult, hidden, and troublesome knowledge" bred students who ignored civic duties and family life, making them unnatural parasites on the social body.[11] The vitriol of Hobbes's critique of this position in favor of a necessarily exclusive discourse of science and philosophy in *de Cive* and *Leviathan* and the revival of Cicero's position, partly in response to

[9] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, 62.

[10] This is a schematic reduction of a complicated tradition of reception, but it furnishes a conceptual frame within which to understand Cicero's influence and an instrument with which to read past the prejudices that inform post-Enlightenment interpretations of rhetoric: see Fantham, *Roman World*, on the "sheer prejudice" against Cicero (185).

[11] *De Tradendis Disciplinis*, 17, translated by Foster Watson.

Hobbes, by Scottish commonsense philosophers like Francis Hutcheson and Adam Smith are indications of its profound impact on early modern thought.

Third, the humanists felt that the investigation of the emotions central to rhetorical discourse since Aristotle rendered rhetoric crucial to the knowledge of humanity, and hence to the teaching of youth and the leadership of polities. "To the will," Vives wrote in 1531, "reason and judgment are assigned as counselors, and the emotions are its torches. Further, the emotions of the mind are enflamed by the sparks of speech. So too, reason is impelled and moved by speech."[12] Speech is in fact the enabler of human community—the fourth key Ciceronian concept in the humanists' repertoire. Stefano Guazzo declared that "nature herself has given man the power of speech, but certainly not in order that he converse with himself. . . . speech is a means by which men come together and love one another."[13] As the heart of civility, the practices that enable humans to live together, eloquence formed the basis for Renaissance redefinitions of the *vita activa*, the active life, and the *vir civilis*, the civic man who took part in it. As the popularity of Castiglione's handbook *Il libro del cortegiano* suggests, Cicero's location of civility at the center of courtly life broadened the horizon of influence in Renaissance courts, and helped make possible theories of political life that substituted town hall and merchant banquet for the medieval court.

Last is the relationship between appearance and essence. Brunetto Latini, the scholar admired by Dante, asks whether the successful ruler "must actually be as he wishes to seem" (*Livre dou Tresor* 3). He affirms that they must—an answer that Machiavelli famously rejects in *Il Principe*, reading Cicero simplistically (but strategically) as the holder of the opposite view. But the origins of Machiavelli's exploration into the nature of the public leader, and the recognition that the political self was a carefully contrived and mutable persona, directly develop the insights of trecento rhetoricians whose central concern was training the student's appearance—writings derived in turn from the Ciceronian belief that bodily practice is an active instrument in shaping the self.

To the question of what Cicero's rhetorical writing offered Renaissance readers, only the briefest of answers is possible here. But the five points I have isolated in Renaissance readings of Cicero—eloquence as humanity's highest virtue, the marriage of philosophical wisdom with eloquence, the pivotal role of emotion in persuasion, speech as civic glue, and the roles of appearance and essence in subjectification—unpack his

[12] Juan Luis Vives, *The Advancement of Learning*, quoted in Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 277.

[13] Quoted in Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 255ff.

conceptualization of rhetoric as the pursuit of virtue. Changing the way the humanists conceived of the good life—as the *vivere civile* led by the eloquent man—Ciceronian rhetoric thus helped to enable the revival of republicanist political theory in Renaissance thought. Here is Habermas:

> Ever since Plato and Democritus, the history of philosophy has been dominated by two opposing impulses: one relentlessly elaborates the transcendent power of abstractive reason and the emancipatory unconditionality of the intelligible, whereas the other strives to unmask the imaginary purity of reason in a materialist fashion. In contrast . . . communicative rationality recalls older ideas of logos . . . it conceives of rational practice as reason concretized in history, society, body, and language.[14]

The vision of the perfect orator adumbrated in *de Oratore* cannot be separated from Cicero's beliefs about republican citizenship and its relationship to ethical self-formation. On the contrary, it shapes and is in turn shaped by those beliefs. Republican citizenship, like eloquence, is the practice of spectacular virtue in the course of an active life in the setting of a political community—which, like Aristotle, Cicero treats as the natural end of human existence.[15]

We have noted the consequences for the subject from the communal aspect of persuasion: Cicero's Crassus "sets the judge on fire with his speech," blazing with what Antonius insists is not false but true passion. In what sense can Antonius claim that his passion is authentic? As we saw in chapter 3, Cicero treats the orator's reason and feeling as, simultaneously, a reflection of and a check on common sensibility.[16] Like moral duty, eloquence resides at the intersection of knowledge and action. "Republican knowledge," the special interest of the orators, their students, and audiences, is the discourse for which Ciceronian rhetorical theory prepares its reader, as Cicero makes clear in his claim that rhetoric offers a more robust version of ethical education and a more reliable method of virtuous self-fashioning than philosophy, by its nature, is able to do.

While it makes strong claims to teach performative ethics, oratorical persuasion must also be flexible, changeable, contingent on circumstances—not promising grounds, we might say, for ethical theory. Here too Cicero gestures toward a radical alteration of the standards of truth and falsity, where what matters is what persuades. But the act of

[14] Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 324, 315, 317.

[15] Aristotle, *Pol.* 1:1–2.

[16] The interest in communality if identity, an interest in a theory of subjectivity that does not privilege individualism over community, is a key theme in a writing of Rosi Braidotti, a theorist of the Deleuzian school who uses the nomad as her exemplum of feminist subjectivity. For her, constant flux is *one* defining mark of namadic existence; equally important are the shifting but intense communities shaped by the journeying nomad.

persuasion has its own rules, and Cicero depends heavily on those rules to limit what an orator can or cannot say: it is the audience that supervises and judges the orator and his truth, just as the orator gauges what the crowd is prepared to hear. And these rules of persuasion extend beyond matters of logical probability in a forensic or deliberative speech to much broader areas of emotion and manners. Eloquence involves the act of emoting; and here too, we have seen, Cicero's text reclaims the target of Plato's critique.

Is it possible to envision Roman rhetoric as a model for contemporary political practice? Let me consider this briefly by taking up the problem of civility, which one might see as the cornerstone of Ciceronian performative ethics. When discussing the concept of civility in the ancient world, and specifically the Roman republic, it is easy to assume that we are moving exclusively among the elite, in that world of urbane gentility so vividly captured in the elegant poetry of Catullus or Cicero's letters to his friends, where civility is exclusively a virtue of aristocratic social practice, a synonym for *comitas*, friendship, or *urbanitas*, elegance. But I have argued in this book that the high premium Cicero placed on *decorum* in fact cannot be explained away as simple praise of an elite ideal. On the contrary: Cicero saw *decorum* as the partner of Roman republican justice, the vehicle of popular persuasion and communal trust, the bedrock of citizenship and public discourse.

It has been the scholarly habit for at least the past two centuries to dismiss Cicero's discussions of civility as a cloak for his class interests.[17] But we might also consider that anyone who wants to chart a mutually justifiable course for our unavoidably common life must take part in the quest for reasonable terms of social cooperation, setting the highest premium on effective communication and reciprocity.[18] Cicero's conception of civility is a useful place to begin that quest precisely because, while it privileges the tensions of economic and social class, it is not *essentially* bound by exclusions of class or gender: what matters is the performance. This is the significance of my insistence, in chapter 5, that gender is not a concept that we may consider a Roman essential: that oratorical training cannot be seen simply as making manly men but as making "manly" "citizens"—both concepts shaped by ideologies of power that are not essentially or necessarily linked to any biological or blood-based property of human experience. Cicero's admission of the potential for slaves, women, Greeks, actors, and professional teachers to be models of *decorum*, which he views with anxiety but cannot deny, bespeaks its availability (despite Cicero's prejudices) to those he seeks to exclude.

[17] See the comments of Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*, 100–115.

[18] Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, 52–63.

We recall that in *de Officiis,* Cicero discusses the four virtues of the ideal citizen, a list drawn from Plato's *Republic*: justice, wisdom, courage, and *sophrosune*, usually translated as "self-restraint" or "self-control." This last virtue Cicero chooses to translate with the Latin word *decorum*. Latin has better equivalents for the Greek, such as *moderatio* and *modestia*; the point is that the Greek *sophrosune*, and Latin equivalents like *moderatio*, are essentially internal virtues of the well-ordered soul, and Cicero, by contrast, is concerned in this treatise on moral duties with external perception as well as internal harmony. How do we appear to others looking from the outside in? Our *decorum* (or lack of it) is what others see—and this, for Cicero, is what matters. "To neglect what others think about oneself is the mark not only of arrogance but of lack of consideration," he says (*Off.* 1.99). He proceeds to set *decorum* on a par with justice as an essential quality of citizenship, arguing that they differ only insofar as one may draw a line between physical and nonphysical violence: "the role of justice is not to do harm (*violare*) to men, the role of decorum is not to offend (*offendere*) them" (1.99). The meaning of the Latin *decorum* is not entirely dissimilar from our own English word, but as we have seen, the Latin *decorum* is a term of much greater ethical and political heft: not simply good manners or politesse, it signifies propriety produced out of self-control—very close to the English "civility."

How might Cicero's readers put this observation into action? An orator and a rhetorician, Cicero was an apostle of the ancient Greek and Roman maxim that "as a man speaks, so he is." As such, he claims that vice and virtue are bound up in, and revealed through, a man's habits of speech. And he defines speech not just as *vox*, literal voice, but as a complex of thought and behavior, opinion, argument, posture, gestures, and facial expressions ordained by nature or tradition: what he calls *eloquentia corporis*, the eloquence of the body. Regulating the motions and the passions of the speaking body, on the one hand, and emotional, passionate thoughts, on the other, go hand in hand (*Off.* 1.100).

At this stage, we may prefer to condemn Cicero for developing an elitist theory of speech that excludes those who are not already familiar with the habits of elite discourse—a common complaint of current democracy theorists like Iris Marion Young and Nancy Fraser. Indeed, Cicero habitually invokes aristocratically biased views of human nature to justify his claims for aristocratic privilege. But he does not do this in his discussion of *decorum*. What we see is a hint toward the opposite view. In *de Officiis,* Cicero argues that *decorum* is not the virtue of a robot obedient to tradition or the pressures of those around him. Instead it is defined through individual difference: "*Decorum* is that which agrees with the excellence of a man just where his nature differs from

that of other creatures" (*Off.* 1.96). "Countless differences exist in natures and characters, and this is not a thing to be criticized," he continues, "everybody must resolutely hold fast to his own unique gifts" (*Off.* 1.109).

The ideal citizen is the man whose *decorum* manifests itself not in artificial stiffness or authoritarianism but in a heterogeneity of speech and manner that reflects the variety of his experiences in different social communities. "It is necessary for the orator to have seen and heard many things, to have gone over many subjects in reflection and reading," Cicero writes. The aristocratic man must be wary of appropriating a falsely populist nature, however: "he must not take possession of these things as his own property, but rather take sips of them as things belonging to others. . . . He must explore the very veins of every type, age, and class, and of those before whom he speaks or is going to speak; he must taste of their minds and senses" (*de Orat.* 1.218, 223). As Cicero sees it, the *decorum* of the good orator and the good citizen not only enables interaction with all kinds of people; more important, it censors elite arrogance and superiority. If in his treatises on rhetoric and citizenship Cicero promises to teach his aristocratic readers the easy manners they could use among their equals, he also seeks to provide the language and ceremonies of civility necessary for societies held together by ties of utility and necessity rather than aristocratic friendship.[19]

Not coincidentally, early modern writers on civility also emphasize this point. In Stefano Guazzo's summary of his treatise *La civile conversatione*, written in 1574, he says he has discussed "how to behave our selves toward others, according to the difference of estates; for that it is our hap to come in companie, sometime with the young, sometime with the olde, as soone with Gentlemen, as soone with the baser sorte, now and then with Princes, now and then with private persons, one while with the learned, another while with the ignorant, now with our owne Countriemen, then with straungers, now with the religious, now with the secular, now with men, then with women."[20] Such capacity for flexibility and shifts of perspective is not empathy; it does not entail assuming or accepting the point of view of the other. It means merely making present to oneself what the perspectives of others involved are or could be, and—if I wish to take part in a casual political conversation or in formal political deliberation—the attempt to "woo their consent" by displaying through my verbal and physical manner my equal standing with them as a free citizen.

[19] Like Guazzo, Justus Lipsius (*De constantia*, 1584), Montaigne (*Essais*, 1580), and other early modern writter on civility.

[20] Quoted in Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 168.

But the natural and desirable variety of human behaviors that Cicero judges necessary for the responsible exercise of politics is only one side of *decorum*. The other is self-control. This, for ancients and moderns, is the dark side of civility: its oppressive erasure of free expression and human individuality. I have already suggested that Cicero's definition of ideal civility makes room for the variety of behaviors that are naturally produced from differences of class, nation, and political belief. But there are two additional Ciceronian reasons to reconsider civility not as a practice of self-oppression but as a part of freedom.

For the citizen to be capable of assuming the shifts in perspective that make responsible and effective politics possible, Cicero believes, the citizen must first be in control of himself. Otherwise he must be controlled by another, whether that be another person or a set of beliefs. Prejudice, the worst kind of refusal to consider multiple perspectives, is the product of a slavish mental state. Trenchard and Gordon, the early eighteenth-century radical Whig authors of *Cato's Letters*, agree: "Polite Arts and Learning are naturally produced in free States. . . . No man can shew me a bigot who is not an ignorant slave; for bigotry is a slavery of the soul to certain religious opinions, fancies, or stories, of which the bigot knows little or nothing, and damns all that do" (2.519). Modern-day conservatives like to complain that liberals have tried to make the very concept of self-governance illegitimate. But Cicero treats self-control in terms that are very congenial to the classical liberal. The issue at stake is the eradication of fear and the consolidation of social trust. In the presence of fear, as Cicero knows from years of civil war, individual citizens and the community of citizens cannot be free. Fear interferes with freedom, in the liberal sense of freedom as nondomination.[21] *Decorum* mitigates the unpredictable behaviors that increase public mistrust and arouse fear. For Cicero, these unpredictable behaviors are as much the source of trouble among elites as they are among the masses: it is the elite citizen who stalks proudly among the citizenry, alienating and enraging them.

Decorum presumes another kind of freedom: the freedom of self-construction. Anthony Appiah has explored the notion that inherent in any vision of subjectivity that views the self as constructed is, precisely, freedom.[22] Creating a self necessarily involves free choice. That is not to say our choices will be good ones, but as Cicero would point out, there are many forces arrayed against our scanting the social matrix in which our identities take shape—arrayed, that is, against bad choices. For Appiah as for Cicero, communication is the anvil on which subjectivity

[21] Pettit, *Republicanism*, 17–50.
[22] Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity*, 192–99.

is wrought. Seyla Benhabib argues along similar lines that the human capacity to use speech allows the emergence of a differentiated subjectivity in the life of the self, which is precisely the reason why speech must be the foundation for liberal deliberative democracy.[23] Both thinkers are working with the insight of Hannah Arendt, who observed that speech is the actualization of the human condition of plurality, that is, of living as a distinct and unique being among equals."[24]

Cicero's views on *decorum* lead him to insist that the public speaker must treat his audience of citizens as equals in an ongoing dialogue of equals—not, to be sure, because he believes that they really are his equals, but because the pretense of equality enables him to reinforce the group's sense of communal identity, and to persuade the group. In point of fact, the pretense of equality works much like the thing itself: if the elite speaker does not moderate and popularize his speech, he risks humiliating and infuriating his audience. Worse, he risks preaching to the converted, contributing to stasis and destructive factionalism. The rhetoric of *decorum*, as Cicero envisions it, literally breaks down the boundaries of class and factional interest by appealing to the common experience of speaker and listener. When policy must be articulated according to its rules, policy itself must change. As Arendt noted, "the thinking process which is active in judging something is not, like the thought process of pure reasoning, a dialogue between me and myself, but finds itself always and primarily, even if I am quite alone, in an anticipated communication with others with whom I know I must finally come to some agreement. . . . This enlarged way of thinking . . . needs the presence of others 'in whose place' it must think, whose perspective it must take into consideration, and without whom it never has the opportunity to operate at all."[25]

Having learned to control himself, to moderate behaviors that arouse fear and mistrust among his fellow citizens, Cicero's ideal citizen is in a position to assume shifting political perspectives. This experience in turn reinforces his habit of asking the central question of civility as we define it today: Does my behavior do psychic violence to my fellow citizen? To the community at large? I read Cicero against the grain not to preserve a nostalgic vision of his past reality but to provoke and to appropriate, and to explore how his views on civility speak to our present. Cicero's views focus on the need for leaders to enlist the trust of audiences by treating them as equals, and for citizens to consider their own personal behaviors in light of the mistrust they might arouse in others. What is most provocative about Cicero's thought here are the points of contact with the work of

[23] Benhabib, *Situating the Self*, 126.
[24] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 178.
[25] Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 220–21.

contemporary political theorists interested in citizenship, speech, and difference. Deliberative democracy in particular has emerged as an alternative to visions of democracy as a hyperindividualistic liberalism obsessed with individual rights, or as a market for competing special interest groups. If their theories are to be put into practice, where to begin? I would suggest that a historically enriched view of civility is a good starting point, and this is to be found in Cicero.

Roman rhetoric leaves contemporary scholars with a challenge. I end this book with a call to scholars to emphasize the fact that when we teach Roman literature, and especially the rhetorical tradition, we are teaching the evolution of the shifting perspectives, the multiple selves and professions, that are crucial to the constitution of political identity in the West. Only by understanding that history, its passions and its self-disciplines, can we do the urgent political work of the intellectual: creating citizens and subjects for a global world in which the constructs of nation, gender, and race mean less and less—while communication means everything.

> Who are you indeed who would talk or sing to America?
> Have you studied out the land, its idioms and men?
> Have you possess'd yourself of the Federal Constitution?
> have you sped through fleeting customs, popularities?
> Can you hold your hand against all seductions, follies, whirls,
> fierce contentions? are you very strong? are you really of the whole People?
> Are you not of some coterie? some school or mere religion?
> Do you hold the like love for those hardening to maturity? for the last-born? little and big? and for the errant?
>
> —Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself"