ABSTRACT

Why did the first printers in Italy choose Cicero’s *De Oratore* in 1465? How did it come to epitomize Renaissance theories of education by the text’s rediscovery in 1421? Studies of Ciceronian oratory have traditionally fallen into two camps: philological scholarship focused on Cicero’s rhetorical works as they were produced during the ancient Roman Republic, and, historical studies of the reception of Cicero’s speeches among later humanists. This bifurcation of scholarship has often overlooked, however, the titular role played by Cicero’s theory of education and its articulation in his philosophical treatise on rhetoric, the *De Oratore*. A philosophical dialogue that described Cicero’s ideal orator, *De Oratore* offered a unique vision of what it meant to be “educated.” This interdependent vision of rhetoric and philosophy embodied in the *De Oratore*, as well as the text’s legacy of transmission through Roman imperial and Late
Antique writers, inspired the *literati* of the Renaissance to adopt the Ciceronian corpus into the humanistic curriculum and, more importantly, to base a western concept of education on Ciceronian principles of oratory.

This project analyzes Ciceronian oratory within its ancient context and demonstrates the fragility of *de Oratore*’s transmission from antiquity to the early modern period. The argument hinges strongly on understanding the reception of the *de Oratore* during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a printed object. Using the introductions, front matters, and marginalia of early printed texts, I show that humanist scholars engaged with Cicero and his vision of "philosophical oratory."

This research makes several important contributions to the fields of both classical and Renaissance scholarship. Close study of the *de Oratore* as both a text and object demonstrates that Cicero’s rhetorical importance in the western tradition is not limited to the transmission and adoption of his (more well-known) speeches. Joint consideration of the philosophical content and ancient historical setting of the text and its later receptive contexts bridges the persistent divide that has separated classical and early modern scholarship. Finally, studying the receptions of Cicero’s *de Oratore* from antiquity through its rediscovery and distribution during the Renaissance, furthers scholarly understanding of western conceptualizations of education.

INDEX WORDS: Classical reception, Textual transmission, Oratory, Renaissance humanism, Sweynheym and Pannartz, Aldine press
CICERO’S *DE ORATORE* FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE ADVENT OF PRINT

by

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DEDICATION

There are many people who have supported me while I worked to complete this dissertation, and I cannot hope to name all of them here. Two of you, however, deserve all the recognition and gratitude I might be able to give. First, since she was there at the beginning, I dedicate this project to my Mama, Marie Davis. Thank you for listening to that very first essay I wrote on the de Oratore as an undergrad at LaGrange College. Your encouragement never wavered, and I feel certain that there will soon be a printed copy of this to sit beside your copy of the MA thesis. And to my partner and best friend, I could not have done this without you. Thank you, Daniel, for your unrelenting love and support. I am beyond grateful for all the opportunities that you made possible, from living and working abroad that I may complete research, to cooking all those dinners so that our daughter had something delicious to eat. Without the two of you, this never would have been written.
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1 INTRODUCTION

In early 1465, two German printers pulled the final leaves of their first edition from their press in Subiaco, Italy. This was the first major work to be printed outside of Germany, and their choice of text reflected the intellectual and cultural climate of fifteenth century Italy. Sweynheym and Pannartz printed the *de Oratore*, a philosophical dialogue on the ideal orator originally written by Cicero in 55 BCE. Very likely, this edition was the first classical text printed anywhere in Europe, and it seems like a risky choice for businessmen who had just started out in a new industry. A textbook for university use or an ecclesiastical treatise might have been the more secure investment. But Sweynheym and Pannartz continued to print works in the vein of *de Oratore*, first editions that reflected the sensibilities of Italian humanists. How did *de Oratore* come to epitomize humanist perceptions of education by the fifteenth century? How was the text transmitted through various political and cultural contexts over the 1,520 years that separated its writing and first appearance as a printed text? What impact did the rediscovery of the completed manuscript in 1421 have on fifteenth and sixteenth century copies of Cicero’s work? Finally, should *de Oratore*’s survival be attributed to its author’s merits, his style or *auctoritas* for example, or was it the vision of *humanitas* and an education based on the marriage of eloquence and wisdom that endured those many centuries?

This project examines the *de Oratore* and its role in Western conceptions of education from the last days of the Roman Republic to the advent of print in Italy. I analyze the text within the context of Cicero’s life and the Roman Republic at large. His assassination and the birth of the Principate could have meant the death of Cicero’s cultural program. And yet, over the next nine centuries, several teachers of rhetoric returned to Ciceronian concepts and revived the *de Oratore* for changed socio-political contexts. These efforts enabled the text’s survival while
creating new lenses for understanding Cicero’s work. The final revival (at least as considered here) came in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when Italian scholars and sons of the elite came to embody the ideal that Cicero established. Their work drove a quest for discovering ancient texts, which in turn led to changes in the rhetorical curriculum. Figures at the center of the overlap between humanist literary circles and institutional pedagogy reimagined rhetorical education and returned to classical Ciceronian principles. With the rediscovery of *de Oratore* in 1421, scholars sought to complete their own copies and the text’s relationship to their own program created demand for its circulation. This attracted our printers to Italy to begin their humanist printing program with its most pivotal text, the *de Oratore*. As the industry developed, many changes occurred, but the dialogue continued to be in demand throughout the sixteenth century and the Aldine Press, perhaps the most famous Italian press of the Renaissance, cemented the *de Oratore*’s importance within the context of Cicero’s corpus.

1.1 Arguments

I argue that the cultural program Cicero created in his *de Oratore* was vital for his survival and influence into the modern period. This hinges on three points: that Cicero’s vision was unique; that his transmission was not guaranteed by the corpus’ availability, Latinity, or Republicanism; and that important moments of reception of the *de Oratore* created new frameworks of understanding for changed sociopolitical contexts. Taken together these points demonstrate that the *de Oratore* was vital to western conceptions of education.

To demonstrate the Ciceronian ideal of *humanitas*, I compare Cicero’s writings on rhetoric and oratory to another first century treatise, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The treatise contained much of the same rhetorical theory as Cicero’s *de Inventione* and is the only surviving complete handbook from the period. Still, Cicero’s early work on rhetoric already
demonstrated many of the attitudes toward a broad, philosophical education that he would fully develop in the *de Oratore*, attitudes that the anonymous Auctor of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* did not even consider. Over time, Cicero’s views on the orator and his style became the classical Latin style to which subsequent teachers of rhetoric would return.

However much Cicero tried to secure his own legacy through copying his polished speeches and treatises and circulating them, at no point in the ancient period was the *de Oratore*’s survival guaranteed. After his assassination, contemporary historians relegated his significance in late Republican affairs, perhaps as he represented a resistance to Augustus’ autocracy. Further, literary critics rejected Ciceronian style and his speeches were not in regular circulation for declamation practices in the schools. A rival style, based on the tenets of the Second Sophistic, was favored. Without the intervention of Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* it is impossible to imagine the fate of Cicero’s corpus and especially the *de Oratore*. And yet, Quintilian’s work did not eliminate the Sophistic style as an alternative to Cicero’s ideal orator. Augustine described both in his *Confessions*, and it was through the Church Father’s embrace of Ciceronian eloquence and wisdom that the *de Oratore* and the Ciceronian ideal were elevated to the pinnacle of Latin prose and classical virtue for the medieval period. Cicero’s style and his self-fashioning did not ensure his survival on their own.

Yet, Cicero alone enjoyed the title of *pater eloquentiae* as bestowed upon him by early humanists. This was because of the ideal he created in *de Oratore*. This dialogue demonstrated *humanitas* in a way that the works of Quintilian and Augustine did not. So, while the *de Oratore* relied upon the intervention of *Institutio Oratoria* and the *de Doctrina Christiana*, neither of their authors rivalled Cicero as the creator of a Roman (later Western) educational model. This explains the *de Oratore*’s attraction to a ninth century monk and abbot who could imagine the
possibility of a Carolingian courtier based on this model. It is no coincidence that the oldest and most important surviving manuscript of the *de Oratore* was copied by Lupus of Ferrières, whose own status and position had much to benefit from *de Oratore*’s model. Although Lupus was not successful in obtaining a position at the courts of Charlemagne’s heirs, his textual work helped to guarantee *de Oratore*’s survival and availability to the early modern period.

*de Oratore*’s centrality to Renaissance humanism made the text an important part of the development of the Italian print industry. Sweynheym and Pannartz chose it for their first major production in Subiaco, and the text would enjoy numerous editions throughout the fifteenth century. As print technology shaped the reading of *de Oratore*, the humanist printer Aldus Manutius secured the text’s place for sixteenth century scholars and its understanding even to the present day.

1.2 Methodology

The project examines the long history of transmission of the *de Oratore* from 55 BCE to 1583 CE. Prior to the ninth century copies, the project emphasizes the *de Oratore* as text, situating it within the changing contexts of the Roman Republic, Empire, Late Antiquity, and Carolingian periods. From the time of Lupus in the mid-ninth century, I place equal consideration on the *de Oratore* as an object, analyzing individual manuscripts and describing the geographical movements of these objects and their copies. Then, I examine many printed copies of the *de Oratore* to ascertain how various editions might have shaped contemporary readings. In particular, I consider the marginalia for each copy, whether *de Oratore* was printed alone or with other texts, and whether the publisher included any editorial supplements including prefaces, authorial biographies, or descriptive colophons. This copy-specific information
coupled with the data regarding the frequency and quantities of printed editions, creates a holistic appreciation of *de Oratore*’s significance in the first century of print.

### 1.3 Historiography and Context

In order to argue that Cicero’s vision enabled the transmission of the *de Oratore* and its importance to Renaissance humanism, this project engages with two larger bodies of scholarship. The first concerns the study of ancient education and the position of Cicero’s rhetorical corpus therein, as well as the larger social and cultural climate of the first century BCE. The second involves the study of the Renaissance reception of Cicero’s work. This section discusses both scholarly contexts in turn.

As Henri Marrou has shown in *A History of Education in Antiquity*, the idea of a classical education did not fully coalesce until the era of Plato and Isocrates in the fourth century BCE.¹ The largest problem facing Athenians during the fifth century was the production of able statesmen. By the end of the century this problem was being addressed by the sophists who were dedicated to educating youths (for a fee) in the arts of dialectic, rhetoric, and some theoretical or practical knowledge of various mathematical, scientific, or cultural skills.² This curriculum was cemented in the schools of Plato and Isocrates during the following century, where pupils organized themselves according to their philosophical outlook. Still, rhetoric formed the central point of this education. Though the curriculum would mature for many more centuries, going even into the Byzantine period, those who received this form of educational training understood themselves to be participating in a single tradition of learning, one that was rooted in the philosophy, writing, and speaking associated with classical Athens. Marrou demonstrates that

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² Emphasis on different mathematics, natural philosophy, and arts-and-crafts varied among the group of sophists teaching in the late fifth century. However, all agreed that their pupils needed to be able to win an argument on any subject whatsoever.
Roman elites adapted the Greek curriculum and debated the value of learning Greek and Latin, with various elements changing in response to the shifting nature of the Roman state, particularly under the empire. Yet even with such modifications, the idea of a single paideia that had endured from archaic Greece to late antiquity united educators in the ancient world and later inspired those who sought to revive classical culture.

Studies of ancient rhetoric and its role in education are important for understanding the curriculum as a whole and especially its reception in the medieval and Renaissance periods. Rhetoric composed the capstone of the traditional curriculum for Greek and Roman students, with additional years of study in philosophy as an optional course. Donald Clark’s *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* is an older treatment of this discipline, but his emphasis on teaching methodologies and their endurance to the modern age has shaped the understanding of the western rhetorical tradition. Clark examines both grammar schools and the grammaticus as well as schools of rhetoric and the rhetor to demonstrate that both early and secondary educators used the same methodologies for instructing their students. He identifies three main techniques of ancient teachers: explanation of the precepts of rhetoric using handbooks when appropriate; imitation of successful writers and speakers through memorization, translation, and paraphrasing; and assigning exercises in writing and declaiming on specific themes. As pupils progressed, teachers would choose more challenging passages for imitation or more complicated themes to declaim; on a daily basis and throughout the course of a student’s education, however, teachers continued to use all three practices. In addition to these practices, Clark argues that ancient educators accepted that the art of speaking well (rhetoric) could be taught to any student. This point was especially important to Clark because it contradicted the view accepted by his

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contemporaries, which was that the ancients believed that rhetorical ability was innate and unique to certain individuals, and not that it could be applied universally with the expectation that all of those educated would improve and progress as a result of formalized training.

In terms of education during the time of Cicero more precisely— that is, of the late Roman Republic and early Empire—scholarship has focused on two main issues: the connection between the school and the home, and the issue of curriculum. Stanley Bonner, for example, has examined how the transition from paternal mentorship, to privately hired (usually Greek) tutors working primarily in the individual home, and later to state-appointed teachers working in public schools, affected the relationship between fathers and their children. As Greek tutors became more widely available as a result of Roman victory during the Punic Wars, with the capture and enslavement of Greek teachers and intellectuals, more families could afford to hire tutors to educate their children. This allowed the fathers to focus more energy on their own careers while still controlling the educational practices occurring in their homes. However, under the empire, the first state-sponsored schools of rhetoric formed. Sending one’s son to an imperial city for his education usually meant the youth would move out from under his father’s roof during his middle teens. These courses of education lasted three to five years and greatly changed the family dynamic, especially as many students now came from classes that would have relied on their labor as part of the family income.

Bonner also examines the concentration of the curriculum on grammar and rhetoric. For the Romans, the ultimate goal of an education was to prepare a young man for his public career as a juror or statesman. This required a mastery of rhetoric, and the Roman curriculum

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5 This should still be understood as a prerogative of the elite, however many families outside of the traditional Roman aristocracy were now able to hire tutors and access the Roman political arena.
streamlined the progression from grammar to literature to oratory. Philosophy and mathematics were not completely overlooked, but by Cicero’s day they had become optional subjects pursued at the father’s discretion and were taught by specialists for a fee separate from that of the rhetorician’s. In fact, Cicero thought that philosophy and math were essential for his ideal orator. Bonner argues, however, that the majority of Romans would have found a more limited version of the classical Greek curriculum to be more pragmatic. Bonner’s study of education centers around the period of Cicero’s life and provides the necessary context for understanding the orator’s own education and his views on the ideal orator.

A more recent study of Roman education is Martin Bloomer’s *The School of Rome.* Like Bonner, Bloomer examines pedagogical practices, but his period of investigation is a little later, namely the empire from the age of Augustus through the third century CE. He argues that education was a process of cultural hegemony necessary for elite males to attain success in the empire. Bloomer emphasizes the student: what an education can do to and for him, how she carries out her studies, what roles are being taught through the content of the exercises and through the daily practices (travelling to school, declaiming and critiquing, being praised and punished) that he undertakes. Bloomer does not radically depart from the views of Bonner on the content of the Roman curriculum, but he more thoroughly examines the control exerted by a strict curriculum over Roman culture and society. He argues that, “We may well reinterpret the enduring legacy of Roman education not as the seven liberal arts or a lapidary prose style or the virile texts of the canon, but as a trained habit of mind that insists that texts and tests, through a

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7 Part of Bloomer’s argument is that girls participated in the same educational practices as boys, although opportunities were more limited for the “fairer sex.”
competitive display of reading, writing, and reciting, form the child into a worthy Roman.”

Bloomer’s study emphasizes the agency of the student, and demonstrates the appeal of a classical education not only as a means of achieving the highest status of a free Roman citizen, but also to later generations who sought entry among this ancient elite who possessed paideia.

Most importantly, recent studies of de Oratore have focused on its context within the crisis of the late Republic, its role in Cicero’s self-fashioning, and as a way of understanding the relationship between rhetoric and politics. Elaine Fantham offers a companion to Cicero’s dialogue in The Roman World of Cicero’s de Oratore. She argues that Cicero’s work marked a crucial moment in the history of rhetoric, and demonstrates that its context in the late Roman Republic enabled Cicero’s ideas to become so influential in the study of oratory. Fantham analyzes Cicero’s choice of genre, setting, interlocutors, and organization of rhetorical topics to demonstrate that Cicero made political and philosophical considerations in writing the text. At this point in his life, Cicero lacked political security himself, but he described a curriculum that would prepare others to attain public success in the forum. Fantham ends her analysis with a demonstration of the immediate impact that de Oratore had on educational theorists and the curriculum. She states, “In the end it is not Cicero the political thinker, but Cicero the education and rhetorical theorist…who has won…respect from posterity.”

Making of a New Man is John Dugan’s analysis of Ciceronian self-fashioning within Cicero’s rhetorical works. Dugan differs from traditional scholarship on the rhetorical treatises by drawing attention to their complex cultural program. As a novus homo Cicero had to create his place within the political world of the Roman aristocracy, and Dugan explores how he did

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8 Bloomer, 8.
10 Fantham, 326.
this in his speeches, the *de Oratore, Brutus,* and *Orator.* In his analysis of *de Oratore,* Dugan differs from those scholars who call Cicero’s text ‘traditionalistic’ and instead emphasizes *de Oratore’s* innovation. It was necessary for Cicero to present his theories within the authority of traditional Roman values, and Dugan believes that this has been taken for granted by others. According to him, for instance, “The fact that such daring ideas have been accepted as standard, traditional, and uncontroversial by later scholars only attests to the success of the *De oratore’s* strategies for naturalizing these questionable notions to a traditional Roman context.”11 Instead of writing a systematic account of oratorical style, Cicero “idealizes and mystifies” the ideal orator, a tactic which built up his own importance within Roman oratory.12 Dugan effectively demonstrates Cicero’s role as author in this text as one who plays hide-and-seek, a strategy that draws the reader’s attention to Cicero without him being directly a part of the dialogue.

Since he looks at the larger rhetorical corpus, Dugan also addresses the change in Cicero’s political use of his texts over time.13 He argues that the *de Oratore* championed oratory and republicanism over a possible military threat and dictatorship. In 55 BCE, Caesar had not yet defeated Crassus and Pompey to become the sole leader of Rome. Dugan claims that Cicero used his dialogue as political speech since he could no longer speak freely in the forum and senate house. However, by the writing of *Brutus* and *Orator* in 46 BCE, Caesar’s dictatorship was already in its third year, and it would be absurd for Cicero to continue to assert that rhetoric would be a match for military strength. Instead, Cicero began *Brutus* with a eulogy for the orator Hortensius, as well as for free speech in Rome in general. Dugan argues that Cicero was never

12 Dugan, 80.
merely discussing rhetorical theory, but used these passages to direct his reader to the large-scale, political importance of eloquence.  

The relationship between rhetorical theory and political power and theory has been further addressed by Joy Connolly and Daniel Kapust. In *The State of Speech*, Connolly examines the relationship between rhetoric and republican citizenship. She is especially interested in the ideal orator constructed in the *de Oratore* and argues that this individual also represents the ethos of the ideal citizen. Connolly claims that Cicero is not interested in forming the private individual but uses his rhetorical corpus to describe a civic ideal whose abilities and success reflect the republic that he serves. Kapust explores the relationship between Cicero’s rhetoric and concepts of liberty and oratory in *Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought*. His primary interest lies in the writings of the Roman historians; however, Kapust uses the rhetorical corpus to identify the ideas and themes that the historians address. He argues that Cicero equated the freedom of the Roman republic with the practice of oratory, a parallel identified by the loss of eloquence as a result of Caesar’s displacement of republican institutions addressed in *Brutus*. Although my study will not focus on questions of the political use of Cicero’s rhetorical works, it is significant that Renaissance humanists may have been attracted to the *de Oratore* in part because of the call to civic duty and ideal citizenship that can be identified  

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14 For example, Cicero argues that good Latinity developed as a result of imitation of the Roman elite conversing with one another in matters of public importance. On the other hand, Caesar writes his *de Analogia* that the formation of Latin words could be reduced to a rational system of analogy among other existing words. Thus the more conservative view of *de Oratore* meets the popular position of *de Analogia*.


in the text. This is especially important considering the debates regarding “civic humanism” and whether or not political ideology is a central component of Renaissance humanism.  

The *De Oratore* must also be situated within studies of humanism and Renaissance education and rhetoric. Paul O. Kristeller has emphasized the importance of studying the Renaissance humanists on their own terms, stripping away the newer connotations of the term “humanism” in favor of the original meaning. As he states, “Renaissance humanism was not as such a philosophical tendency or system, but rather a cultural and educational program which emphasized and developed an important but limited area of studies,” including grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philosophy. Kristeller argues that it was this orientation toward rhetoric in particular that united the Renaissance humanists as a group and that Renaissance humanism was a “characteristic phase in what may be called the rhetorical tradition in Western culture.” The humanist emphasis on rhetoric and the reorganization of education during the fifteenth century demonstrated the extent to which the Renaissance was concerned with recapturing ancient *paideia*, especially Cicero’s *humanitas*.

While Kristeller is less concerned with temporal parameters for understanding the development of humanism, the debate over when humanist studies first began is important for this study. Several other scholars have analyzed the medieval use of pagan texts, as well as the particular cultural and intellectual climate of Northern Italy that allowed for the flourishing of humanistic curriculum during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Paul Grendler has studied the school and university systems of late medieval and Renaissance Italy, especially the curriculum

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19 Kristeller, 24.
and texts preferred by teachers in different cities at different times. Grendler views education as a conservative institution and sees only three major curricular revolutions throughout western history. He identifies the first as the time when ancient Greeks and Romans created a *paideia* system (as described by Marrou), which Grendler argues was dramatically altered at the end of the western Roman Empire. In its place emerged a medieval curriculum based largely on logic and Christian trainings, although some classical practices persisted. At the time of the Italian Renaissance, which for Grendler begins during the fourteenth century, a third revolution occurred when the *studia humanitatis*, a system devoted to learning both eloquent style and moral wisdom from the ancient sources, triumphed. This curriculum “lasted well into the twentieth century.”

At the center of this shift from medieval logic-*cum*-Christian morality curriculum to a system of *studia humanitas* lies the rediscovery of the Ciceronian corpus. Grendler argues that the rediscoveries, the majority of which fell between 1392 and 1421, came at precisely a moment when many humanists were finding fault with the medieval *auctores* and *ars dictaminis*, the art of prose writing. He claims that these discoveries provided the first examples of Latin prose worthy to be imitated since the late antique period. "The Renaissance," Grendler writes, “found Cicero with his ornate style, simplified Greek philosophy, conception of the orator, and involvement in the legal and political affairs of the Roman Republic more congenial than any other classical prose author.”

Over the next two centuries, Ciceronian texts were quickly distributed across Italy and found themselves entrenched in humanist schools.

Ronald Witt has also sought out earlier, pre-Renaissance manifestations of humanist thought in Italian education. His two major works on the topic describe the cultural and

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20 Paul Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 110.

21 The medieval curriculum usually relied on poetry for imitation.

22 Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 122.
intellectual climate of medieval Italy and its unique position as the birthplace of humanism, and
the generations of humanists who taught and wrote prior to the fourteenth century. The more
recent *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy*
describes the symbiotic relationship between traditional European book culture and the medieval
Italian legal culture.\textsuperscript{23} Witt explains that the traditional book culture-- which included studies of
grammar, Latin literature, and a liturgical and patristic curriculum-- rested in the hands of the
clerics who ran cathedral schools and monastic libraries. Unique to Italy, however, was the
secular legal culture that followed the tradition of ancient Roman legal texts, particularly
Justinian’s legal code. Witt argues that these two cultures resided together from 800 to 1250,
and that instead of causing tensions between clerical and lay teachers, the two groups formed a
working relationship that enabled specialization of teaching disciplines and methods at a much
earlier period than in transalpine Europe. As time progressed, laymen became increasingly
involved in the teaching of Latin language and literature, and developed private schools that
rivaled the traditional cathedral schools. This atmosphere, he concludes, encouraged wider
reading of Latin classics and the emergence of the earliest humanist teachers during the twelfth
century.

This argument complements Witt’s earlier work, namely, his examination of the long-
term historical process of humanism in *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*.\textsuperscript{24} In this book, Witt
argues that “humanist” should be defined as anyone who consciously tried to imitate classical
Latin style in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; as such, everyone from Lovato (who taught
and imitated the letters of Seneca), to Albertino Mussato, Francesco Petrarch, Coluccio Salutati,

\textsuperscript{23} Ronald Witt, *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy*

\textsuperscript{24} Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden: Brill Academic
and finally Leonardo Bruni were humanists. Humanism thus may have deeper roots than previous assessments have allowed. Taken in context with scholarship of Black and other scholars, these studies suggest that humanist practices existed within the “scholastic system” for centuries before the renewed interest of classical texts enabled the triumph of the humanist curriculum in the fifteenth century.25

The importance of Cicero’s rhetorical works, speeches, and collections of letters has long been understood in relation to the development of humanist educational theories and practices. Although recent scholarship has renewed its interest in the de Oratore, its particular reception after its rediscovery in 1421 has not been carefully studied and understood. My discussion in this section of various attributes of the relevant historiography has concentrated on two goals: first, to reveal the text’s complexity and relation to the first century BCE; and second, to demonstrate that humanist practices developed in line with the vision Cicero presented in the de Oratore. This began to happen before the complete text was rediscovered, and Ciceronian scholars were closely involved in the humanist pedagogical practices. This setting created much enthusiasm for the de Oratore’s rediscovery and made the text an important feature in early Italian print.

1.4 Chapter Summaries

The project is divided into four main chapters. “de Oratore in the Late Roman Republic” analyzes de Oratore in the context of the Roman Republic and in Cicero’s life. I consider issues of genre outline the contents of the text. This chapter provides analysis of Cicero’s cultural ideal. “Survival from Antiquity to the Carolingian Age” examines those three moments of reception mentioned earlier, with descriptions of the social, cultural, and political changes that

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25 Robert Black, Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
occur between the lives of Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine, and Lupus. Chapter four, “Medieval Manuscripts to Renaissance Print” examines the medieval transmissions of the manuscripts, demonstrating the *de Oratore*’s availability to influence Italian humanist practice. I contextualize the rediscovery of the complete text at Lodi in 1421 and the first printing of the *de Oratore* in 1465. Chapter five examines the remaining incunable editions with emphasis on the interdependence of print and humanism in Rome and Venice. This chapter concludes with analysis of the Aldine Press and its role in securing modern readings of *de Oratore*.

The *de Oratore* not only provided a description for becoming a truly educated person, one who possesses *humanitas*, but it also invited the reader to participate in a dialogue with similarly educated men. This vision embraced philosophy and eloquence, providing a timeless articulation of education adaptable to changing social and political contexts. After fifteen hundred years, the *de Oratore* still resonated within humanist circles as an ideal to embody. This made the text crucial for fifteenth century intellectuals, and explains its centrality to early Italian print.

2 **DE ORATORE IN THE LATE ROMAN REPUBLIC**

The political world of the Roman Republic required its elite statesmen to speak in a variety of settings. Patrons represented their clients and friends in the courts, senators debated issues of state, consuls and tribunes addressed the Roman people. Preparation for this career centered on oratorical training, and from the third century BCE rhetorical education followed the Greek art. Although a general tension existed between Greek culture and Roman virtue, it was particularly acute in issues of elite education and political success. Amid these tensions a Latin eloquence developed in the first century BCE, primarily around the oratory and theoretical work of Cicero. As a young man, Cicero began and abandoned a rhetorical handbook before making a
name for himself as an advocate and then climbing the *cursus honorum*. The speeches he delivered throughout his career were edited and published, in part to create a body of Latin oratorical texts for students to imitate.\(^\text{26}\) Nearer the end of his life, Cicero wrote several philosophical dialogues on oratorical theory and history. Throughout his career, he drew from Hellenistic rhetorical theory, but cultivated an ideal orator (modeled after himself) who was culturally and politically prepared to lead the state of Rome. Although additional styles of oratory would be developed over the course of Roman imperial history, none of these survived as a viable alternative into the medieval period. Latin eloquence was essentially Ciceronian, in that Cicero consciously toiled throughout his life to develop a Roman, Latin, art of oratory that could be passed along in its entirety to future generations. This chapter analyzes the socio-cultural climate and personal circumstances that led to Cicero’s writing of the *de Oratore* and identifies the components of Cicero’s theory that would transcend the Republican context to appeal to multiple generations of future Latin orators.

### 2.1 The Roman Republic

The development of the Roman Republic from its traditional establishment in 509 BCE to its decline in the first century BCE provides important context for understanding how Romans interacted with the culture and arts of the greater Mediterranean world. The methods by which Rome adapted and adopted Greek philosophy and rhetoric have direct bearing on the development of Ciceronian oratory.

\(^{26}\) See Jane Crawford, *M. Tullius Cicero: The Lost and Unpublished Orations* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 1-21 on the reasons for publishing. Cicero had his polished speeches and other writings copied, often by his slave Tiro, and sent to Atticus and other friends for further copying and circulation.
In 509, a young Roman aristocrat raised up his people against the abuses of the king and his son, Tarquin the Proud. Brutus and his supporters established a republic to be governed by principles of representation and limited democracy. During the earliest phases of republican development, the Romans increased their dominance on the Italian peninsula and created institutions to balance the power between the patricians and plebs. The codification of law into the Twelve Tables (c.450) and the expansion of Tribunate (494-457) were meant to protect the plebs from the abuses of oligarchy. During the fifth and fourth centuries, Rome engaged in a series of wars with its Latin, Italic, and Gallic neighbors and, by the start of the third century, dominated the central and northern part of the peninsula. The Romans ruled this territory through a range of relationships with the peoples they defeated, sometimes as conquerors, but also by extending trade and voting rights to favored cities. Their expansion brought them into increased conflict with the Greek peoples of Magna Graecia in southern Italy and Sicily. These Greeks sought the help of Pyrrhus of Epirus, who was the first to bring war elephants to Italy. After the Pyrrhic War of 280-275, Rome controlled the entire peninsula and Sicily and became a major player in the Mediterranean.

The next stage of conflict is perhaps the most important for understanding how the Romans turned the Mediterranean into what they called *mare nostrum*, our sea. Carthage had dominated the western Mediterranean for several centuries, controlling territories across the shores of North Africa, in Spain, and the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. During the 260s, the Sicilians first sought the help of the Romans, and then the Carthaginians, in settling some internal disputes. This put Carthage and Rome into direct conflict. From 264-146, Rome

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28 Our source for the Carthaginian Wars is primarily Polybius’ *Histories*. 
fought three separate wars with the Carthaginians to protect its interests in that half of the Mediterranean. During the second war, Hannibal made an alliance with the Macedonians, and Rome was forced to fight her Greek neighbors to the east in a series of wars stretching from 218-148. By 146, the Romans had razed Carthage and utterly subjugated the Greek mainland. Her influence firmly established across the Mediterranean, Rome needed to develop structures for ruling vast territories and to accommodate the cultural and intellectual prizes of war. Over the next century, from the destruction of Carthage in 146 to the Battle of Actium in 31, Rome struggled to balance the interests of the Roman elite, the Italian allies, the army veterans, and the provincials. Further complicating the political and economic factors is the understanding of Roman identity in this more globalized society. Should Rome embrace the culture and learning of the Greeks, a people who must be their inferiors since they were now Roman subjects? Addressing these concerns would be a key element of Cicero’s own cultural program.

2.1.1 Early Roman Education

Education during the Republic aimed in part to retain the political authority of the elite by producing another generation of statesmen. Education also defined the elite as such, affecting its hierarchies and social cohesion. Changing historical circumstances caused educational practices to evolve, and these changes could be contested. Understanding the history of the changes, tensions, and contestations of educational practice in Rome provides the context for analyzing Cicero’s own cultural program as detailed in the de Oratore.

Early Roman education tended to be more practical than theoretical and equipped a young man for the legal and military duties required to climb the cursus honorum, or the ranks of

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elected positions that culminated with the consulship. Education enabled the exercise of political
power. It was designed to inculcate the values, priorities, and behavioral patterns that sustained
the political culture of the Roman commonwealth, including consensual as well as competitive
virtues. Aristocrats trained their children to follow in their footsteps, become leaders of the
Republic, and bring prestige to the family name. Although actual educational practices are
difficult to reconstruct, a general pattern can be discerned.

Education began in the home, where children learned reading, writing, and basic
arithmetic. Their fathers also taught them their family history and the deeds accomplished by
their ancestors. Boys were expected to emulate these accomplishments and one day to bring
even greater glory to the family. Elite culture was dictated by the mores maiorum, or virtues of
the ancestors, and young boys learned manliness (virtus) and courage (fortitudo) from their
paterfamilias. This structure was also used by common Romans. The soldier-farmer was
idealized for this class, and fathers were directly responsible for the education of their sons. This
was limited to non-literary, oral histories of the Roman state with emphasis on models for virtue.
Boys were taught their fathers’ trade and prepared for carrying out the civic duty of fighting for
his patria, homeland. In general, non-elite girls would be even less likely to receive any literary
instruction but were taught to model the virtues of historical Roman women. They were
expected to be industrious in skills like weaving, cooking, and farming, first in the homes of their
fathers, and then in those of their husbands.

At the end of boyhood, around age sixteen, a youth underwent a coming of age ceremony
and was presented with the toga virilis. He now left the personal care of his father and followed

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30 As grammar schools became more popular under the empire, both boys and girls would attend a grammar school
around age seven. These need not have been run by very accomplished grammatici, and only elite males
graduated to the school of the rhetor. See George Kennedy, Quintilian (Twayne Publishers, 1969) and
Bloomer, The School of Rome for detailed analysis in pedagogical changes from Republic to Empire.
a successful statesman in his affairs around the forum. The youth learned about the law and oratory by attending and imitating his teacher. This was called the *tirocinium fori*, the capstone of non-military education. When this was complete, most young men served in the entourage of an active general to learn to command an army in the field. For young women, education always remained in the private sphere. It is possible that an aristocrat would employ a tutor to teach his daughters advanced literary study, even in Greek, but this was not the norm. Certainly, young women did not continue their educations into the forum. Since they did not have a political voice or role within the state, they are not fully participating in the *paideia* or *humanitas* of their male counterparts.\(^{31}\)

### 2.1.2 The Greek Art of Rhetoric in Rome

These three elements of early Roman education, the instruction of the *paterfamilias*, the *tirocinium fori*, and the military *contubernalis*, would have continued importance throughout the end of the Republic. Greek influence, however, began to be felt at least as early as the mid-third century BCE, and controversy over incorporating Greek practices with the Roman educational schematic can be dated to the early second century. At least by the mid-second century, it had become a common practice to acquire a private tutor for the instruction of Greek language and rhetoric. (Instruction of Latin literature would be added over the course of the second century.) Boys would study at home with their Greek tutor in the final years before the *tirocinium fori*.

The demand for Greek tutors became great and was met with the supply of Greeks enslaved during Rome’s conquest of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Macedonian wars. Many

\(^{31}\) In the late Republic and throughout the Empire, schools for rhetoric were founded. Young girls did participate in the grammar schools but did not attend the lessons of the *rhetor*. For greater analysis of female education, see Emily A. Hemelrijk, “The Education of Women in Ancient Rome,” in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World, ed. W. Martin Bloomer (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2016).
educated slaves were qualified to teach Greek language, rhetoric, and the more controversial Greek philosophies. This instruction would lead to many young Romans choosing to do tours of Greece and Asia as a final culmination of their studies. Cities like Athens and Rhodes were particularly popular destinations where youths sought famous orators and philosophers for their public performances. Here, they could sample the teachings of various philosophical schools and listen to a variety of oratorical styles for the further perfection of their own speaking ability.

Initially, the infusion of Greek instruction at the hands of enslaved tutors was met with little resistance. Competition among elite families to procure the ablest tutor ran high, and the exclusivity of Greek instruction allowed it to be an identifying hallmark of the patrician class.

It is, in part, this exclusivity that has led some scholars to argue that elements of Greek education had become an accepted part of the *mos maiorum* by the first century BCE. Competition for the best tutor did not just ensure a proper education, but the *grammatici* became status symbols themselves, jealously guarded and handsomely paid by their patrons. Tutors could not translate this value into social or political power, however, because they retained an inferior status whether enslaved or freed. A Greek tutor could not hope to accomplish anything more than a teaching career, thus making that profession totally unsuitable for an elite Roman.

The status of the *grammatici* and the general unease with Greek culture caused some Romans to push back against the onslaught of Greek rhetorical training. Especially troubling was the idea of elite Roman boys being subject to Greek slaves for their education. For instance, although he owned a Greek tutor to instruct other members of his household, Cato the Elder insisted on educating his own son. He thought it unacceptable that a slave would chastise his

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32 Corbeill, “Rhetorical Education.”
34 A convention that Cicero must balance in his own educational writings.
son, or that one day his son would be indebted to a slave for his education, and therefore for his political success. Cato believed that novel educational practices threatened the aristocratic consensus and so attempted to counteract their influence by invoking an idealized, conservative model of how Roman education had worked in the past. According to Cato, a traditional Roman education should be overseen by the father, include practical training in the courts, and finish with military service.

Cato also opposed Greek oratory and the impression it created among Roman youth. In 155 BCE, an embassy consisting of philosophers came to Rome from Athens. While there, Carneades the Academic took the opportunity to address the populace. “Romans flocked to the lectures of Carneades, relished the philosophy and rhetoric – and, evidently, had no problems understanding the Greek.” According to Plutarch, this troubled Cato because the youth were being encouraged to focus on words rather than deeds. He had the embassy hurried from the city on account of the ambassadors’ ability to persuade. Plutarch claims that Cato did this because he hated philosophy and Greek culture. However, Gruen argues that Cato approached all aspects of Greek culture with the purpose of exerting Roman superiority. He sought to promote the traditional virtues of Roman culture, like industria, parsimonia, and above all dignitas.

Cato’s position must have carried some weight, because many statesmen denied that they participated in Greek studies and considered them inferior to Latin. In the prologue of the second book of de Oratore, Cicero discussed the characters of Crassus and Antonius, his two main

35 Plutarch. Cato. 20.3-5.
36 Plutarch, Cato. 20.6-7.
37 Gruen The Hellenistic World, 258.
38 Plutarch, Cato 22.
interlocutors. He said that the general belief was that Crassus had only received an elementary education, and Antonius “was entirely unacquainted with any instruction whatsoever.” Cicero called on the evidence of his family and childhood to refute these claims saying that Crassus “spoke Greek with such fluency that he seemed to know no other language,” and Antonius participated in learned discussions at both Athens and Rhodes. Even though both men were presented as having extensive knowledge of Greek learning, Cicero wrote that their attitudes toward this knowledge were constructed to gain influence with the aristocracy. He wrote,

Both men, however, had a particular way of handling these matters. Crassus wanted to be thought of, not so much as someone who had learned nothing, but rather as one who looked down on these things and, in every area, preferred our practical, Roman wisdom to what the Greeks had to offer; while Antonius estimated that his oratory would be more persuasive with our people if he were thought never to have learned anything at all. Thus, each reckoned that he would carry more authority, the one if he was seen to despise the Greeks, the other if he seemed not even to know of them.

The Roman attitude toward Greek culture and arts was complicated. Some denied outright its influence in their education (eg. Antonius), others embraced it so wholeheartedly that they reaped the criticism of lacking gravitas (eg. A. Postumius Albinus and T. Albucius), and then there were some to represent every shade of acceptance in between. Cato’s attempt to promote a Latin elite culture that did not depend upon imports from the Greek world ultimately failed. Still, the controversy remained unresolved during the late Republic. This is one issue that Cicero would seek to address in his later works, but it directly affected tensions facing rhetorical education in the early first century BCE.

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40 *de Oratore*, 2.1, *M. autem Antonium omnino omnis eruditionis expertem atque ignarum fuisse*. All English translations of *de Oratore* are from May & Wisse, *On the Ideal Orator*.
41 *de Oratore*, 2.2, *illum et Graece sic loqui, nullam ut nosse alienam linguam videretur* ; 2.3.
42 *de Oratore*, 2.4.
43 See Gruen, *The Hellenistic World*, 263-4, for more biographical details.
In 92, the censors Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus and Licius Licinius Crassus issued an edict disapproving the *novum genus disciplinae* (new kind of learning) of the Latin rhetoricians at Rome. Suetonius records the edict, possibly verbatim, in *On Teachers of Grammar and Rhetoric* 25.2:

> We have been informed that there are persons who have established a novel sort of instruction and that the youth gather at their school; that these persons have styled themselves ‘Latin rhetoricians’, and that young persons idle away whole days there. Our ancestors established what manner of things they wished their children to learn and what manner of schools they wished them to attend. These new practices, which do not accord with ordinary custom and the way of our ancestors, are vexatious and wayward-seeming. Therefore we have determined to make our judgement plain both to those who preside over these schools and to those who have become accustomed to attending them: we do not approve. 44

The Censors, as supervisors of Roman behavior, focused their language on the moral problems that the Latin teachers caused, however it is not clear exactly what these moral problems were. Somehow, the new Latin schools, which did not appear in Rome more than a few years prior to the edict, were believed to create laziness in their pupils and contrasted with traditional Roman values, or at least the edict claims this. Kaster suggests three main possibilities, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as to why the Censors should issue their edict. 45 First, the Latin schools might have been considered a democratizing force that removed the elite’s educational monopoly. Previously, a pupil must have mastered Greek language and literature before he could study rhetoric. Only the elite could afford the private Greek instruction, therefore only the

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44 renuntiatum est nobis esse homines qui novum genus disciplinae instituerunt, ad quos iuventus in ludum conveniat; eos sibi nomen imposuisse Latinos rhetorae, ibi homines adolescentulos dies totos desidere. maiores nostri quae liberos suos discere et quos in ludos itare vellent instituerunt: haec nova, quae praeter consuetudinem ac morem maiorum fiant, neque placent neque recta videntur. quaapropter et iis qui eos ludos habent et iis qui eo venire consuerunt visum est factiundum ut ostenderemus nostram sententiam: nobis non placere.


elite could benefit from rhetorical education. Second, the new Latin schools might have undermined the traditional *tirocinium fori*. Specifically, Kaster notes that the *homines adulescentulos* would have been old enough to participate publicly in the Forum. Traditionally they should be engaging with the political affairs of the republic instead of being harbored in the schools for a further period of study. Finally, he suggests that the new instruction may be considered a distortion of Greek rhetoric (readily practiced by the elite in 92 BCE) that created a sort of “glibness” in its pupils that defied the *mos maiorum*. In addition to these possibilities, the professionalization of Latin teachers might have been another issue that caused the censors’ displeasure. The instructors were no longer under the patronage and control of members of the elite and could more easily turn their positions into ones of power.46

Regardless of the censors’ motivations, their edict draws attention to the tensions in rhetorical education of the late Republic.47 The process of synthesizing Greek practices with Roman tradition had not been universally accepted in Rome. The private nature of education allowed the elite to control it and its teachers without having to deny outright educational access to other members of society. It is into this uncertain situation that the first Latin rhetorical handbooks, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *de Inventione*, appeared. The authors must present their material in a way that reconciled the Greek elements of rhetorical education with the traditional Roman *mos maiorum*.


2.1.3 Cicero’s Early Life and Education

Cicero was born in 106 BCE in Arpinum and came to Rome as a novus homo.\(^{48}\) His father was not totally unconnected, however, and he moved Cicero and his younger brother to Rome to obtain the education necessary for entering Rome’s political sphere. To hold political power in Rome, Cicero would need to cultivate connections that would replace the familial ties and accomplishments that the nobility could rely upon to build their careers. The choice of tutors would be vital to his future self-fashioning. Cicero studied rhetoric at the home of L. L. Crassus, the same Censor who issued the above-mentioned edict in 92. In the Brutus, Cicero records other aspects of his education.\(^{49}\) He studied law by attending the advice given by Q. Scaevola, reflected on philosophy under Philo of Larissa, and listened to the speeches of Sulpicius regularly in the Forum. His education closely follows the model presented earlier. He was also a student when the Latin schools were censored and his affinity for Greek culture developed in spite of the fact that his models were hesitant to claim Greek learning for themselves.

This period was also characterized by social and military unrest in Rome and across the peninsula. The reforms proposed by the Gracchi and their subsequent deaths in the latter part of the second century intensified the Republic’s failures to balance all of the demanding interests created by its Mediterranean expansion. The elite divided into two parties, the populares and the optimates. These factions struggled for control in the Senate and among those elected to the consulship to try and achieve their ends. Both sides used extreme demonstrations of violence through proscriptions to establish dominance. In the 80s, first Marius, a member of the

\(^{48}\) For a full biography of Cicero, see Anthony Everitt, Cicero: The Life and Times of Rome’s Greatest Politician (New York: Random House, 2003.)

\(^{49}\) Brutus, 305-324. This is the first surviving autobiographical sketch in a classical text.
populares, then Sulla, one of the optimates, waged wars against Rome itself and instituted reigns of terror through the powers of the dictatorship, the strength of armies loyal to themselves (not the state), and the use of the proscription lists. For a novus homo like Cicero, navigating this political landscape was treacherous. He began his career as an advocate just as it seemed order could be restored, but could not be sure if he had fashioned the right connections and identity for long term success.

Cicero wrote de Inventione, a Latin handbook on the first division of rhetoric, sometime soon after Crassus’ death in 91 and before he began his career as an advocate. Although he denounced the two books on invention as unworthy of his experience when writing the de Oratore, one scholar has argued that he implies that they “were perfectly adequate, and indeed more so, as the product of a young man.” Even before Cicero had achieved any sort of success as an orator, he wrote a treatise that connected him to the practice of rhetoric. In 79, Cicero successfully defended Sextus Roscius Amerinus on charges of patricide. This was a bold move for such a young advocate. The crime was one of the most heinous for Roman society, and Amerinus’ accusers included favorites of Sulla. Cicero’s success demonstrated his strength as an orator. But he immediately left Rome to travel the East, perfecting his oratorical skill and further studying philosophy. (He also avoided any retribution from Sulla.) Cicero’s period of extended study indicated that he was pursuing the highest standard of oratorical ability. While Cicero did not neglect his military duties entirely, his choices as a young man demonstrated his preference for the Forum and his confidence that his oratory could achieve political success for him.

50 Steel, Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 166.
2.2 The Appearance of Latin Rhetorical Handbooks

Within a decade of the Censors declaring their disapproval of rhetoric, the first handbooks on rhetoric appeared in the Latin language. While it is not possible to determine the relationship between the schools and the handbooks, their concurrent appearance indicates a larger desire for an art of rhetoric that reflected the social, cultural, and linguistic realities of first century Rome. The two handbooks that survived from this period share so much common ground that both were attributed to Cicero during the medieval period. A comparison between the anonymous Rhetorica ad Herennium and Cicero’s de Inventione demonstrates the rhetorical theory that Cicero learned as a youth, while also illustrating some of Cicero’s earliest convictions about the nature of oratory and its cultural significance.

Rhetorical education at Rome in the early first century BCE endured tensions from the cultural and social controversies as previously discussed. The need for a proper education that fell short of philhellenism, coupled with the issues surrounding the social and political inferiority of teachers, left rhetorical education in a somewhat precarious situation. Further, the rhetores Latini must have been busy compiling Greek rhetorical theory from a variety of sources for use in their new Latin schools that opened in 93 BCE. de Inventione and Rhetorica ad Herennium were composed in the volatile conditions created by these issues. The general consensus is that de Inventione was composed first, probably between 91 and 88.51 These dates are reasonable considering Cicero did not include any material that dates later than 91 BCE. Of course, he could have composed de Inventione at a later date, but not much later since he write that the treatise was written in his youth at de Oratore 1.5, “quae pueris aut adolescentulis nobis ex

51 Caplan, xxv-xxvi; Hubbell vii-viii; Kennedy The Art of Rhetoric, 107-10; Marx 76-7. Other dates have been suggested, Achard, 6-10; Adamik 275-6; Kroll, 1093.
Cicero would have been fifteen in 91 and could have considered himself a youth for only a few more years. Even if he deliberately exaggerates his youth in *de Oratore*, it is difficult to argue for a date much later than the mid-eighties, since he did not include material from that time. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was most likely composed sometime between 86 and 82 BCE based on its internal evidence. The Auctor does not mention any conditions at Rome that reflect Sulla’s rule, and he probably does not wait long after collecting his examples to write to the eager Herennius.  

The *de Inventione* and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* are most closely associated with Hellenistic theory, an eclectic compilation of earlier theories that was currently being taught at Rome. Scholars have identified four general stages in the development of rhetorical theory, and attributes of each stage appear in the Latin handbooks under consideration. In brief, the earliest treatises are known as “speech part handbooks,” and include those written before the time of Aristotle. The authors of these handbooks are concerned with the parts of the speech and focused on judicial oratory. Although none survives in its entirety, the contents can be reconstructed from Aristotle’s criticism of them. These handbooks divide speeches into four or five partitions: the proem, the narration, the proof (which could itself be divided into the refutation and the reply by comparison), and the epilogue. The second stage of rhetorical

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52 “the sketchy and unsophisticated work that found its way out of my notebooks when I was a boy (or rather a youth.)”

53 Caplan, xxvi; Calboli, 12-17; Achard, vi-xiii; Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric*, 112-13. Much later dates have been offered, Henderson, 73; Kroll, 63; Douglas, 65-78; Hermann, 144-60. The Auctor mentions events that happened in 88 and 86, but he never indicates the changes to the judicial system instituted under Sulla. His examples include juries composed of both senators and *equites*, but Sulla transferred power away from the *equites* while dictator in 82-81 BCE.


theory comprises Aristotle’s own theory, from the mid-fourth century. He is concerned with the speaker rather than the speech, and his Rhetorica divides the activities of the speaker into four parts: invention, style, arrangement, and delivery. Aristotle’s shift of emphasis from the speech to the speaker makes the most lasting impact on rhetorical theory. The third stage began with Hermagoras in the first century, whose works also included four partitions: invention, management, memory, and style. It was Hermagoras who defined the orator’s goal as persuading the audience through speech.

Elements from each of these stages became fused into the eclectic theory, the fourth stage of the rhetorical handbook tradition. Eclectic theory was practiced from at least the mid-second century until the nineties BCE. The main evidence of this comes from Cicero’s account of Crassus’ education in de Oratore. Crassus says that he learned that “the duty of the orator is to speak in a manner suited to persuasion,” which comes from Hermagoras. Then he describes the five divisions of the activities of the orator: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery, which are a combination of those named by Aristotle and Hermagoras. Finally, he lists the parts of the speech: proem, narration, proof, and epilogue, which have been carried down from the earliest handbooks. Crassus would have undertaken this training around 125 BCE, and Sulpicius, a younger interlocutor, indicates that he too learned the same doctrines.

The de Inventione and Rhetorica ad Herennium reflect the eclectic theory on most counts. Both Cicero and the Auctor acknowledge the five functions of the orator (invention, arrangement, expression/style, memory, and delivery), the three genres of discourses (judicial, deliberative, and epideictic), a Hermagorean account of controversy, and the six partitions of a

58 Gaines, 166.
59 de Oratore, 1.138.
60 See de Oratore, 1.137-45, for Crassus’ full account.
61 de Oratore, 1.148.
speech (exordium/proem, narration, partition, confirmation, refutation, and conclusion).

However, the handbooks break from the eclectic theory on two major counts. First, neither author defends rhetoric’s prerogative to debate philosophical theses. Instead, they focus on speeches of a more concrete nature, or hypotheses. Second, both Cicero and the Auctor consider the parts of a speech under invention as opposed to arrangement. This concept can be traced to Isocrates and is significant because it points to an additional source being available to both authors. The fact that de Inventione and Rhetorica do break from the eclectic theory “indicates that the intellectual context of the two handbooks was fluid enough to support innovation, despite the constraints of authority and consensus associated with traditional doctrine.”

Not only do these handbooks draw from the eclectic theory, but they even share many verbatim passages. Since neither author makes a reference to the other, it cannot be concluded that they had access to each other’s treatise. This implies that Cicero and the Auctor had access to the same source, either in Latin or Greek. A common Greek source could explain the similarities in content and structure, but it is unlikely that both authors choose to translate a number of passages with identical Latin phraseology and to insert the same Roman examples. Instead, the authors most likely share a Latin source, either a translation of a Greek treatise, or the same Latin teacher of rhetoric. That both authors sat under the same teacher is an attractive option since each makes some reference to lecture notes. Cicero uses commentariola, “notebooks,” at de Oratore 1.5, and the Auctor writes of noster doctor, “our teacher,” at 1.18. Also, that Cicero would have listened to this teacher up to a decade before the Auctor, could help

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62 Gaines, 173.
64 Caplan, xxvii-xxx; Corbeill “Rhetorical Education in Cicero’s Youth,” 34; Gaines, 173.
65 Some have argued that the Rhetorica is simply a school notebook (Marx, Teubner Edition, 1894), but this does not account for his philosophical training and the encouragement offered to the clearly younger Herennius. Quintilian never mentions a work that could be the Rhetorica, but he does refer to de Inventione as a collection of Cicero’s school notes at 3.6.59.
to explain some of the differences in the treatises. If they did have the same professor, he likely taught from a Greek handbook adapted to his Roman pupils’ needs. Neither author had to have relied upon these notes exclusively. In *de Inventione* Cicero claimed to have chosen from a wide variety of sources for completing his work: “But after collecting all the works on the subject I excerpted what seemed the most suitable precepts from each, and so culled the flower of many minds,” which might also help to account for some differences.\(^66\)

Although the texts indicate that their authors received similar educations, an analysis of their differences demonstrates a nascent version of Cicero’s unique oratorical program is present from the very beginning of his career. A brief analysis of each text allows for a contrast between the larger values of each author.

### 2.2.1 *de Inventione*

Cicero’s youthful handbook on rhetoric only considers invention, the first function of the orator, in two books. At the end of his treatise Cicero writes that he would cover the remaining topics in other books, “*quaer restant in reliquis dicemus,*” but other pursuits must have kept him from finishing his task.\(^67\) Primarily, the work is meant for use in training its reader for a career in public speaking. Cicero especially focuses on forensic speeches. He begins his preface by considering the nature of eloquence and its contribution to society and concludes, “I have been led by reason itself to hold this opinion first and foremost, that wisdom without eloquence does too little for the good of states, but that eloquence without wisdom is generally highly disadvantageous and is never helpful.”\(^68\) He goes on to defend the study of eloquence as the

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\(^{66}\) _de Inventione_. 2.4, *sed, omnibus unum in locum coactis scriptoribus, quod quisque commodissime praecipere videbatur excerpimus et ex variis ingenii excellentissima quaeque libavimus.*

\(^{67}\) _de Inv_. 2.178.

\(^{68}\) _de Inv_. 1.1, *Ac me quidem diu cogitantem ratio ipsa in hanc potissimum sententiam ducit, ut existimem sapientiam sine eloquentia parum prodesse civitatibus, eloquentiam vero sine sapientia nimum obesse plerumque, prodesse nunquam.*
means to protect the state from evil men. Cicero is familiar with the division of eloquence and wisdom, and this is the beginning of his attempt to reconcile the two, an attempt that he completes in de Oratore. After this rather philosophical preface, Cicero outlines the purpose, materials, and divisions of rhetoric at 1.5-9. He writes that he will follow Aristotle in the three-fold division of the types of speeches into epideictic, deliberative, and judicial. Cicero describes the five functions of the orator at 1.9 and states, “Therefore let us consider what the character of invention should be: this is the most important of all the divisions, and above all is used in every kind of pleading.” The rest of the first book, as well as the majority of the second, are concerned with discovering arguments that relate to judicial cases. He handles the invention of deliberative speeches at 2.155-176, and epideictic at 2.176-177.

Cicero begins his discussion on invention in book one by defining the four types of issues that could arise in a case: coniecturalis, definitiva, generalis, and translativa. This was the status theory for which Hermagoras was best known, and it classified the grounds of dispute into matters of fact or law. At 1.17-18, Cicero discusses the complexity of a case as well as the use of written documents in the courts. Beginning in section twenty he lists the parts of an oration: the exordium (20-26), the narrative (27-30), the partition (31-33), the confirmation (34-77), the refutation (78-96) the digression (97), and the peroration (98-109). After identifying the purpose of each part, Cicero explains how to use each part in different kinds of cases. Cicero ends book one with a brief conclusion, writing that enough had been said about the parts of speech and that

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69 de Inv. 1.5.
71 de Inv. 1.7.
72 Quare inventio, quae princeps est omnium partium, potissimum in omni causarum genere, qualis debeat esse, consideretur.
73 For instance, the exordium “is a passage which brings the mind of the auditor into a proper condition to receive the rest of the speech. This will be accomplished if he becomes well-disposed, attentive, and receptive.” de Inv. 1.20.
the discussion of invention will continue in the second book.\textsuperscript{74} Book two begins with a lengthy comparison between the paintings of Zeuxis of Heraclea and Cicero’s choice to use a variety of sources.\textsuperscript{75} He follows this introduction with the arguments required of each of the four types of issues in a judicial case: \textit{conjecturalis} (2.14-51), \textit{definitiva} (52-56), \textit{translativa} (57-61), and \textit{generalis} (62-115). Thus, Hermagoras’ status theory forms the “backbone” of \textit{de Inventione}.\textsuperscript{76}

Cicero turns to those cases that involve documents, and he addresses the issues that arise with ambiguity, the conflict between letter and intent, and a clash among multiple laws.\textsuperscript{77} Near the end of the book, Cicero turns to deliberative speeches (155-176) and epideictic speeches (176-178). His emphasis on the judicial is in part an inheritance from the earliest “speech-part” handbooks. Finally, the book concludes with his comment that enough has been said on invention.

Cicero takes the Greek rhetorical tradition and attempts to make it applicable to Rome. He readily acknowledges Greek sources, but makes efforts to alter his material so that it is better suited to his Roman audience. One example is his discussion of the Roman proper name and how a speaker can manipulate it to create suspicion. Since Romans had three (or more) names, a speaker could use whichever one best aided his speech. Cicero lists four such pejorative names: Caldus, to suggest hot-temperedness; Clodius, lameness; Caecilius, blindness; and Mutius, muteness.\textsuperscript{78} This practice was only possible in the Roman court, and would fool \textit{Graecis}.

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{de Inv.} 1.109.
\textsuperscript{75} \textit{de Inv.} 2.1-10. Zeuxis used a variety of beautiful models from the city of Croton for his paintings in Juno’s temple, because “he did not think all the qualities which he sought to combine in a portrayal of beauty could be found in one person, because in no single case has Nature made anything perfect and finished in every part,” 2.3.
\textsuperscript{76} Hubbell, 19. See also Barwick, “Zur Erklärung und Geschichte der Stasislehre der Hemagora von Temnos”; Heath, “Hermagoras”; and Mathhes, “Hermagoras von Temnos,” 81-100, for the relationship between Hermagoras’ theory of controversy and \textit{de Inventione}.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{de Inv.} 2.116-154.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{de Inv.} 2.28-29.
imperitis.\textsuperscript{79} However, in a few places Cicero betrays his attempts to synthesize the material. For instance, at 1.35 he discusses which attributes of a person can aid in proving one’s argument. Cicero says, “As to race, whether one is a Greek or a foreigner.”\textsuperscript{80} This was not a distinction that a Roman would have made, and Cicero must be copying from a Greek source. Also, he occasionally writes as if a defendant would represent himself in court, instead of having a counselor defend him.\textsuperscript{81} This was not a reflection of contemporary Roman practice and again must be attributed to Cicero’s copying from a Greek source. Aside from these innovations in adapting his Greek sources, Cicero’s attitude toward the Greek rhetorical tradition was a positive one. This contrasted with the Auctor’s outlook and will be analyzed in greater detail below.

2.2.2 \textit{Rhetorica ad Herennium}

Throughout the Middle Ages, \textit{Rhetorica ad Herennium} was attributed to Cicero until Lorenzo Valla questioned its authorship in the middle of the fifteenth century. Since then, scholars have tried to identify its author without reaching a consensus.\textsuperscript{82} It is not essential to this discussion for the author to be named, and so it is safest to ascribe the work to an anonymous Auctor. The treatise is addressed to Gaius Herennius and is written at his request although the busy Auctor made it clear that he prefers to spend time studying philosophy and is not a professional rhetorician.\textsuperscript{83} Given that Herennius requested this instruction, the Auctor must have been the elder. However, he writes that he and Herennius still practice together and so cannot be much older. The Auctor constructed a manual \textit{“de ratione dicendi”} (on the theory of public speaking) that was useful for Herennius and his own practice.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{79} \textit{de Inv.} 2.28.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{natione, Graius an barbarous}.
\textsuperscript{81} See \textit{de Inv.} 2.91 as an example.
\textsuperscript{82} See Caplan, ix.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Rhet.} 1.1.
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Rhet.} 1.1.
In his brief preface, the Auctor states his desire to be clear and concise. He accomplishes clarity by using Latin terms and specific examples, and brevity by avoiding irrelevant material. To this end he immediately identifies the task of the orator, the three causes of speech, and the five functions of the speaker. The speaker should attain competence in these functions through theory, imitation, and practice.\textsuperscript{85} In his first two books, the Auctor discusses the invention of judicial causes. He lists the six parts of the speech and offered the rules for constructing each. He addresses the introduction (1.5-11), the narration (12-16), the disputation (17), and the proof and refutation (18-25).\textsuperscript{86} The Auctor continues his discussion of the parts of the speech in book two, beginning with a further analysis of the proof and refutation (2.3-12). He meticulously records the methods of proving or denying guilt: motive, character, opportunity, and the testimony of witnesses. He turns next to cases involving documents and addressed letter versus intent (13-14), the conflict of multiple laws (15), issues involving ambiguity (16), definition (17), and transference (18). He discusses the types of law in sections nineteen and twenty, before the Auctor gives an artistic analysis of the argument with examples, as well as examining defective arguments (27-47). The book ends with a look at the conclusion of a speech (47). Considering the first two books of the Rhetorica cover the same topics as the de Inventione, Cicero might have planned to finish his work in similar outline.

Book three includes invention in deliberative and epideictic speaking, arrangement, delivery, and the oldest surviving treatment of memory. The deliberative speech has advantage (\textit{utilitas}) as its aim, and the Auctor divides this into what is secure (\textit{tutus}) and honorable

\textsuperscript{85}\textit{Rhet.} 1.2-3. The Auctor also follows Hermagoras in the definition of his orator. He writes, “The task of the public speaker is to discuss capably those matters which law and custom have fixed for the uses of citizenship, and to secure as far as possible the agreement of his hearers,” (1.2).

\textsuperscript{86} Note that the Auctor wants his hearer “receptive, well-disposed, and attentive,” at 1.7 as Cicero also does in \textit{de Inv.} 1.20.
The parts of speech are readdressed according to their function in the deliberative speech (3.7-9). The function of invention is completed with a discussion of the epideictic (10-15), and the Auctor turns to arrangement (16-18). Delivery follows, including a precise account of voice quality (19-27). The function of memory comprises the rest of book three (28-40). Here the Auctor describes the practice of constructing a series of mental backgrounds onto which the speaker could place images representing the parts of his speech. He emphasizes the importance of practice to develop this function.

Finally, book four contains the oldest treatment of style in Latin. The Auctor begins this book with a preface (4.1-10) that justifies his decision to use examples of his own creation instead of following the practice of the Greeks, who choose examples from the poets and most esteemed orators. In this preface the Auctor comes close to abandoning his aim of being concise, and thoroughly argues against the claims of the Greeks in this matter. He moves on to the three kinds of style: grand, middle, and simple, as well as their defective counterparts: swollen, drifting, and meager (11-16). After addressing taste (17) and distinction (18), the rest of the book is devoted to figures of diction (19-46) and figures of thought (47-69). In the epilogue (69), the Auctor encourages Herennius to diligent practice.

The Auctor does fulfill his aim of being concise and systematically explains his material with few diversions. He uses recent historical exempla, many from the Marsic and Marian Wars, as well as references to older Latin orators. The Auctor has been accused of being a popularis, and some of his exempla do sympathize with that party, (2.45; 4.22, 31, 68). However, he also includes exempla that criticize the populares, (1.28; 2.17; 4.12, 38, 67). It seems reasonable to conclude that the Auctor chooses exempla mainly to suit his rhetorical purposes regardless of

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87 de Inv. 3.3. cf. de Oratore 2.334.
their political nature. This makes it difficult to determine whether political perspective contributes to differences between the approaches of the Auctor and Cicero.

2.2.3 Cicero’s “Youthful” Ideal of Oratory

Perhaps the differences between the two rhetorical handbooks are more striking than their similarities. One significant difference is the attitude each takes toward the Greek rhetorical tradition. Marx refers to de Inventione as a palliata and to Rhetorica as a togata, terms that come from Latin comedy.\textsuperscript{88} A palliata introduced Greek characters in their own dress while the togata camouflaged them in Roman garb. Cicero makes no attempt to disguise his use of Greek sources, while the Auctor denies his use of them and even declares his independence. The Auctor does not name a single Greek source although he certainly relies on them.\textsuperscript{89} And in his preface to book four, he goes to great lengths to emphasize his own creation of the exempla he uses; however the preface itself, as well as many of his exempla, exhibits Greek influence.\textsuperscript{90} Corbeill argues that the Auctor was not merely being disingenuous about his use of Greek sources, but that, “compared with Cicero, the Auctor considers the acknowledgement of Greek culture as a greater threat to the convergence of moral and political authority at Rome.”\textsuperscript{91} The Auctor concerns himself greatly with the Roman tradition of teaching “through the witnessing and retelling of direct action on the part of the political elite.”\textsuperscript{92} He feels it is necessary that Greek rhetorical theory be perceived as something innately Roman as well.

Another significant difference between the two handbooks is their relationship to philosophy. Cicero begins his work with a philosophical preface, and he continues to attempt to

\textsuperscript{88} Marx, Teubner Edition, 129.
\textsuperscript{89} Corbeill, “Rhetorical Education in Cicero’s Youth,” 35.
\textsuperscript{90} Rhet. 4.1-10. Caplan, xxx-xxxii.
\textsuperscript{91} Corbeill, “Rhetorical Education in Cicero’s Youth,” 42.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 43.
make a place for philosophy in his theory of rhetoric. For instance, when discussing the rules for *partitio* at 1.33, he mentions the rules that philosophers use and writes that these apply also for the orator, but cannot be found in other textbooks. Cicero concerns himself with a philosophical rhetoric, as his definition of the art indicates. At 1.6 he writes, “We will classify oratorical ability as a part of political science. The function of eloquence seems to be to speak in a manner suited to persuade an audience, the end is to persuade by speech.” He is interested in a philosophical and logical rhetoric. The Auctor is less interested. He avoids any material not strictly applicable to the speaker’s faculties. Further, the Auctor emphasizes the stylistic features of invention throughout his text. Gaines argues effectively that these indications point to an influence of the sophistic. According to Cicero’s *Orator*, sophists intend to please their audiences rather than persuade them. This could account for the Auctor’s exhaustive explanation of stylistic expressions, physical delivery, and facial expressions the speaker should employ during his speech.

In comparison with *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, *de Inventione* emerges as a philosophical prototype of Cicero’s more mature works on rhetoric. Even as a young man Cicero concerns himself with the relationship between eloquence and wisdom. He tries in this handbook to position the study of rhetoric as the force that will reunite them. Following this, *de Inventione* can be considered as an early trial of Cicero’s later philosophical treatises.

93 Ac sunt alia quoque praecepta partitionum quae ad hunc usum oratorium non tanto opere pertineant quae versantur in philosophia ex quibus haec ipsa transtulimus quae convenire viderenter quorum nihil in ceteris artibus inveniēbamus.

94 eam civilis scientiae partem esse dicamus. Officium autem eius facultatis videtur esse dieere apposite ad persuasionem; finis persuadere dictione.

95 Gaines, “Roman Rhetorical Handbooks,” 177.

2.3 *de Oratore*

After completing the *de Inventione*, Cicero concentrated his efforts on a political career, one that he crafted around his abilities as an orator. He pursued success as a speaker in the Roman Forum and used this success and his abilities to climb the *cursus honorum*, achieving the consulship in 63 BCE. Unlike other aristocrats, who made a name for themselves through their military achievements, Cicero excelled through his unique talent in eloquence; his own life serves as an *exemplum* of success built on oratory. Cicero’s education, training, and personal vision of oratory enabled him to attain the highest position in the Roman Republic, and it seems natural that he would perceive this very education as the ideal. *de Oratore*, or *On the Ideal Orator*, is Cicero’s more mature work on the nature of oratory and its relationship to rhetoric and philosophy.  

It presents his educational ideal for an orator who unites *res* (content) with *verba* (words).

*de Oratore* stands apart from the rhetorical handbooks circulating in the late Republic for several reasons. He aims to reflect something “worthy of [his] present age and of the experience [he has] acquired from pleading so many momentous cases.” Cicero’s self-fashioning in *de Oratore* plays a large role in his presentation of the ideal orator. It was not written by a rhetorician in the typical handbook style but by an experienced orator in the form of a Platonic dialogue. Cicero is not interested in the rules of speech making but rather in constructing the perfect speaker. Aside from differences in genre, *de Oratore* also presents Cicero’s synthesis of oratory and philosophy, an issue that the rhetoricians only addressed tersely in their handbooks.

The dialogue is a subtle and sophisticated blending of the Greek arts with the goals of the Roman

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97 This is not Cicero’s final say on the subject of oratory; he does write *Brutus* and *Orator* in later years. It is however written from the other end of his career than the *de Inventione* and benefits from Cicero’s experience in the Forum.

98 *de Oratore*, 1.5.
statesman. The following will examine these issues and the development of Cicero’s oratorical ideas.

2.3.1 *de Oratore* in Cicero’s Life

Cicero returned to Rome from his Asian philosophical tour in 77 BCE and began working his way up the *cursus honorum*. In 75 he attained the position of Quaestor and joined the Senate. Cicero became an Aedile in 69, a Praetor in 66, and he reached the pinnacle of his career in 63 as Consul. It is significant that Cicero was able to achieve the consulship as a *novus homo*, and especially that he successfully attained each office as early as the law allowed. During his consulship, Cicero put down the Catilinarian conspiracy and had several of its supporters executed without a trial. Although Cicero considered his actions justified at the time, those opposed to this action sought an opportunity to punish Cicero. Their chance came in 58 when Clodius, a Tribune and enemy of Cicero, forced the former Consul into exile with the knowledge, if not support, of the First Triumvirate. Although he returned to Rome the following year, Cicero would never again feel entirely secure in Roman politics. He would be forced to either support the Triumvirate or else be silent. In 55, during this time of political uncertainty, Cicero wrote the first of several philosophical dialogues, *de Oratore*. The politically marginalized orator wrote as a champion of the cultural and political relevance of oratory.

2.3.2 Cicero’s Self-Fashioning

Being a *novus homo*, Cicero had to construct his character and ancestry.\(^\text{99}\) He could not rely on the feats and reputations of his ancestors to win approval with the people or the Senate in

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the same way that the other aristocrats could. An elite ancestry could be especially useful to the orator since much of his authority came from his own ethos. An orator could claim that the glorious deeds of his ancestors also belonged to him and their reputations improved his own. Cicero lacked the advantage of an accomplished Roman family, and he had to construct a “political and cultural ancestry of his own making.” He did this also by claiming all novi homini as his own cultural ancestors. Thus, the interlocutors of de Oratore may be seen as Cicero’s cultural family. Crassus, Antonius, and Scaevola were his teachers and stand in the place of his paterfamilias. Cicero can claim an intellectual inheritance from these men, and so he implicitly claims them as his ancestors. Also, he takes great care to present his physical family as friends with his cultural one. Cicero mentions his grandfather, father, and two uncles, L. Tullius Cicero and C. Visellius Aculeo. The entire work is supposedly composed at the request of Quintus, his brother, and Cicero uses their childhood memories as connections to the great orators of the 90s. Cicero presents his family as belonging in Rome and having intimate connections to the aristocracy. In Cicero’s idealized past his novitas is washed away.

It is not only his past that Cicero constructs in de Oratore. Throughout the work, the interlocutors emphasize that they do not discuss any orator that they have heard before, but an ideal orator who would possess the greatest natural talent and best possible training. Near the conclusion of the text, Catulus says that he wished Hortensius had been present for their conversation because everyone was expecting him to “excel in all of the great things that you have embraced in your discussion.” Crassus corrects him by saying that actually Hortensius is

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100 Dugan, 11.
101 Van der Blom, 159-160.
102 de Oratore, 2.265; 2.1-2; 2.2-3; 1.191; 2.2, 262.
103 Dugan, 96.
104 de Oratore, 3.228.
already attaining distinction for he “has no deficiencies either in natural ability or in learning.”\textsuperscript{105}

From the viewpoint of 91 BCE, it was certainly plausible for the interlocutors to imagine that Hortensius would achieve oratorical supremacy at Rome. But this was actually a false prophecy from the view of 55 BCE, since he had already been defeated by Cicero’s own prosecution of Verres in 70.\textsuperscript{106} For the fifteen years prior to his writing \textit{de Oratore}, Cicero had reigned as the supreme orator at Rome. The prophecy concerning Hortensius was really intended to call readers’ minds to the dialogue’s author. Cicero modeled his ideal orator after himself.\textsuperscript{107}

\section*{2.3.3 Overview of Contents}

\textit{de Oratore} emphasizes the person of the orator and the steps he undertakes to compose his speech. Cicero considers this when organizing his material, and the final product does not resemble any previously written work on oratory. He organizes the dialogue into three books, each including a conversation that Cicero claims to have been reported to him directly by an interlocutor. Notice that Cicero does not remember the conversation perfectly, emphasizing that it is his own literary \textit{ingenium} that must fill in the gaps.\textsuperscript{108} Briefly, the first book begins with a preface in which Cicero discusses the difficulty of oratory and its exacting nature before he introduces the setting of the dialogue.\textsuperscript{109} In this book, Cicero includes the orator’s place in politics and the courts, which requires knowledge of civil law. He also addresses the need for both \textit{ingenium} and practice in developing the orator. The second book begins on the next morning, and the interlocutors have mostly agreed to a more technical discussion of oratory.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{de Oratore}, 3.229.
\textsuperscript{107} Cicero’s self-fashioning continues in \textit{Brutus}, where he positions himself as the \textit{telos} of the history of eloquence at Rome. See Dugan, 172-250.
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.4. “Though the story is not remembered in every detail…” See also Dugan, 92.
\textsuperscript{109} For an in depth look at the topics of \textit{de Oratore}, see Fantham, \textit{The Roman World of Cicero’s de Oratore}. And May and Wisse, \textit{On the Ideal Orator}. 
Included in this conversation are discussions of invention, arrangement, and memory, three of the five traditional practices of an orator. Also, a lengthy digression on wit offers a respite from more weighty matters, and Cicero mentions the lesser genres of deliberative and laudatory speaking. The third book includes discussions on style and delivery, as well as the majority of Cicero’s argument for a broad philosophical knowledge. None of these topics is treated in the same manner as the rhetorical handbooks. Cicero employs all of the devices available to a dialogue, which enables a far more sophisticated approach. The nuances of the dialogue bring an entirely novel approach to these traditional topics. This results in a treatment of oratory that reflects the dignitas of a former consul, rather than a rhetorician’s guide to the rules of speech.

2.3.4 The Dialogue: Genre, Techniques, and Cultural Meaning

Cicero’s audience expected a book titled *de Oratore* to fall into the same category as the rhetorical handbooks then in circulation. This is far from what Cicero gave them. Treatises like *Rhetorica ad Herennium* contained the rules for constructing a speech. They emphasized the final product and were formulaic in nature. *de Oratore* is a far more complex work, written as a Platonic dialogue with its focus on the orator himself, not the speech. Cicero wanted to recall the elegance of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, but present his educational ideal in its natural, Roman setting.  

In the preface of book one, Cicero writes that he is responding to his brother Quintus’ requests for a “more polished” account of oratory. He idealizes the time of the previous generation, who were able to devote their *otium* to letters and study and claims that it is appropriate for him to recall their conversations. He writes, “Though the story is not remembered in every detail, it is, I think, particularly suited to your request, and you will learn from it the ideas of the most

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110 *de Oratore*, 1.28.
111 *de Oratore*, 1.5.
eloquent and illustrious men about all the principles of oratory.” The “story” is set in 91 BCE at Crassus’ Tuscular villa. The ludi Romani are underway at Rome and political business is currently suspended. The Republic sits on the brink of war with the Italian Allies, and Crassus and his guests have left the city to “reinvigorate” themselves. Cicero recreates a time when Rome’s leading statesmen were in great personal danger, most of the characters would die within a few years of the conclusion of their conversation, and the Republic itself faced crisis. de Oratore is set to reflect the author’s own predicament in the 50s.

Cicero carefully selected his interlocutors so that their reputations and strengths would suit his material. de Oratore is a tribute to Antonius and especially to Crassus, both Cicero’s mentors in the 90s. Antonius and Crassus had enjoyed successful careers and attained the censorship in the decade preceding this conversation. They are known for different styles of oratory; Crassus for the polished nature (ornatus) of his speech, and thus he receives the subjects of style and delivery in the third book, while Antonius is known for his knowledge of his cases and excellent memory, and so discusses invention, arrangement, and memory in the second. These two carry the weight of the dialogue, and Cicero uses them to present his cultural ideal.

Additional interlocutors include Gaius Aurelius Cotta and Publius Sulpicius Rufus. Both were promising orators in the late 90s, and their youth allows them to urge on the conversation by their questions and requests. Crassus’ father-in-law, the jurisconsult Quintus Mucius Scaevola, also attends. His legal expertise adds authority to the conversation on the orator’s

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112 de Oratore, 1.4, Ac mihi repetanda est veteris cuiusdam memoriae non sane satis explicate recordatio, sed, ut arbitror, apta ad id, quod requires, ut cognoscas quae viri omnium eloquentissimi clarissimique senserint de omni ratione dicendi.
113 de Oratore, 1.24.
114 For more on the oratory of Crassus, see Brutus 140, 143, 148, 158, 161-2, and 215. For Antonius, Brutus 139-142, and 215.
knowledge of civil law in the first book, while his venerable age, seventy-four at date of the
dialogue, adds dignitas to the gathering. Cicero later wrote to Atticus that he thought it
inappropriate for Scaevola to be present for the technical conversations and has him leave after
the first day for a previous appointment. Quintus Lutatius Catulus and his half-brother Gaius
Julius Caesar Strabo replace Scaevola on the second morning. Catulus is known for his
knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy and contributes to these areas of discussion.
Caesar’s speech is characterized by his lightness of tone and extraordinary wit. Cicero entrusts
him with the digression on humor and wit in the second book. The variety of ages, styles, and
learning of these seven interlocutors allow Cicero to create a conversation that not only
encompasses his own views on the ideal orator, but also achieves a sense of historical
plausibility.

Cicero chooses to present de Oratore as a dialogue not merely to create a contrast with
the handbooks, but because this genre offers layers of sophistication that the handbooks
necessarily lacked. Crucially, the dialogue allows Cicero to place his discussion on the ideal
orator within the world of Roman politics. His interlocutors are leading statesmen removed
from the Forum only because of the ludi Romani. Rhetorical handbooks create a separation of
theory from practice since they belonged to the schools and rhetors, and their rules fail to
address the realities of delivering a speech in the Forum. Cicero wants to emphasize the
importance of statecraft to the ideal orator, and the setting and characters of his dialogue help in
this respect.

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116 Cicero, Ad Atticum, 4.16.3. Cicero also states that he is directly imitating the Phaedrus in this choice.
Although Crassus and Antonius present most of the material, it is possible to establish some similarities between Cicero’s own preferences and those he attributes to the interlocutors. The exchange among interlocutors allows the author to offer different views to the same issue and explore nuances in a way that is impossible in other genres. For instance, in book one, Crassus asserts that a wide philosophical knowledge is necessary for the orator, and he especially emphasizes the knowledge of the civil law.\textsuperscript{118} Antonius, however, disagrees with Crassus and claims that the definition of an orator should not be unduly extended. His more practical view is that the orator should devote himself to his speaking and consult with someone well versed in the law when he needs more exact knowledge. “The presence of Antonius’ counter-arguments gives the discussion a depth that would have been impossible to achieve in a straightforward treatise.”\textsuperscript{119} The secondary interlocutors respond in two general ways to the main speaker’s arguments: they mimic the anticipated response of the audience or, and this occurs more often, they endorse the claim that has just been made and give it more weight. In the case of the previous example, Sulpicius and Cotta are confused by the disagreement between Crassus and Antonius, much like the audience may have been confused.\textsuperscript{120} The next day, however, Antonius admits that he was really only playing devil’s advocate and thus demonstrated the ideal orator’s ability to argue both sides of an issue.\textsuperscript{121} In this single example, Cicero uses two interlocutors to present opposite arguments about the definition of the orator, two secondary speakers to identify with the audience, and Antonius’ about-face to demonstrate a necessary skill of his ideal orator. That all of this is accomplished naturally in the course of the dialogue is part of the genre’s strength and Cicero’s genius.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.30-95, 160-203.  
\textsuperscript{119} Wisse, “\textit{De Oratore:} Rhetoric, Philosophy, and the Making of the Ideal Orator, 380.  
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.262.  
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{de Oratore}, 2.40.
The nature of conversation contains persuasive characteristics that are absent from treatise writing. Cicero takes advantage of these aspects in his dialogue to give greater authority to his arguments. One especially useful aspect is the repetition that occurs naturally in conversation. Crassus approaches the subject of the orator’s knowledge several times throughout the course of the third book. First at 3.19-24, Crassus discusses the intimate connection between words and content without indicating that he will return to the subject of the orator’s knowledge of that content. He does come back to this subject at 3.52, but still offers no systematic treatment. At 3.104-119, Crassus revisits the issue of concrete and general questions. Here he draws a sharp contrast between the current conversation and the treatment this topic receives from the rhetoricians. “As for the second type [general questions], they merely mention it at the beginning of their system, saying that it belongs to the orator, but without setting out its meaning or its nature or its species or its classes. So, it would have been better for them to pass over it entirely rather than to touch upon and then abandon it.” He argues that all concrete questions are merely examples of general ones, and a good orator would move gracefully from the vague to the specific during his speech. Finally, Crassus takes the theme of the orator’s knowledge to its “climax” at 3.126-143. Not only is this theme repeated, but each time Crassus also incorporates a gradually growing conception of orator’s need to master philosophical knowledge. He begins by asserting the requirement for ethics and psychology, a limited portion of philosophical learning. By the fourth succession, however, Crassus asserts the

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124 de Oratore, 3.110, alterum vero tantummodo in prima arte tradenda nominant et oratoris esse dicunt, sed neque vim neque naturam eius nec partes nec genera proponunt - ut praeteriri omnino fuerit satius quam attentatum deseri.
125 May & Wisse, 19.
ideal orator’s need of all philosophical knowledge. This tactic helps the audience to accept Cicero’s broad definition of the ideal orator bit by bit.

The dialogue allows Cicero to demonstrate how to be an accomplished orator in ways that simply cannot be explained in a simple rhetorical handbook. The gentlemanly discussion as presented demonstrates that knowledge is only created with argumentation, or dialectic. With the reader’s knowledge that the interlocutors are nearing their deaths, “the text becomes a hymn to the methods by which eloquence can employ disagreement in the service of mutual understanding. As such, the drama presents an idealized form of discourse in much the same way that our own classrooms represent idealized sites for argument where we are only called upon to contemplate the issues and not to resolve them in action.”

Traditionally, the dialogue is the genre of the philosophers. It is for the sophisticated readers of the Roman elite, not schoolmasters or children. The dialogue occupies a place in the cultural imagination that prevents its content or author from being relegated to the classroom. Cicero must ensure his dignitas in all his writings, as these replace the auctoritas he was currently denied in the Senate by the Caesar’s triumvirate.

2.3.5 Greek Arts in Rome

Philosophy had long been considered a Greek art at Rome, and Cicero employs persuasive techniques to incorporate it into de Oratore because he recognizes the complicated Roman attitude toward such learning. He wants to construct the ideal, Roman orator, but believes that this orator required the Greek arts. Cicero needs to carefully integrate Greek learning into a Roman context, and he does this through a variety of means. His choice of

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interlocutors not only makes the dialogue plausible because of the unique attributes each brings to the conversation, but they are also chosen because they represent the respectability of the Roman elite. In the preface of book two, Cicero writes, “Each reckoned that he would carry more authority, [Antonius] if he was seen to despise the Greeks, [Crassus] if he seemed not even to know of them.” Crassus is especially loath to resemble a rhetorician, and he even qualifies his more technical discussion in the third book by making it an issue of moral obligation. He protests being made to sound like one of the Greeks who prided himself on being able to speak about any subject. Since Crassus demands broad knowledge for the orator and seems most sympathetic to Greek learning, Cicero carefully characterizes him as a “real Roman.” At 3.75 Crassus mentions a journey through Athens on the way home from his province. He says, “I would have stayed there longer, had I not been angry at the Athenians from their unwillingness to repeat the celebration of the Mysteries, for which I had arrived just two days late.” This is the typically arrogant attitude of the Roman conqueror toward a subject city, and Cicero includes this anecdote to depict Crassus as essentially Roman in nature and not as an outright philhellene.

Cicero knows that his audience would connect his dialogue to Plato’s Gorgias and Phaedrus. He wants to distinguish de Oratore from rhetorical handbooks, but needs to emphasize the Roman nature of his work. He acknowledges the similarity between his work and Plato’s almost immediately at 1.28 when Scaevola suggests that they “follow the example of Socrates as he appears in Plato’s Phaedrus,” by sitting and conversing under a plane tree. But

127 de Oratore, 2.4.
128 de Oratore, 3.18. Crassus had agreed to share his views if Caesar and Catulus promised to spend the day at his villa at 2.27.
129 de Oratore, 1.102.
130 May and Wisse, note 247.
131 de Oratore, 3.75, ubi ego diutius essem moratus nisi Atheniensibus quod mysteria non referrent ad quae biduo serius veneram succensuissem.
Cicero does not let his dignified Romans mimic the Greeks too closely. They know what is fitting and proper for Roman men of their status, so Crassus says, “But certainly we can make things even more comfortable,” and calls for cushions to sit on the benches he has placed under his plane tree. Cicero demonstrates the superiority of Roman culture in this subtle change and his audience would appreciate knowing that the leaders of the Republic behaved with more dignitas than did the Greek philosophers. Throughout de Oratore Cicero incorporates some standard stereotypes of Greek intellectuals. For instance, he emphasizes their loquaciousness by telling the story of Phormio, a Hellenistic philosopher who lectured Hannibal on the duties of a general. Cicero reflects the tensions over Greek learning in de Oratore, but still co-opts the arts of rhetoric and philosophy to create the ideal synthesis for his orator.

2.4 Cicero’s Cultural Ideal

In the de Oratore, Cicero maintains four unique principles that characterize his cultural program and make it appealing to future writers of oratory. First, Cicero believes that eloquence can be taught and learned; it is not wholly attributed to natural ability. Next, his ideal orator bears social and political responsibilities for personal honor and the benefit of the State. Third, he creates an art of oratory beyond the rules of rhetoric. It rests on its own value and encompasses the personal virtues of the orator. Finally, Cicero is adamant that oratory is the marriage of eloquence and wisdom, a position he hopes will end the centuries-old debate between rhetoricians and philosophers. In the natural give and take of conversation, Cicero

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133 de Oratore, 2.75-77. Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general who almost defeated Rome in the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE), did not benefit from a lengthy lecture on generalship from a philosopher who had never seen a battlefield!
weaves these principles through his dialogue and presents a portrait of the ideal orator: the citizen for whom a broad, philosophical education has created political success and social grace.

2.4.1 Talent vs. Training

The debate over whether eloquence springs from natural talent or could be learned was not new in Cicero’s time, and he quickly cites the debate in his reasons for writing the text. Cicero states that he will write out of duty to his brother’s request, as well as to resolve their oratorical disagreements. “When our discussions on occasion turn to this topic, you generally disagree with me. I maintain that eloquence is founded upon the intellectual accomplishments of the most learned; you, on the other hand, believe that it has nothing to do with the refinements of education, but is, rather, one of the things that depend on natural ability and practice.”

Cicero acknowledges that talent plays a role in the orator’s overall success, and praises that of the Roman people. “Moreover, there are many indications that the natural ability of our people was far superior to that of all the others, from every other nation.” Still, even those Romans who do possess an abundance of natural talent for skillful speaking must attend to their studies in order to attain the cultural requirements of a true orator. When considering how to encourage a prospective orator, Antonius says that one must first consider if the youth has been “imbued with culture; he should have done some listening and reading and have learned even those precepts that we have mentioned [rhetorical principles, historiography, and the general theses of the philosophers].”

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134 *de Oratore*, 1.5, solesque nonnuncuam hac de re a me in disputationibus nostris dissentire, quod ego prudentissimarum hominum artibus eloquentiam contineri statuam; tu autem ilam ab elegantia doctrinae segregandum putes, et in quodam ingenii atque exercitationis genere ponendum.

135 *de Oratore*, 1.15, Ingenia vero (ut multis rebus possussum iudicare) nostrorum hominum multum ceteris hominibus omnium gentium praestiterunt.

136 *de Oratore*, 2.85, Sit enim mihi tinctus litteris; audierit aliquid, legerity. ista ipsa praeecepta acceperit. Antonius has discussed the precepts at 2.41-73. Later (pg. 170), it will be shown that Renaissance readers engaged with this section of the text.
consider his natural abilities to decide if, or to what extent, he would encourage the youth to pursue oratory. Cicero insists that the education must precede the consideration of natural talent. In this way, all youths, at least the elite males, would study a broad, philosophical curriculum whether they go on to pursue oratorical careers or not.

Throughout the dialogue, the younger speakers request that Antonius and Crassus divulge their knowledge of all aspects of oratory. They want to learn the art of eloquence from the most illustrious orators of the day and express their exuberance at finally having the chance to hear from both men at the same time. In this respect, the dialogue is a re-enactment of the *tirocinium fori*, a part of Roman traditional education during which an adolescent attended a successful statesman in the forum to hear his speeches and imitate his style. In book two, Antonius explains that one should consider the style of delivery when choosing a suitable orator to serve as teacher. He offers the example of Sulpicius, whose quick and excited speech would be tempered by attending the dignified delivery of Crassus. Antonius comments that within a year Sulpicius had become a formidable orator with a splendid manner. He continues, “This, then, must be the first rule I give to the prospective orator: I will show him whom he should imitate. The next thing, to be joined to this, is practice, through which he must imitate and thus carefully reproduce his chosen model.”

Cicero wants his orator to choose a mentor with a complementary style, then continue his training by imitating the speeches given in the real-life atmosphere of the Roman Forum. The orator practices the style in his own trial speeches, not in the seclusion of the schools. (Antonius heard Sulpicius in a “minor case” before suggesting he attend Crassus’ speeches, then again when they rivaled each other in the case of Gaius Norbanus.)

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137 *de Oratore*, 2.90, *Ergo hoc sit primum in praeceptis meis, ut demonstremus, quem imitetur atque ita ut, quae maxime excellant in eo, quem imitabitur, ea diligentissime persequatur.*

138 *de Oratore*, 2.89.
would-be orator should add to his natural talent by carefully imitating those who have proven oratorical effectiveness and should bring this practice directly into public business.

2.4.2 Political and Social Responsibilities of the Orator

True eloquence benefits the whole community. Cicero does not limit his cultural program to the individual rewards obtained in the study of eloquence. In his own life, oratory brought prestige and political success, and Cicero does not deprive his ideal orator of these rewards. However, throughout the text of the de Oratore, Cicero emphasizes the cultural and social benefits of obtaining eloquence and the social and political responsibilities that follow.

The choice to write a dialogue facilitates this. He presents a conversation among friends. No, not all of the interlocutors are on equal footing in regard to their prestige and status, but these members of the elite gather out of their shared bond as leaders of the Republic. They arrive at Crassus’ villa without intentions of discussing rhetoric and oratory, but because this is what Romans do during the ludi Romani. Their shared cultural education would have allowed them to talk about any other subject (as Crassus reminds the group on several occasions when he wants to avoid imitating a rhetor). Cicero records this setting as it embodies the ideal he wants to secure for all elite Romans.

Cicero contrasts this with the practice of Greek intellectuals. He criticizes them for limiting their discussions among members of their own sects, as if they hoard knowledge at the expense of fellow Greeks. When arguing that the orator must obtain broad, philosophic knowledge, Crassus says that “all the gymnasia and all the schools of the philosophers will cry out that all these topics belong to them and are not the orator’s business. Well, I give them leave

139 At the very beginning of the dialogue, Crassus states this most clearly, “If we consider our leisure time, what can be more pleasant or more properly human than to be able to engage in elegant conversation and oneself a stranger to no subject?” de Oratore, 1.32, quid esse potest in otio aut iucundius, aut magis proprium humanitatis, quam sermo facetus ac nulla in re rudis?
to discuss such matters in their secluded corners, just to pass their leisure time.” Crassus portrays Greek philosophers as secretive and exclusive. While he hosts many of his friends in the openness of his home, where successful orators happily share their thoughts and practices with rising speakers (and future rivals!), these Greek intellectuals isolate themselves and their learning within the limited settings of their own schools. He further criticizes the philosophers for neglecting politics, accusing them of “shirk[ing] politics and its responsibilities on deliberate principle.” Cicero presents these men as the antithesis of his orator. Their refusal to create a wide society of cultured men and to act publicly on behalf of the state diminishes the significance of their knowledge.

Cicero charges his orator with social and political responsibilities to give his knowledge purpose. Near the beginning of the first conversation, Crassus encourages the younger interlocutors to pursue oratorical excellence. “The leadership and wisdom of the perfect orator provide the chief basis, not only for his own dignity, but also for the safety of countless individuals and of the state at large. Therefore, young men, continue your present efforts and devote all your energies to the pursuit you are following, so that you can bring honor to yourselves, service to your friends, and benefit to the State.” Orators will not always be on holiday, free to discuss all knowledge with their peers. This otium provides brief respite from

140 de Oratore, 1.56, de omni virtutis genere sit dicendum, clamabunt, credo, omnia gymnasia, atque omnes philosophorum sholae, sua haec esse omnia propria; nihil omnino ad oratorem pertinere. Quibus ego, ut de his rebus omnibus in angulis, consumendi oti causa dissersant.
141 Elite Romans must open their homes to the community, specifically to their clientes. Each day, the public spaces, like the atrium, would be filled with visitors. Some were there to request help for legal trouble while poorer clientes sought a meal handout. As a patron, one met all these needs to generate political support. See de Oratore 1.200 for reference to the importance of this practice for legal advice.
142 de Oratore, 3.59, a re autem civili et a negotiis animi quodam iudicio abhorrerent.
143 de Oratore, 1.34, sic enim statuo, perfect oratoris moderatione et sapientia non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universae reipublicae salutem maxime contineri. Quam ob rem pergite, ut facitis, adolescents, atque inid stadium, in quo estis, incumbite, ut et vobis honoris, et amicis utilitati, et reipublicae emolumento esse possitis.
duty; the eloquent Roman will be called upon to defend his friends, family, and *clientes* in court. Greater still, the orator will provide “safety” for “the state at large.” Crassus acknowledges that the pursuit of wisdom, when coupled with “leadership,” brings dignity and honor to the individual. However, this is only the beginning. His knowledge and practice also must serve the community. This practical application of the orator’s knowledge is so important, that Crassus goes on to insist that “we must apply it to our knowledge of community life, with which it is concerned and at which it aims” and “we must not waste an entire lifetime in learning all this.”

Cicero assigns his ideal orator with social and political duties that are essential to his identity as a man of eloquence.

### 2.4.3 Philosophers vs. Rhetoricians

In creating the ideal orator, Cicero has to reconcile rhetoric and philosophy. Before addressing his means of doing so, a brief sketch of the history of the quarrel is in order.

For several centuries prior to Cicero’s life, rhetoricians and philosophers had quarreled over intellectual territory. Traditionally, rhetoric originated in fifth century Sicily with two thinkers, Corax and Tisias. It was brought to Athens where the democratic atmosphere demanded that citizens know how to speak well. Isocrates opened a school of rhetoric in the first half of the fourth century and thus institutionalized the study of rhetoric. The fourth century also witnessed the beginnings of the philosophical schools. Plato and other followers of Socrates began teaching their doctrines in a more formal manner, and most continued Socrates’ likely opposition to rhetoric. Rivalry for pupils between the two disciplines contributed to their ideological

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144 *de Oratore*, 3.123, *dummodo illa ad hanc civilem scientiam quo pertinent et quam intuentur transferamus, neque, ut ante dixi, omnem teramus in his descendis rebus aetatem.*
145 For more on the history of rhetoric, see Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education*, 1-9.
146 The earliest references to their contributions comes from *Phaedrus* 267ff.
147 May & Wisse, 20. Socrates was condemned to death by an Athenian court in 399 BCE and this increased the hostility his followers may have felt towards the rhetoricians.
differences. In the third century, the debate seems to have abated, possibly because the rhetoricians were left to teach the younger pupils and the philosophers to teach the older ones. By the middle of the second century, Rome’s extension of power to the East reinvigorated the quarrel. This was the time of Hermagoras of Temnos, the first notable rhetorician in generations. Some scholars have conjectured that rhetoricians were eager for their discipline to be on equal footing with philosophy in Roman eyes, causing a renewal of hostilities between the two groups.148 Also, in 155 BCE the Athenian delegation of philosophers came to Rome. While Carneades demonstrated his eloquence in his popular lectures, the Academy did not endorse rhetoric at this time.149 Philo of Larissa became the head of the Academy in 109 BCE.150 In the 90s he began to teach rhetoric in his school, probably to entice more pupils. Philo did not offer a synthesis between rhetoric and philosophy as Cicero emphasizes at 3.110. Here Crassus “represents his move not as a reconciliation but as another attack on the province of rhetoric and oratory.”151 When Cicero wrote de Oratore in 55 BCE, the conflict had yet to be resolved.

Cicero offers his own interpretation of the history of the quarrel in the third book.152 He asserts that wisdom, as the “Greeks of old” called it, consisted of thought and expression, philosophy and oratory.153 Originally no separation existed between the arts of thinking and speaking, producing wise men like Lycurgus, Pittacus, and Solon. Those who diverted their attentions from the affairs of the state used their leisure to learn poetry, mathematics, music, and dialectic, and to study the universe. These men criticized and scorned this practice of speaking. The most important among them was Socrates…and in his discussions he split apart the knowledge of forming wise opinions

148 See May & Wisse, 21.
149 Cf. de Oratore, 1.45-47, 82-93.
151 May & Wisse, 22.
152 For the entire argument, see de Oratore, 3.56-143.
153 de Oratore, 3.56.
and of speaking with distinction, two things that are, in fact, tightly linked…This was the source of the rupture, so to speak, between the tongue and the brain, which is quite absurd, harmful, and reprehensible, and which has resulted in our having different teachers for thinking and for speaking.\textsuperscript{154}

Thus Cicero emphasizes an artificial split between oratory and philosophy that resulted from a failure to prioritize political speech.\textsuperscript{155} This allows Cicero to present his ideal “not as an innovation, but as a return to the original state of things.”\textsuperscript{156}

2.4.4 Creating an “Art” of Oratory

The largest debate surrounding rhetoric involved whether it was truly an art and what content could be rightly claimed by rhetoricians. Philosophers demanded that an art contain a systematic body of absolute knowledge that produced moral behavior in its practitioner.\textsuperscript{157} Cicero does not engage with the philosophers on this point, mostly because he has no love for the systematic rules of the rhetoricians who opposed them. Instead, Cicero focuses on the part of the quarrel that he argues is necessary for the attainment of eloquence: the knowledge of the orator. Cicero argues that all philosophical knowledge is a requirement for the orator and mocks the disciplinary boundaries dividing rhetoric and philosophy. “It is, after all, really a fight over a mere word that has been tormenting those petty Greeks for such a long time, fonder as they are of an argument than of the truth.”\textsuperscript{158} Orators must claim the right to address philosophical knowledge in their speeches.\textsuperscript{159} The majority of book one describes the orator’s use of poetry,

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{de Oratore}, 3.59-61, \textit{...hanc dicendi exercitationem exactitatem atque conterment. Quorum princeps Socrates fuit...sapienterque sentendi et ornate dicendi scientiam re cohaerentes disputationibus suis separatit...Hinc discidium illud exstitit quasi linguae atque cordis, absurdum sane et inutile et reprehendendum, ut alii nos sapere, alii dicere docerent.}


\textsuperscript{156} May and Wisse, 23.

\textsuperscript{157} May and Wisse, 23-25.

\textsuperscript{158} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.47, \textit{Verbi enim controversia iamdiu torque Graeculos homines, contentionis cupidiores quam veritatis.}

\textsuperscript{159} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.54-57.
history, civil law, diplomacy, affairs of state, literature, wit and humor, ethics, and human emotions.\textsuperscript{160} All this knowledge is necessary for creating the ideal orator: “…an orator worthy of this grand title is he who will speak on any subject that occurs … in a thoughtful, well-disposed, and distinguished manner.”\textsuperscript{161} By focusing on the competencies of the orator and the knowledge necessary for the attainment of true eloquence, Cicero turns the focus away from the pedantic squabbles between teachers of rhetoric and philosophy and toward a cultural ideal.

Eventually, he concedes that rhetoric does not meet the strict requirements for being an art as established by the philosophers, but this is only to make place for his own, grander conceptualization of eloquence.\textsuperscript{162} For Cicero, the rules put forth in handbooks of rhetoric fail to create an eloquent person. They may have use to a person trying to write and deliver a speech, but they cannot produce a real orator. He even suggests that the rules were created after someone observed an eloquent speaker and condensed his practices into a guide. Crassus states, “Thus, eloquence is not the offspring of art, but art of eloquence. Even so, as I said before, I do not reject it. For even if art is unnecessary for good speaking, becoming acquainted with it is not unsuitable for a gentleman.”\textsuperscript{163} Cicero rejects the idea that restricted disciplinary boundaries produce well-educated men. Instead, his ideal integrates all knowledge in order to foster eloquence. He states this clearly in his own voice in the preface to book two.

Anyone who has ever achieved success and pre-eminence in eloquence can only have done so by relying on the whole of wisdom, not just on rhetorical rules. For almost all the other arts hold their own separately, in and of themselves; but speaking well, which means speaking knowledgeably, skillfully, and with distinction, is not confined by the boundaries of any fixed area. Anyone who claims to have this power must be able to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textit{de Oratore}, 1.30-79; 158-9; 166-203.
  \item \textit{de Oratore}, 1.64.
  \item \textit{de Oratore}, 1.108.
  \item \textit{de Oratore}, 1.146, sicesse noneloquentiam ex artificio, sed artificium ex eloquentia natum: quod tamen, ut ante dixi, non eiicio: est enim, etiamsi minus necessarium ad bene dicendum, tamen ad cognoscendum non illiberale.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
speak well about everything that can possibly fall within the scope of human discussion, or else he cannot maintain a claim to the title of eloquence.\textsuperscript{164}

Cicero does not present his ideal as belonging to either the rhetoricians or the philosophers. Instead, he takes elements from both sides in his synthesis. He does not defend rhetoric as an art at any point. This is unsurprising because Cicero found little value in the rules of the rhetoricians, and these rules are not given much scope in the education of his ideal orator. Cicero refuses to engage in the debate over the art of rhetoric on the same terms as those before him. Instead, he suggests that true eloquence surpasses any disciplinary divisions and exists beyond the squabble of the rhetoricians and philosophers.

2.4.5 Marriage of Eloquence and Wisdom

By arguing that the orator should have broad philosophical knowledge, Cicero eliminates the division between the domains of the rhetoricians and philosophers. Prior to Socrates’ division, philosophical knowledge and eloquence were united in the wise man, and Cicero devotes the majority of book three of \textit{de Oratore} to reuniting eloquence and wisdom. At the beginning of the afternoon’s discussion, Crassus complains about the way in which Antonius had divided the topics they were discussing. That morning, Antonius had addressed invention and had left style for Crassus to handle. Crassus says, “For since all discourse is made up of content and words, the words cannot have any basis if you withdraw the content, and the content will remain in the dark if you remove the words…eloquence forms a unity.”\textsuperscript{165} He claims that only the “half-educated” split apart difficult concepts in order to try to understand them. “They

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\textsuperscript{164} \textit{de Oratore}, 2.5, neminem eloquentia, nonmodo sine dicendi doctrina, sed ne sine omni quidem sapientia, florere unquam et praestare potuisse. Etenim cetera fere arts se ipsae per se tuentur singulae; bene dicere autem, quod est scienter, et perite, et ornate dicere, non habet definitam alium regionem, cuius terminis septa teneatur. Omnia, quaecumque in hominum disceptationem cadere possunt, bene sunt ei dicenda, qui hoc se posse profitter, aut eloquentiae nomen relinguendum est.
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\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{165} \textit{de Oratore}, 3.19-22, Nam cum omnis ex re atque verbis constet oratio neque verba sedem habere possunt si rem subtraxeris neque res lumen si verba semoveris…Una est enim…eloquentia.
\end{flushleft}
separate words from thoughts just like a body from its soul – which in both cases can only wreak destruction." According to Cicero, the separation of the activities of the orator here, he has Crassus bristle at the division between res (here sententia) and verba, thoughts and words, paralleling de Oratore’s grander theme of the relationship between wisdom and eloquence.

A crucial part of Cicero’s argument is the claim that rhetoricians laid upon general questions, or theses. Traditionally, the rhetors were allowed to claim the discussion of specific questions, hypotheses, in their speeches, but the more general theses were disputed territory. Philosophers claimed that this remained their exclusive purview. The rhetoricians disagreed, but did not offer any systematic treatment of theses in their handbooks. Cicero claims both the thesis and hypothesis for his orator, and he goes further than the rhetor’s mere claim of possession by offering a treatment at 3.111-125. He argues that the best speeches will move from a general question to a specific one to give the audience the proper context for the orator’s persuasive argument. Orators must study the general questions and practice using them in speech to do this effectively. Crassus encourages the younger interlocutors to such study and assures them that they are not trespassing. “We must load our minds to the brim with the attractive richness and variety of the most important matters in the greatest possible number. Indeed, it is ours…this whole estate of understanding and learning, which people with far too much leisure time have invaded while we were occupied, like property unclaimed and uninhabited…as if the orators were not the real owners of the things.”

Cicero does not offer some sort of apology for why

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166 de Oratore, 3.24, et qui tanquam ab animo corpus sic a sententiis verba seiungunt.
167 de Oratore, 3.121-122, sed onerandum complendumque pectus maximarum rerum et plurimarum suavitate, copia, varietate. Nostra est enim...omnis ista prudentiae doctrinaeque possessio, in quam homines quasi caducaam atque vacuum abundantes otio nobis occupatis involaverunt...quasi non illa sint propria rhetorum.
orators may need to borrow philosophical teachings, he accuses the philosophers of stealing them in the first place! This plundering of knowledge means that orators must now go to the philosophers to study *theses*, but this only serves to create the eloquence of the orator. “Since the orator may range freely in this enormous, immense field, and since he is on his own ground wherever he chooses to stand, all the elaborate provisions for speaking with distinction will be readily at his disposal.”¹⁶⁸ The wisdom obtained through the study of *theses* will naturally produce true eloquence, speech that is both beautiful and honorable. “For fullness of content begets fullness of words; and if the subjects we speak about are honorable, the content produces a certain natural splendor in the words.”¹⁶⁹ The unity of *res* and *verba*, of wisdom and eloquence, fashions the ideal orator.

Cicero unites the claims of the rhetoricians and philosophers and gives them all to his orator. He reemphasizes the original unity of wisdom and speech by claiming that the title given to the wise man matters far less than that he unites thinking and speaking. Crassus concludes:

Now if anyone wants to give the name of orator to the philosopher who imparts to us a full range of subject matter as well as fullness of speech, he may do so as far as I’m concerned. Or if someone prefers to give the title of philosopher to this orator who, as I say, unites wisdom and eloquence, I shall not hinder him. But it should be clear that no praise is due to the dumbness of the person who has mastered the matter but cannot unfold it in speech, nor conversely, to the ignorance of the one who does not have the subject matter at his command, but has no lack of words. If we must choose between these alternatives, I myself would prefer inarticulate wisdom to babbling stupidity. But if we are looking for the one thing that surpasses all others, the palm must go to the learned orator.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ *de Oratore*, 3.124, *In hoc igitur tanto tam immensoque campo cum liceat oratori vagari libere atque ubicunque constiterit consistere in suo, facile suppeditat omnis apparatus ornatusque dicendi*.
¹⁶⁹ *de Oratore*, 3.125, *rerum enim copia verborum copiam gignit, et si est honestas in rebus ipsius de quibus dicitur, existit naturalis quidam splendor in verbis*.
¹⁷⁰ *de Oratore*, 3.142-143, *Nunc sive qui volet, eum philosophum qui copiam nobis rerum orationisque tradat per me appellat oratorem licet, sive hunc oratorem quem ego dico sapientiam iunctam habere eloquentiae philosophum appellare malit, non impediam: dummodo hoc constet, neque infantiam eius qui rem norit sed eam explicare dicendo non quæat, neque inscientiam illius cui res non suppetat, verba non desint, esse laudandam. Quorum si alterum sit optandum, malum equidem indiscertam prudentiam quam stultitiam loquacem; sin quaerimus quid unum excellat ex omnibus, doctor oratori palma danda est*. 
2.5 Conclusion: The Ideal Orator

In *de Oratore*, Cicero presents his innovative rhetorical theory in mantles of Roman tradition. Dugan argues that Cicero is so successful in presenting this new model that later generations mistake it for the Roman norm. “The fact that such daring ideas have been accepted as standard, traditional, and uncontroversial by later scholars only attests to the success of the *De oratore*’s strategies for naturalizing these questionable notions to a traditional Roman context.”\(^{171}\) Cicero takes the rules of the rhetoricians, which from his own experience proved impractical in the Forum, and he disseminates them in a manner suited to the *dignitas* of the Roman elite. The interlocutors, even the young Cotta and Sulpicius, are not subjected to pedagogical lists of rules. Rather, they participate in a learned conversation with all the urbanity appropriate for their social status. Cicero’s emphasis on the orator and the stages of his preparation could be of far more use to anyone preparing a speech than the rigid proclamations of the rhetoricians. While the attitude toward Greek learning in 55 BCE was still complicated and tenuous, Cicero creates a natural place for it in the education of his orator. He claims both eloquence and wisdom for his ideal, and although he presents it as a return to the original definition of wisdom prior to Socrates’ schism, this was his own, new synthesis. Antonius describes the ideal when he announces that he had never met a truly eloquent man, but trusted that the talent of his countrymen made him hopeful that *someone* would achieve this.\(^ {172}\) He says, “The eloquent speaker was someone who could amplify and give distinction to whatever he wished in a more marvelous and magnificent way, and whose intellect and memory encompassed all the sources of all the subjects that had any bearing on oratory…let us nevertheless grant that

\(^{171}\) Dugan, *Making a New Man*, 76.

\(^{172}\) We could read “Cicero” here.
This is what is implied by the nature and essence of eloquence.”

*de Oratore* presents the work of a skilled and successful orator who understood the benefits of Greek learning and believed his first responsibility lay in protecting his state. It idealizes the author and creates an atmosphere and curriculum that may reproduce such an ideal.

Cicero’s ideal orator eases the tensions surrounding rhetorical education at Rome. He is a Roman statesman who benefited from great *ingenium*, Greek learning, and Roman training. Although Cicero would write further on oratory in *Brutus* and *Orator*, *de Oratore* represents the zenith of elite education at Rome. The progress from *de Inventione* to *de Oratore* encompasses the development of Cicero’s ideas on rhetorical education, and this signifies the development of Latin eloquence as its own art. Many precepts are adopted from Greek theory, but the end result is unique to Rome. Cicero takes the contestations from the previous centuries and creates an influential vision that became a point of reference for thinking about eloquence in later centuries, especially the Roman Empire and the Italian Renaissance.

### 3 SURVIVAL FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE CAROLINGIAN AGE

In 43 BCE Cicero was assassinated as part of the proscriptions issued by the Second Triumvirate. His hands and tongue were severed from his corpse, and head and hands displayed on the Rostra. The silencing was profound. In spite of Cicero’s careful efforts to publish and circulate his works, his politically motivated death and the onslaught of autocracy could have meant a death for Ciceronian concepts as well. Certainly the earliest generations of imperial Romans exercised caution and restraint when incorporating Cicero into their works. Yet we

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173 *de Oratore*, 1.94, elloquentem vero, qui mirabilius et magnificentius augere posset atque ornare, quae vellet, omnesque omnium rerum, quae ad dicendum pertinenter, fonts animo ac memoria contineret...sit tamen in re positum atque natura.

know that Cicero’s corpus did in fact enjoy great respect and popularity into the modern era. This was made possible by important moments of reception, from the Principate through the advent of printing. This chapter addresses three key moments in the reception of the *de Oratore*: the *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian, Augustine’s *de Doctrina Christiana*, and the humanistic efforts of Lupus of Ferrières who copied Cicero’s dialogue during the ninth century.

Although not an exclusive list of receptions, these three moments shaped Ciceronian concepts for a more enduring legacy. Quintilian revived Ciceronian oratory and taught it to function in the imperial schools and courtrooms. Augustine refreshed the Republican orator’s precepts within the context of a Christian Empire that was slowly fracturing. Finally, by the ninth century the *de Oratore* survived only in a corrupted form. The earnest work of Lupus of Ferrières ensured that Cicero’s grand treatise on oratory was not forever eclipsed by the more “classroom friendly” rhetorical handbooks. Taken together, these revitalizations not only ensured *de Oratore*’s survival, but also created layers of readings for subsequent generations. The value these moments imparted to the *de Oratore* was also reflected by the value imparted to the authors. In short, *de Oratore*’s “success” was intricately and inseparably entwined with that of the *Institutio, de Doctrina Christiana*, and Lupus’ manuscript and reputation. This bundled legacy confronts fifteenth century publishers and scholars, and teasing out the relationships among the texts allows a more nuanced understanding of the significance of the *de Oratore* during the Renaissance.

### 3.1 *de Oratore* in the Roman Empire

The transition from republic to empire brought changes to the practice of oratory. Immediately following his death, Cicero was not heralded as the *pater eloquentiae* as he would be known in later periods. This section examines oratorical theory and practice under the empire
and contextualizes Quintilian’s choice to revive Cicero as the most important model for imitation.

### 3.1.1 Oratory during the Principate

Although there were never any attempts to purge the empire of Cicero’s works, there did exist a hesitation to openly admire or quote from the Republic’s martyr. Contemporary historians were cool toward Cicero, most often describing his death and not his life or accomplishments. While we do not have many rhetorical treatises from the period, the authors of the Julio-Claudian and Flavian dynasties demonstrate a reluctance to use Cicero as a source in their writings, at least as a named source. This has been attributed to Cicero’s failure to earn the status of an exemplum from the generations who immediately followed him. Writers like Seneca, Sallust, and Virgil do not admire either Cicero’s politics or his conduct, so he is minimized or remains absent from their works. Sallust’s Bellum Catilinae, which appeared shortly after Cicero’s death, should feature Cicero as a prominent figure, but he instead reduces his role and writes in a style that rejects Ciceronian preferences. Twenty years later, Virgil ignores Cicero in the Aeneid. In book eight, Virgil describes Aeneas’ shield and its “prophetic” decorations that relate the future of Rome. He mentions Catiline being tortured in the underworld and Cato giving laws, but does not find the space for a reference to Cicero. There is an echo of de Oratore’s methodology in Vitruvius’ de Architectura, however Cicero’s authority on oratory is overshadowed by his shortcomings as a servant to the state. “Seneca, and others too for that matter, could not, or would not, separate Cicero’s life from his work; the

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177 *Aeneid*, 8.668-670. Cicero is also written out of the history given in book 6 when Aeneas is in the underworld.
authority of the latter, to some degree was determined by how he had conducted his life.”

Perhaps this treatment of Cicero was not wholly due to Augustus’ autocracy, for Plutarch records an anecdote in which the emperor catches his grandson reading a work of Cicero’s. “Caesar saw it, and took the book, and read a great part of it as he stood, and then gave it back to the youth, saying: “A learned man, my child, a learned man and a lover of his country.” Whatever the cause of Cicero’s sidelining in the early imperial authors, Quintilian would develop a means of analyzing and adopting Cicero’s oratorical theory without bothering to fully defend the Republican’s conduct. Quintilian would readily admit that Cicero was not a perfect man but observe that he had come closer than any other to being a perfect orator.

Autocracy did not merely cast a shadow on Cicero’s reputation, but also profoundly altered the functions of Republican institutions. Certainly, the consuls, senate, and assembly remained intact. However, the balances within the government were abolished. Meetings, debates, even trials all operated under the watchful eye of a militarily-backed autocrat. Especially significant to the present study, rhetorical training was forced to adapt because oratory no longer served as the vehicle for becoming a head of the state. This is not to say, as many contemporary literary critics had done, that oratory had lost all relevance, only that deliberative oratory could no longer claim pride of place over the epideictic and judicial branches as it had in the Republic.

178 Gowing, 243.
180 In the first century CE, skepticism abounded about the present state of eloquence. Tacitus, in Dialogus de Oratoribus, remarks that it is no longer even common to use the title orator, but causidici, advocati, or patroni were used instead. On this evidence, Gwynn argued in the early twentieth century that “political oratory was dead, and everyone in Rome knew that it was dead,” Roman Education, 188. More recent analysis suggests that political oratory was still important for the individual, but had less impact on the governance of the state. (See Steel, Roman Oratory and Steven Rutledge, “Oratory and Politics in the Empire,” in A Companion to Roman Rhetoric, ed. William Dominik and Jon Hall (Oxford: Blackwell,
The empire also witnessed an increase in bureaucracy, and even at this early stage the attitude of the state changed from censoring to financially supporting the rhetorical schools. Boys who advanced to the study of rhetoric no longer participated in the practical *tirocinium fori*. The role of speech in the senate meetings and general assemblies no longer offered the same dynamic presentations of debate and oratorical skills as they had during the Republic. Even court cases were determined more by the preferences of the Emperor than by the advocate’s ability to persuade the judge, and they “almost never took on the national significance that the factionalism of the late republic had encouraged.” Increasingly, rhetorical education was isolated from the forum and into the rhetor’s school. The practice of declamation gained importance. Professors declaimed before their pupils, who in turn wrote and performed speeches on imagined topics before their peers. Declamation served as a replacement for the *tirocinium fori* and helped to train young men for careers as advocates and appointed civil servants.

A lost benefit of the *tirconium fori* was that its practice had remained firmly rooted in the reality of an orator’s daily life. Declamation, on the other hand, could be prone to excesses of imagination and exuberance of style. Competition in the schools, if not reigned by a competent teacher, may encourage some boys to focus their efforts on performance and delighting the audience at the expense of careful preparation, organization, Latinity, and decorum.

First, the teenaged boys in the rhetorician’s school would take their turn composing such briefs; they were not required to know details of the law but, rather, to evolve arguments from probability and use paradox and striking aphorisms and dramatic characterization. This forced each boy to be more ingenious than the one before him and led to increasingly clever and artificial speeches. Later too, as adults, men continued to practice declamation for public display, and well-known orators competed to demonstrate their skill. These competitions seem sterile to

2007). The biggest change affected the epideictic genre, which enabled men to promote themselves on the merits of eloquence and praise of the emperor. This genre had received little attention during the Republic.

181 Kennedy, *Quintilian*, 22.
us, but they were attended by the leaders of Roman public and literary life.\textsuperscript{182}

Further, since autocracy had altered the source of true power within the state, some men gravitated towards those positions near the ear of the emperor. A new position as a delator, or informant, appeared, and Quintilian is especially critical of those who combine the excesses of competitive declamatory speech with false accusations to win the emperor’s favor. While it is possible to overstate the transformation of oratory at this period by describing a collapse of morals or deterioration of eloquence, it is nonetheless significant that these changes occurred. At this time, Cicero’s speeches are not in fashion for boys to memorize as literary critics like Tacitus and Seneca the Younger are extremely critical of the Republican’s style. Instead, the pithiness of Seneca is widely imitated. Cicero’s ideal orator would not flourish in these political conditions, and our evidence does not indicate that an accepted rhetorical theory or curriculum developed at pace with the changes in practice.

Another kind of speaker did flourish during the Principate, and without considering cause, it is useful to discuss here the Second Sophistic in some degree. Although this movement and its adherents elude a strict definition, it is clear that the Greek elite under Roman rule sought a cultural renewal of identity through a linguistic and literary revival of classical antecedents.\textsuperscript{183} In the city of Rome, this movement was on display from the last quarter of the first century CE through the reign of Hadrian. The sophists specialized in epideictic oratory and they attracted large crowds for their performances. “Sophists mixed lurid theatre with intricate scholarship, miming and mimicking figures from the historical past, as well as fictional characters who found themselves in horribly complex moral circumstances.”\textsuperscript{184} Sophistry and the title “sophist” prove

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\textsuperscript{184} Whitmarsh, 1.
\end{footnotesize}
difficult to define as some individuals denied the label, but performed in the same manner. This tension can be felt in contemporary debates that attempted to distinguish the “philosopher” from the “orator” from the “sophist.”

When defined against ‘philosopher’, in the Greek texts of the Roman empire, the term ‘sophist’ implies a fickleness and crowd-pleasing razzmatazz. When defined against ‘orator’, however, it takes on different inflections. In some circumstances, ‘orator’ covered the general category of the specialist in rhetoric, while the ‘sophist’ was a more refined orator, that is to say a famous performer who could command large audiences. On other occasions, however, sophists are distinguished on the basis that they attract students, while orators speak in professional (i.e. legal, political, ambassadorial) contexts.\(^{185}\)

While these performers were new in the city of Rome in Quintilian’s time, their appearance and practices indicate yet another alternative to Ciceronian oratory that was prominent in the first century. The ancient struggle between Greek art and Roman virtue found another avenue for debate in rhetorical contexts, and many have equated sophistry with an effeminate excess of the spoken word. Quintilian began his career as a teacher of rhetoric during the advent of the Second Sophistic, after declamation dominated the classroom and political informants had established themselves in the workings of the state.

### 3.1.2 Quintilian’s Life and Career

The details of Quintilian’s early life remain obscure. He was born around 40 CE in Calgurris, Spain, and studied rhetoric in Rome during the late 50s. Not much is known about his family, but they certainly were not of senatorial rank. Perhaps they were equestrian, because they afforded to send Quintilian to the capital for his rhetorical education. Quintilian writes about his relationship with the orator Domitus Afer and mentions the trial of Capito which occurred in 57. Since Afer died in 59, it is likely that he was in Rome between ages fourteen and

\(^{185}\) Whitmarsh, 18.
twenty. Afer worked as an advocate and was not known as a declamer but for avoiding voluptuousness of style. He also demonstrated an affinity for Cicero and Virgil, and Quintilian’s choice to imitate him displays the latter’s preference for the classical style from a young age. Afer supported the Principate, earning Tacitus’ ill-will, and Quintilian inherited this cooperation as well. After his mentor’s death in 59, it seems he returned to Spain to practice in the provincial courts.

The next mention of Quintilian reports that he is brought to Rome by Galba. Since Galba was assassinated the following year, and the opportunities for a legal career were diminished by the Civil War, it seems Quintilian decided to open a school. He was the first person to establish a public school at Rome and receive a salary from the state treasury. This stipend likely began under Vespasian, and Quintilian benefitted from this approval and the freedom from needing to collect fees from pupils or other private benefactors. He attracted young men from good families as students, and it is very likely that his pedagogical declamations were attended by interested adults as well. Although this will be explored in greater detail in the next section, we may note that Quintilian would claim that his school could be characterized by its emphasis on morality, reality, and Ciceronian style.

During this period, Quintilian did continue to serve as an advocate in the courts, although he only mentions four cases and published just one speech. He also published a now-lost treatise titled *de Causis Corruptae Eloquentiae* which Kennedy argues was not a commentary on the general literary decline of the first century, but a critique on excesses and errors of style that had become popular during the period. This argument follows Quintilian’s views as presented in

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187 See Kennedy, *Quintilian*, 20-21 for a summary of these cases. Interestingly, each of these cases involved a woman.
the *Institutio*, where he praises autocracy, indicates his period’s ability to use great examples from the past, and shows no belief in decline of contemporary writers in his reading list. Instead he comments throughout his work on the danger of moral corruption and that education has allowed its standards to slip. Kennedy concludes that the loss of this work is not great, for it can be understood as a preview to the *Institutio*.

After twenty years teaching in Rome, Quintilian retired. With his newly acquired leisure, he set out to write a treatise on the education of the orator, from infancy to lifelong reading for continuous refinement. After beginning the work, Quintilian was appointed teacher to Domitian’s heirs, Vespasian and Domitian. It seems that they were meant to study rhetoric, but history does not record what happened to them. In any case, the *Institutio* can be seen as Quintilian’s effort to preserve his pedagogical methods and theories for future generations.

### 3.1.3 *Institutio Oratoria*

At the beginning of the *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian claims that he writes at the bequest of his friend to offer his opinion on all the debates surrounding the education of the orator. His authority comes from twenty years in the classroom as a professor of rhetoric, but Quintilian does not limit himself to a rhetorical handbook. Instead, he presents a curriculum designed for the ideally educated orator, with concern for his earliest days with a nurse to his reading choices as a practicing advocate. This twelve-book treatise benefits parents, teachers, and students of rhetoric alike by presenting a rigorous plan of study with encouragement and advice for each stage of the process.

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188 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 6.1.35; 12.11.22; and book ten.
189 As he mentions in the preface to book six of his *Institutio*, Quintilian’s own sons died before reaching adulthood, while he was writing his great treatise. It is possible that the elder had started his study of rhetoric, but Quintilian could not hope for his own sons to follow in his footsteps.
Cicero’s influence on Quintilian’s thinking, teaching, and writing cannot be overstated, as Cicero is quoted 802 times in Quintilian’s writings.190 The de Oratore forms a central part of this influence, however, Quintilian did not attempt to imitate the de Oratore in genre or style. Quintilian did not face an identical cultural and social atmosphere as Cicero had 150 years prior. There was no need to make the Greek art of rhetoric more palatable to a Roman aristocratic audience. The state was not censoring Latin schools, but sponsoring them. Quintilian does not need to protect himself from the “slander” of being called a rhetor for this was now a socially, politically, and culturally acceptable position for a man of his rank and talent. Unlike Cicero, Quintilian enjoyed the freedom to discuss his theories and evaluate others’ without risking any social stigma. The Institutio served as a practical guide for Quintilian’s sons and imperial charges, while also ensuring his legacy.

The treatise is divided into sections on educational practices from the nursery to the rhetor’s classroom in book one, historical evaluations on rhetoric’s definition and its relationship to philosophy in book two, a literary review of the best authors in Greek and Latin in book ten, the theoretical discussions of the five parts of oratory in books three through nine and eleven, and the ultimate demand that the ideal orator must first and foremost be a good man in book twelve.

For the most part, the Institutio is a survey of rhetorical theories and practices, and Quintilian’s evaluation of which is best. He does not claim to offer radically new viewpoints, but instead reforms what he perceives as current excesses to align with classical standards. More than any other source or author, Quintilian defends and praises Cicero. There are numerous references to Cicero’s approval of theories throughout the work, an extended defense of him and

comparison to Demosthenes in book ten, and the prooemium to book twelve contains a maritime metaphor where Cicero is the only scholar to have attempted to go so far on this oratorical journey before. Of course, Quintilian presents himself as bravely setting forth with Cicero already in the rearview mirror, as it were. Quintilian does need to justify his approval of Cicero. The Republican statesman had not been the oratorical darling of the early Principate’s eye, which can be a difficult thing to remember from our perspective. The elder Seneca was much more popular by Quintilian’s day, and the Institutio must present an argument for a return to a more balanced, classical style best embodied by Cicero. Quintilian’s repeated references to and extended praise of Cicero aim to convince the reader of Cicero’s position of oratorical authority. Especially, Quintilian needs to explain the faults in Cicero’s conduct, and ultimately the Republican fails to be the ideal orator because he was not morally perfect. But no one else has come closer to the ideal.

While much of the Ciceronian corpus is referenced, the de Oratore is strikingly present in Quintilian’s work. Not only does Quintilian follow Cicero in his divisions of rhetorical theory, but those themes that Cicero develops in de Oratore find a home in the Institutio as well. Quintilian champions educational training and critiques those who rely on talent. This training prepares a student for the courts, where he can fulfill his social and political duty. Quintilian defends rhetoric as an art in the fullest sense, by comparing it to other Greek techne. And he argues that oratory encompasses the knowledge and morality of all philosophers. Quintilian takes this final point to the furthest extent as his orator must possess virtue to be truly called an orator: Cato’s vir bonus dicendi peritus.

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191 Institutio, 12.1.14-20.
In book two, Quintilian criticizes those who argue that natural talent and declamatory practice are sufficient for success as an orator. He writes that those who rely on talent are often rude, at a loss for words, and attempt to make up for this by gesturing wildly and stomping their feet.\textsuperscript{192} Instead, Quintilian’s orator requires strict teaching in the full course of rhetorical precepts, and this includes an appropriate practice of declamation. He asserts, “The thing [declamation] has degenerated to such an extent (and this is the fault of the teachers) that the licence and ignorance of declaimers has become one of the prime causes of the decadence of eloquence.”\textsuperscript{193} Instead of allowing boys to practice speeches about topics like magicians, oracles, and tragically cruel stepmothers, teachers should set exercises based on reality. Declamation is a way of preparing for court cases in the absence of the \textit{tirocinium fori} and should reflect the gravity of Roman judicial practice. This would prevent the declaimers from becoming over-stylized and flamboyant speakers.

Quintilian sets aside a large portion of books two and three for addressing the debate over the art of oratory and its relationship to philosophy. Whereas Cicero dismissed the terms of the debate by demonstrating that his ideal orator would possess all the knowledge of the philosophers, Quintilian carefully refutes all of those who criticize rhetoric as inferior to other arts. He does this through comparisons between rhetoric and other arts like painting, generalship, and dance, as well as by the very practical realization that men, like himself, have made successful careers out of teaching rhetoric as an art. In the end, Quintilian returns his focus to the ideal orator he seeks to educate. The art of rhetoric is apparent in the eloquence of the orator. Quintilian’s orator is not just eloquent but has mastered the content that belongs to

\textsuperscript{192} \textit{Institutio}, 2.11-12.
\textsuperscript{193} \textit{Institutio}, 2.10.3, \textit{Eo quidem res ista culpa docentium reccidit ut inter praecipuas quae corrumpent eloquentiam causas licentia atque inscitia declamantium fuerit.}
rhetoric as well. And it just so happens that this includes all the knowledge of the philosophers as described by Cicero. Although Quintilian is not as exacting in the expertise required, he nevertheless includes civil law, history, and all those topics normally taught by the philosophers. He insists that the orator is a *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, a good man skilled in speaking, and that philosophical knowledge is essential in maintaining that goodness. Most of book twelve explains the need for a fully trained orator to persist in his philosophical studies, for philosophical knowledge is “allied to the business of the orator.”

**3.1.4 Quintilian’s Contribution to *de Oratore*’s Survival**

This analysis has demonstrated the influence of *de Oratore* on Quintilian’s work. What is left to be discussed is the role of the *Institutio* on *de Oratore*’s future. By the end of the first century BCE, Cicero’s style and vision of oratory was dated and sidelined. His written speeches may have served as examples for imitation in the classroom, but Senecan terseness and sophistic declamation occupied a majority of the oratorical “stage.” Not that Cicero had been forgotten, but his goal of achieving the pinnacle of Latin eloquence was far from accomplished. With the *Institutio*, Quintilian returns Cicero to the front of this race. The Republican statesman is not endorsed without reservations, but Quintilian demonstrates how Ciceronian oratory still functions in the empire to produce an orator of excellence. The completeness of Quintilian’s education curriculum, especially when discussing how an established orator should spend his leisure, revives Cicero as the primary example to whom the Roman orator should aspire.

Because of Quintilian’s success and authority as a professor of rhetoric, the *Institutio* would be used in classrooms across the Roman Empire and (to a lesser but still significant extent) in medieval Europe. Since Quintilian defends Cicero and *de Oratore*, the work finds new

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194 *Institutio*, 12.2.10, *qua tandem non est cum oratoris opera coniuncta?*
audiences where the *Institutio* is read. Cicero’s ideal has been adapted, but Quintilian makes it practical and conceivable for an orator to pursue. Without the *Institutio* it is difficult to imagine how the *de Oratore* and its principles would have been an attractive source for later authors, not to mention for Sweynheym and Pannartz in 1465.\textsuperscript{195}

3.2 *de Oratore* in Late Antiquity

After Diocletian split the administration of the empire along an east-west divide and Constantine legalized Christianity, oratory adapted again to changing circumstances. Cicero had enjoyed a place in the curriculum but sophistic oratory persisted as well. This section examines the sociocultural changes of late antiquity and the role of Augustine in preserving Ciceronian oratory for an age of Christian rule in Europe.

3.2.1 From Quintilian to Augustine

The three centuries separating the *Institutio Oratoria* from Augustine’s *de Doctrina Christiana* witnessed numerous political, military, and administrative reconfigurations in addition to Rome’s conversion to Christianity. It is not surprising that the practice of oratory also adapted to fulfill new roles created by these changes. Diocletian’s division of the empire increased the need for efficient bureaucracy. Many elite males of the fourth century, especially from the equestrian class, pursued a brief rhetorical training in order to meet this need. Teachers like Libanius of Antioch complain that students and their parents abused the *rhetor*’s school when they tried to accomplish the minimal amount of training possible before abandoning their

\textsuperscript{195} It should be noted that the *Institutio* only preserves the *de Oratore*’s principles as it revives Cicero as a source for oratorical instruction. The texts serve different purposes and do not necessarily appear together in the manuscript or print traditions. The *Institutio* is valuable for pedagogy until it is replaced by the shorter works of Donatus and Priscian in the fourth century, who embrace its technical aspects and therefore partially transmit its contents. In the fifteenth century, Quintilian’s work is rediscovered in its entirety. While this was important, the *Institutio*’s format and pedagogical purpose mean that it does not enjoy the same significance for Renaissance humanism as the *de Oratore*. 
teacher for an imperial post or the law schools. The state had expanded its financial support of the rhetorical schools, but was itself satisfied with the “early” graduates and did not impose any regulations on the duration of the curriculum. A full oratorical education had become a luxury into which most students did not indulge. Augustine seems to be an exception for the fourth century, for he continued his study to the point of becoming a professor of rhetoric himself.

Outside of the imperial administration, the Christian Church offered an alternative route for the educated to pursue careers. In many areas of the empire, especially across the Latin West, bishops and clergy were pressed into their positions by the local population. Instead of serving on local curia, these church leaders carried out local administration and justice with the added responsibilities of delivering the weekly (or possibly more frequent, depending upon the demands of the community) homily. Some of the best orators in the church drew crowds in a similar fashion to the Sophistic declaimers of the first and second centuries. This is how a still-pagan Augustine first heard the bishop Ambrose in Milan in 384. For these orators, a full rhetorical education was often completed before joining the clergy. For many others, however, piety and social responsibility far outweighed oratorical talent and training.

Augustine is interesting in this context because his career intersects with many of the issues facing Roman rhetoric of the late fourth and early fifth centuries. He preserved a detailed record of his own education as well as his experience as an imperial professor of rhetoric in both the provinces and cities of Rome and Milan. His writings also reflect the tension between Christian morality and pagan arts, and the difficulties faced by Christian preachers who lacked oratorical training. Finally, Augustine represents the late antique mindset: classical training and

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196 Not that a true majority had ever afforded this luxury, but while Quintilian writes as though young men lounged within the schools for too long, in the fourth century Libanius complains that he cannot retain his pupils long enough to complete the course he has outlined for them in *Oration 62*. 
heritage with a more individualized identity living through the political fracturing of the Roman Empire.

3.2.2 Augustine’s Career and the Confessions

Augustine was born in Thagaste (modern day Algeria) in 354 CE. His father was a member of the local curia and a pagan, while his mother was a devoted Christian. Augustine describes his early life and education in the Confessions, written from 397-400. His father was eager for him to study literature and rhetoric to become a legal advocate. Augustine emphasizes the loquaciousness of the rhetoric students throughout the early books of Confessions, equating the abundance of words with an abundance of pride. He says of himself, “The blindness of humanity is so great that the people are actually proud of their blindness. I was already top of the class in the rhetor’s school, and was pleased with myself for my success and was inflated with conceit. Yet I was far quieter than the other students.”

It seems that at the writing of the Confessions, Augustine held the sophistical rhetoric of his school days in contempt. A conceited Augustine sat at the top of his class, but there were other students more verbose than himself! Further analysis of his attitude toward sophistic rhetoric follows below, but this sketch allows for understanding of the type of rhetoric that Augustine practiced at school. Here, at a Carthaginian school c. 372, Augustine read Cicero’s Hortensius and was forever changed.

This was the society in which at a vulnerable age I was to study the textbooks on eloquence. I wanted to distinguish myself as an orator for a damnable and conceited purpose, namely delight in human vanity. Following the usual curriculum I had already come across a book by a certain Cicero, whose language (but not his heart) almost everyone admires. That book of his contains an exhortation to study philosophy and is entitled Hortensius. The book changed my feelings. It altered my prayers, Lord, to be towards you yourself. It gave me different values and priorities. Suddenly every vain

198 Conf. 3.6.
hope became empty to me, and I longed for the immortality of wisdom with an incredible ardour in my heart. I began to rise up to return to you.\textsuperscript{199}

Augustine writes about this experience twenty-five years later, and his account lacks a great deal of detail. Still, the overall feeling is positive. Something in the \textit{Hortensius} directed Augustine’s heart toward God and set his path toward conversion.

Unfortunately, the \textit{Hortensius} no longer exists, so a reconstruction of the text’s contents from fragments found in other texts is necessary to understand its effect on Augustine.\textsuperscript{200} The text appeared in 45 BCE, near the end of Cicero’s life, when his political influence was practically nonexistent and immediately after the death of his beloved daughter Tullia. The statesman withdrew to his villa to spend the last of his years writing. Enough fragments of the text survive to draw conclusions about its contents. Cicero set this dialogue at the villa of Lucullus in 62 BCE, and each interlocutor defends a branch of study. Hortensius, an orator whose career was eclipsed by Cicero, defends rhetoric while Cicero defends philosophy, and it seems that the overall effect is an exhortation to Hortensius to take up philosophical study as an improvement of his own oratory. Some scholars suggest that Cicero’s speech likely resembles those given to Crassus in the third book of \textit{de Oratore}.\textsuperscript{201} Anything more than this vague exhortation to pursue wisdom seems unlikely to be discerned.

Augustine admits that \textit{Hortensius} appealed to him not only because of its author’s eloquence, but also because of its contents. “I was impressed not by the book’s refining effect on my style and literary expression but by the content…the one thing that delighted me in Cicero’s

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{Conf.} 3.7.
\textsuperscript{200} J.H. Taylor, “St. Augustine and the \textit{Hortensius} of Cicero,” \textit{Studies in Philology} 60 no. 3 (July, 1963), 488. The interlocutors discuss poetry, history, rhetoric, and philosophy. See Taylor’s notes for more in-depth studies of the \textit{Hortensius}.
exhortation was the advice ‘not to study one particular sect but to love and seek and pursue and hold fast and strongly embrace wisdom itself, wherever found’. The rhetorical curriculum of Augustine’s day undervalued this pursuit of wisdom, and it appears to have claimed his attention all the more strongly in this context. However, “one thing alone put a brake on [Augustine’s] intense enthusiasm – that the name of Christ was not contained in the book.” Augustine had taken the name of Christ to heart since his infancy with his mother’s teaching. He expected to find wisdom only with Christian teachings. Hortensius has the immediate effect of turning Augustine toward the scriptures. “I therefore decided to give attention to the holy scriptures and to find out what they were like…[they] seemed to me unworthy in comparison with the dignity of Cicero. My inflated conceit shunned the Bible’s restraint, and my gaze never penetrated to its inwardness.” Augustine’s mother taught him to associate wisdom with the name of Christ, but his rhetorical training preferred a refined style. Augustine would not appreciate the eloquence of scripture until after his conversion. Hortensius can be seen as a turning point in Augustine’s life and career. He embraced Cicero’s call to “love and seek and pursue…wisdom itself,” and started down a path that led to Christ.

After explaining his conceited rejection of the scriptures, Augustine relates his embrace of Manichaeism. This seems a logical fit since the heretical Christian sect proclaimed the name of Christ, but in a style consistent with the rhetoric that Augustine was learning at that time.

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202 Conf. 3.7-8.
203 Conf. 3.8.
204 Peter Brown, Augustine 30-31, discusses the conception of Jesus as teacher and the source of wisdom. Fourth century Christianity portrayed Christ in this way rather than with an emphasis on the crucifixion and resurrection.
205 Conf. 3.9.
206 See de Doctrina Christiana (DDC) 3.25-62.
207 Stock, 40.
208 The Manichees were dualists; they did not accept that evil could come from a holy God and so attributed evil to an equal but dark power; Troup, Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom, 11-16.
Mani called himself an apostle of Christ and spread a universal religious message. He claimed that Christ enlightened men with true knowledge of themselves, God, and the universe. The Persians executed Mani in 276 CE for his radical teachings, and his dispersed followers had reached Carthage by 297. Their group found acceptance among the students and intelligentsia of the city and constituted a large portion of that community in Augustine’s day. As a part of Augustine’s commitment to seeking wisdom, he decided to give up a career in the imperial bureaucracy and become a teacher of rhetoric. This allowed him to pursue philosophical study and forsake ‘worldliness,’ a Manichean goal. He remained with the Manichees for about nine years, or until he set sail for Italy in 383. At this time he sought better-behaved students as well as a more convincing wisdom. He would find both in Milan.

Augustine first traveled to Rome in 383 to advance his career as a rhetor. He quickly caught the attention of the Roman prefect Symmachus, who appointed Augustine as professor of rhetoric at the imperial court in Milan. When he arrived in 384, St. Ambrose held the bishopric of the city. Two years of his influence, coupled with Augustine’s reading of neoplatonist writings, prompted the famous conversion to Christianity as told in Confessions. As one of his first actions as a committed Christian, Augustine abandoned his imperial post as professor of rhetoric. Many have read this decision as a rejection of rhetoric on theological grounds. However, Augustine does not divide the world into holy and profane in any of his works and never condemns rhetoric outright. Nevertheless, book nine of the Confessions contains critical

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209 Brown, 32-34.
210 Conf. 8.18-30.
211 Tell, “Augustine and the “Chair of Lies”: Rhetoric in The Confessions” Rhetorica 28 no.4 (Autumn 2010) : 387-392, analyzes some of these positions. For an extremely negative reading of rhetoric in the Confessions, see Kevin Hughes, “The “Arts Reputed Liberal”: Augustine on the Perils of Liberal Education,” in Augustine and Liberal Education, ed. Kim Paffenroth and Kevin L. Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2000). “For Augustine, looking back, the life of a teacher of rhetoric, even at the royal courts of Milan, was little different from that of back-alley weapons merchants and prostitutes,” 97.
language toward Augustine’s former profession and this has caused difficulties for those trying
to place Augustine in the rhetorical cannon. David Tell analyzes this episode in Augustine’s life
and draws attention to the intimate connections between the Manichees and rhetoric in the
*Confessions*. Augustine’s main antagonists in this work are the Manichees, and he criticizes
them for their use of the *professio*, a distinctive rhetorical form recognized by its loquacity. To
the Christian bishop writing the *Confessions*, the Manichees spoke constantly and yet had
nothing to say. “The Manichaean heresy, then, was both a theological and a rhetorical
heresy.” Not only did this sect teach a theology abhorrent to the Catholic Church, but their
rhetoric consisted of the teaching of the second sophistic; it divorced wisdom from eloquence.
Augustine condemns this rhetoric when he writes, “I made a decision…to retire from my post as
a salesman of words in the markets of rhetoric.” He will no longer teach students to craft
together empty words to please an audience. Augustine now appreciated the wisdom found in
scripture. The remainder of his career testifies to his willingness and ability to weave together
true wisdom with eloquence.

At Easter 387, Augustine was baptized in Milan. He started on a journey back to his
home through Rome and Ostia. His mother died in Ostia along the way. Augustine continued to
Carthage and ultimately Thagaste. Here he devoted himself to writing several treatises on
Christian theology, including two against the Manichees, before traveling to Hippo in 391 to
found a monastery. In this year Augustine was ordained a priest, and he became bishop of Hippo
just four years later. Around this time he started writing *de Doctrina Christiana*, a four-book
treatise on understanding and preaching the scriptures. This may seem like a straightforward

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212 Tell, 392-396.
213 Tell, 394.
214 *Conf.* 9.2.
undertaking for a Christian bishop, but the vision appears less clear when considering the largely illiterate society that Augustine shepherded.

Estimates of literacy rates in late antiquity vary, but even in the urban center of Carthage those who could read comprised no more than twenty percent of the population. The percentage of the literate in smaller cities and the countryside was considerably smaller, and the estimate for all of the western provinces falls between five and ten percent. Thus Augustine’s paradox. How can he encourage his flock to have faith in a text they cannot read? The answer lay with the sermon. Augustine knows the power of the human voice to teach and persuade an audience to the speaker’s position. For Christians, remission of sin and the hope of eternity come through faith in Christ. The gospels equate Christ with scripture. John wrote, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God…The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Since the majority of Christians cannot read the Bible, their only path of salvation lies in the hearing of the Word. If the bishop can train preachers to read the scriptures accurately and preach with eloquence, then hope remains for the flock.

3.2.3 *de Doctrina Christiana*

With this burden in mind, Augustine began writing *de Doctrina Christiana* around 396. *de Doctrina Christiana* is neither a full educational curriculum nor is it mainly concerned with oratory in and of itself. Augustine writes for those already leading a congregation and who do

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216 Schaeffer, 1136.
218 See also Stock, *Augustine the Reader*, 197.
not have the luxury of time needed to become masters of eloquence. (Although, for those of
good character who do have the time, Augustine encourages them to learn rhetoric elsewhere.) He asserts that eloquence is important and preachers should arm themselves with eloquence in order to combat the well-spoken lies of non-believers. Without time for formal training, this is done through observance of eloquent Christian preachers and through reading and imitating their written texts. He writes, “There is no shortage of Christian literature…and by reading this an able person, even one not seeking to become eloquent but just concentrating on the matters being discussed, can become steeped in their eloquence, especially if this is combined with the practice of writing or dictating, and eventually speaking.” Once again, the *tirocinium fori* is reconfigured to reflect the realities of the fifth century. But Augustine does not stop there. The rest of the book contains enough oratorical advice for the preacher to use in crafting his sermons. Augustine follows Cicero in writing about the three purposes of the speaker (to instruct, to delight, and to move), and in his discussion of the three styles of speech (the restrained, intermediate, and grand).

Augustine does emphasize the supremacy of scripture, but he also argues for the utility of acquiring broad knowledge so that a priest may more effectively instruct and persuade his audience. The effective preacher must possess a broad, cultural learning, including mastery of eloquence, in order to refute the lies of others. However, he must also exercise caution when pursuing these disciplines through pagan sources. Augustine lists the liberal arts in detail, then concludes by comparing them to the treasures that the Hebrews took out of Egypt. “All the branches of pagan learning contain not only false and superstitious fantasies and burdensome

\[^{219} DDC, 4.3-6, \text{trans. R.P.H. Green, } On \text{ Christian Teaching} \text{ Oxford World Classics Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).}^{220} DDC, 4.9.\]
\[^{221} DDC, 4.74-86; 4.96-145.\]
studies that involve unnecessary effort...but also studies for liberated minds which are more appropriate to the service of the truth." According to Augustine, the Christian should carefully sift through these treasures, but the profitable arts, which include an art of eloquence, must be mastered by one who wants to effectively communicate truth.

Augustine wants his readers to understand the value of eloquence, but, like Cicero, he insists that eloquence cannot be separated from wisdom. Indeed, he sees the practice of eloquence without wisdom as inherently dangerous. For Augustine, the wisdom that his ideal orator or preacher should embody comes from the Holy Scriptures, where truth is absolute and not subject to boastful declamations. He reconciles the divide between eloquence and wisdom by subjugating eloquence to wisdom: the ideal orator will master eloquence in the service of wisdom. The apostle Paul, a rhetorical amateur, is Augustine’s example par excellence. Paul “spoke with an amazing combination of wisdom and eloquence, but as the servant of wisdom and the master of eloquence, being led by the one but leading the other and not disdaining it as it followed behind.” Such a characterization follows the model set by Cicero, but addresses the concerns of contemporary Christians who need help negotiating the relationship between Biblical authority and pagan learning, between the proclamation of truth and a skill that could be used for deception.

3.2.4 Augustine’s Contribution to de Oratore’s Survival

de Doctrina Christiana demonstrates that a Ciceronian oratory is useful, even vital, for the Christian teacher. Augustine does not argue that classical knowledge should be acquired for its own sake, but that proficiency in the liberal arts, especially rhetoric, equips the Christian to

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222 DDC, 2.145.
223 DDC, 4. 17-18.
224 DDC, 4.34.
better interpret the Scriptures, better teach the truth to others, and better combat the lies of heretics and pagans. Others had written similar apologies for classical learning, but two factors make Augustine’s defense of Ciceronian oratory important. Augustine had trained as a rhetorician and enjoyed much success at this first career. He knew the art of rhetoric better than most any other Roman of the same time. From his position as a foremost authority of Roman oratory, Augustine espouses Ciceronian themes and interprets Ciceronian oratory in the context of Ciceronian philosophy. This combination had been very powerful in Augustine’s own life, and he embraces Ciceronian oratory as the most appropriate for his students in Africa, Rome, and Milan, and then for the preachers he addresses in *de Doctrina Christiana*.

Augustine wrote near the beginning of a millennium of Christian rule in Europe, and his authority as a teacher of rhetoric during the medieval period is surpassed only by his authority as a theologian. Especially influential are his writings on original sin and predestination. His central role in medieval doctrine makes Augustine a model for imitation in all aspects, including his appreciation for classical rhetoric. Augustine embraced Ciceronian oratory as a rhetorician, defended it as a bishop, and preserved it through his position of authority in the medieval period.

### 3.3 The Carolingian Renaissance

This section examines education and oratory as it evolved in the medieval period, with a special emphasis on the reforms of Charlemagne and the imperial courts of his heirs. The scholarship that persists at this time is not the rhetorical schools of the empire, however the Ciceronian ideal again finds a place.

#### 3.3.1 From Augustine to Lupus

Another four centuries separate the appearance of *de Doctrina Christiana* and the life of Lupus of Ferrières. To keep this study focused, I will examine the changes to education and
textual preservation that occurred during the Carolingian period and the place of the *de Oratore* at this time. Classical learning persisted through the fifth century, but the episcopal schools began to be predominate in the sixth. Our evidence of educational practices during the Merovingian period is scarce, however it seems clear “that education – within households and at schools – continued, that it was primarily practical in its aims, that the Roman rhetorical tradition had disappeared, but that occasionally there were instances of aristocrats with more intellectual interests than their peers.”225 The Merovingians, and the Carolingians after them, relied on written charters and other legal documents to maintain their kingdoms. To be effective, the majority of aristocrats required a basic education in grammar, and this was acquired at monastic and cathedral schools. The most common grammar text was Donatus’ *Ars grammatica*. This work presented the eight parts of speech in its *Ars minor*, and grammarians of the medieval period had to adapt it for an audience that did not primarily speak Latin. Although there was not a decisive break with practice from the Merovingians, the Carolingians began to create more diverse solutions for teaching grammar. During the seventh and eighth centuries, new commentaries on Donatus’ grammar appeared, along with declension lists of ecclesiastical words (more accessible to students speaking Germanic or Celtic languages), and insular grammars became available as supplements to Donatus.226 At Charlemagne’s court, Peter of Pisa wrote the first parsing grammar, a methodology that would remain hugely influential throughout the medieval period.

During the Merovingian period, it was still possible to study ancient literature and philosophy, but only by efforts additional to the main curriculum. Texts continued to be


produced in Gaul during this period, but a clear, geographical shift to the north, away from the front between the Merovingians and the Iberian Peninsula occurred. “Many of the monasteries which emerged as centres of literary activity or book production in the second half of the eighth century enjoyed royal or aristocratic patronage, and it is patronage which emerges as one of the most important features of the Carolingian Renaissance.” So there was some continuity of literary and educational practices from the fifth to the eighth centuries, but Charlemagne’s increases of patronage for scholars and intellectual pursuits revived the preservation and production of classical texts to an extent that the term “renaissance” is not entirely without merit.

Two documents survive which express Charlemagne’s desires for the cultivation of learning in his kingdom, the *de Litteris Colendis* written between 780 and 800, and the *Admonitio Generalis* from 789. *de Litteris Colendis* is addressed to the abbot of Fulda, and copies were sent also to other abbots throughout the empire. The letter indicates a belief that a lack of literary comprehension could compromise understanding of the scripture and Christian truths.

We began to fear lest perchance, as the skill in writing was less, so also the wisdom for understanding the Holy Scriptures might be much less than it rightly ought to be. And we all know well that, although errors of speech are dangerous, far more dangerous are errors of the understanding. Therefore, we exhort you not only not to neglect the study of letters, but also with most humble mind, pleasing to God, to study earnestly in order that you may be able more easily and more correctly to penetrate the mysteries of the divine Scriptures. Since, moreover, images, tropes and similar figures are found in the sacred pages, -no one doubts that each one in reading these will understand the spiritual sense more quickly if previously he shall have been fully instructed in the mastery of letters.

Charlemagne calls on the abbot to not just stop neglecting the study of letters, but to actively encourage it by setting up teachers for the other monks. This activity would be necessary to win

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the king’s favor, and the abbot of Fulda should send copies of the letter to all other monasteries and bishoprics under Charlemagne’s control. The Admonitio contains similar fears that some “pray badly because of their incorrect books.”\textsuperscript{229} To combat this, Charlemagne wanted schools built and texts like the Psalms and grammars corrected.

It is clear from these two texts that the main motivation for improving literary studies was to promote orthodoxy of faith throughout the empire. Grammar was a means to better theological understanding, and this required uncorrupted texts and greater academic rigor. Charlemagne invited scholars from across Europe to his court to help him determine what to prioritize. These men brought important texts and skills with them, and they were awarded with positions and lands for their contributions. The palace library grew, as did those of monasteries throughout the Charlemagne’s territories, with an emphasis on those along the northern borders of his control. It seems that much of the palace library was inherited by Louis the Pious, and his second wife Judith further encouraged literary studies.\textsuperscript{230} However, the political fracturing and civil wars that occurred after Charlemagne’s death meant that fewer resources were available to the wide-scale promotion of learning that Charlemagne had desired. This was the world into which Lupus entered in the early ninth century.

\textbf{3.3.2 Lupus of Ferrières: The Abbot}

Lupus was born around 805 in the Archdiocese of Sens. His family was aristocratic, although not one of the most prominent in the kingdom, and it seems that they designated Lupus for a career in the church from birth. As a youth, Lupus went to the abbey of Ferrières to begin his education. Around 828, Abbot Aldrich sent him to Fulda to increase his knowledge of the

\textsuperscript{229} McKitterick, \textit{The Frankish Kingdoms Under the Carolingians}, 751-987, 145.

\textsuperscript{230} McKitterick, “Charles the Bald and His Library: The Patronage of Learning,” \textit{The English Historical Review} 95 no. 374 (Jan. 1980).
scripture under Hrabanus Maurus. At Fulda he worked on a commentary of the book of Numbers and developed many friendships, including an epistolary one with the famous Einhard, which would serve him throughout the rest of his career. By 836 Lupus was back at Ferrières seemingly as a schoolmaster. He taught rhetoric to a modest number of students, and it appears that he was a conscientious instructor.

Twice, Lupus received invitations to the court of Louis the Pious at the request of Empress Judith. She wanted to persuade Lupus to support her son Charles the Bald, and Lupus believed that these visits would lead to an imperial appointment. This was not to be, however, and the death of Louis the Pious in 840 started a civil war among his sons and their heirs. Lupus did remain loyal to Charles, although during the war Abbot Odo of Ferrières supported Lothair. When Charles won the kingship over West Francia, he dismissed the abbot and named his friend Lupus abbot instead. Lupus served as abbot of Ferrières for the next twenty years, the remainder of his life, and carried out many duties in addition to the scribal and textual work that he is best known for.

In many ways, Lupus represents the average Carolingian abbot in his duties. Noble writes about his activities, especially in his many efforts to reclaim the cell of Saint Josse for Ferrières. This had been given to Odulf, a supporter of Charles the Bald after the civil war, and its loss put Lupus and his monastery at disadvantage. Lupus wrote to many of his personal and family friends to assist his request that Charles give back the cell, indicating that its loss had crippled the economic stance of Ferrières. The monks wore tatters, Lupus had to sell its precious

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231 Lupus, Epistle 11.
232 As a side note, it seems that Lupus never considered forgery of documents in his attempts to reclaim the cell. He writes to friends, offers gifts, and attends a formal hearing, but does not “discover” or “repair” any documents that would support his claim. “Perhaps forgery is the tool of the weak, or, more emphatically, of the weakly connected.” Thomas F.X. Noble, “Lupus of Ferrières in His Carolingian Context,” in After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History, Essays Presented to Walter Goffart, ed. Alexander Callander Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 243.
possessions, there were no gifts to offer prestigious benefactors, and the monastery could not offer hospitality as it was expected to do. Most seriously, Lupus was uncertain if the monks would be able to continue in their prayers for Charles. (He was vague about whether this is simply because they lacked the means to do so or because Charles’ actions, or lack thereof, placed him outside the blessings of the church.)

By 852, Lupus finally succeeded in having the cell returned.

These episodes demonstrate how power operated in the ninth century Carolingian court. Lupus and his family were important enough to have members awarded positions like the abbacy and even an arch-bishopric, but not so important that they could not be slighted by the confiscation of properties. The emperor designated positions to the important individuals from the most important families, and their appointments were scattered far from their original places of power. This made them imperial. Lupus’ family was not one of these. Instead, he “and his clan were dangling from the fringes of real power.”

This required Lupus to use friendship connections to support his claims, and many of his letters contain these requests. Additionally, Lupus mentioned gift-giving and institutional forums for conducting business. The Carolingian empire was not solely governed based on one’s relationship to the king, but by the interplay of familial, social, and institutional mechanisms of power.

By establishing where Lupus fit in terms of Carolingian society, it is possible to ascertain what kinds of support he may have had for his intellectual pursuits. “Lupus never enjoyed the kind of patronage, of enveloping support, that so deeply benefited the generation of his predecessors.”

His age was one of greater political fragmentation, and neither Louis the Pious

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233 See Ep. 36, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 54, 57, 58, and 61.
234 Noble, 240.
235 Noble, 235.
nor Charles the Bald invested the same energy or resources toward intellectual endeavors. Further, the “Carolingian Renaissance did not set out to produce geniuses. Its aim was to provide competent teachers. Lupus’ writings show that he was that, and perhaps a little more besides.”

His contributions in textual preservation and improvements were significant, but he did not possess the wide reading in classical authors that may have been credited to him in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, it seems his knowledge of Cicero was rare and even unrivalled, and that is why he remains significant in this study of the *de Oratore*.

### 3.3.3 Lupus of Ferrières: The “Scholar” and Text Critic

In 829 or 830, Lupus wrote a letter of introduction to Einhard, the famous scholar and biographer of Charlemagne. Lupus praises this work, especially Einhard’s classical style, and requested Einhard’s friendship and a few books to copy. One of these books was the *de Oratore*. We know that Lupus was successful in his request through several bits of his correspondence. In a letter dated May 836, Lupus writes that he has not been able to return the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius because Hrabanus Maurus has kept it to make another copy for the library at Fulda. Since this text had been requested in the same, introductory letter as the *de Oratore*, it demonstrates that Einhard had shared some texts with Lupus. Then, sometime between 855 and 858, Lupus writes Pope Benedict III and requests more books. “We are also in search of Cicero’s *De Oratore* and the twelve books of Quintilian’s *Institutiones Oratoriae* which are contained in one rather small volume. We have parts of each of these authors, but we desire to obtain by your help the entire works…”

Although no evidence...

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236 Noble, 246.
237 All dates are taken from Levillain.
238 The two earliest medieval references to the *de Oratore* come from Lupus’ letters.
239 Ep. 100. Regenos, *Petimus etiam Tullium de Oratore, et XII libros Institutionum Oratoriarum Quintiliani, qui uno nec ingenti volumine continentur; quorum utriusque auctorum partes habemus, verum plenitudinem per vos desideramus obtinere.*
suggests that Benedict sent any texts to Lupus, the request indicates that Lupus did possess a corrupt copy of the *de Oratore* already. Finally, Lupus’ transcribed copy still exists as Beeson demonstrated in 1930.²⁴⁰

This copy, the Harley 2756, H, now at the British Library, possesses internal features which indicate what sort of scholar Lupus was and what condition the *de Oratore* was in when he read and copied it. Beeson’s work highlights several features of Lupus’ text-critical practices as demonstrated in the *de Oratore* and other works.²⁴¹ Lupus edited his copy as he wrote, making corrections on wet ink or through erasure. He made notes if he doubted the reading of his copy, and left spaces blank for those parts of the text that were missing or too corrupt to determine. Lupus seems to have been working quickly, as he is not always careful to balance the number of lines of text on each page. His haste gives further weight to the probability that he is copying Einhard’s text, for he certainly would have wanted to return the work promptly to stay in Einhard’s good graces. Still, Lupus demonstrated his priorities as scholar and text-critic as opposed to the professional scribe. He strove for accuracy in the copy, leaving blank spaces in hopes that he would find a more complete copy to perfect his own. As Beeson states, “The urge


²⁴¹ Several manuscripts have been attributed to Lupus. The following are recognized as definitely his:

- Berlin, Bibl. Nat. lat. 126 (Philips 1872), Jerome, *Chronica Eusebii*.
- Berne 366, Valerius Maximus, *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*.
- ___. Lat. 6370, Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somniun Scipionis and Saturnalia*, Book I.
- ___. Lat. 8623, Symmachus, *Epistolae*, Books I-VIII.
- Vatican, Reg. lat. 597, Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, Books IX-XX.
- ___. Lat. 1484, Tiberius Claudius Donatus, *Interpretationes Vergilianeae Aeneidos*, Books I-VI.
- ___. Cod. Lat. 474, Augustine, *Sermones*.

For lists of possible and proposed texts of Lupus, see Robert Gariepy, *Lupus of Ferrières and the Classics* (Darien, Conn: Monographic Press, 1967), 87ff.
for a second copy from which to correct the first is almost as strong in Lupus as the desire for a new text. It is this characteristic that distinguishes him from all the other scholars of the Middle Ages. The use he makes of his two texts, and the respect for the tradition which he shows in preserving discrepant readings or old readings when he occasionally does emend, more than atone for the mediocrity of his scholarship.”

Lupus was a careful text critic, but he was not the great reader of classical works that earlier studies have made him out to be. A particularly close reading of his correspondence reveals his familiarity with classical sources. His references to the scripture and Patristic authors outnumber his references to classical ones. (This should not be surprising. He was the abbot of Ferrières and had studied theology extensively.) But of the classical sources, Cicero stands out as the most frequently cited and most closely imitated in Lupus’ style. His letters indicate that he also has familiarity with Aulus Gellius, Flavius Caper, Nonius Marcellus, Aelius Donatus, Priscian, Valerius Maximus, Publius Synes, Virgil, Servius, Sallust, Horace, Martial, and Ovid. Although this list includes works that range across genres from grammar to history, poetry, and philosophy, Lupus’ use of these authors is limited in the surviving evidence. When considering the standard education during the Carolingian period, his use of these other authors is in keeping with what could be expected of a ninth century scholar. The overall impression is that Lupus “had a somewhat limited knowledge of Latin literature.” Lupus only distinguished himself through his knowledge of Cicero.

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242 Beeson, Scribe and Text Critic, 4.
243 Gariepy, 36ff. Gariepy combed Lupus’ letters for quotations and references of classical authors. He distinguishes between instances where Lupus had direct access to the classical source, and where he indirectly accessed the source through a later author, perhaps a grammarian like Priscian or a church father like Augustine.
244 Gariepy, 83.
Why did Lupus endeavor to secure (multiple) copies of classical works for his private use? The Carolingians considered books to be treasures and produced finely ornamented copies as gifts for individuals and institutions. Books were listed in wills with other items of treasure and even Lupus noted the likelihood of a book being stolen. Men like Alcuin and Hrabanus Maurus expressed the value of the content of books as well. The Carolingians noted the age of a text or its provenance. “This appreciation was more than mere connoisseurship: it was, first, a recognition of the spiritual, and possibly even material, enhancement of value a special association could lend a text, and secondly, it was an awareness of the need for particular works and the necessity to search for them. But it also involved a growing understanding of how the history of the transmission of a text, and the age and provenance of a volume containing a text, might affect the text itself.”

Lupus was not the only Carolingian scholar to value texts and to concern himself with their fragile transmission. However, most understood the value of the text in terms of the Heavenly wisdom it contained, whether direct or as a means to accessing such wisdom. Lupus may have had other motivations for collecting the classics, particularly Cicero. These works could represent Lupus’ preparations as a new kind of courtier in the service of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald. In his first letter to Einhard, he described the changes of attitude toward learning from Charlemagne’s time to the present:

A love of learning arose in me almost from earliest childhood, and I did not despise what many people today speak of as a horrible waste of time. And if there had not been a lack of teachers, and if the study of the ancient writers had not passed almost into oblivion through long neglect, perhaps, with the help of God, I could have satisfied my craving, for within your memory there has been a revival of learning, thanks to the efforts of the illustrious emperor Charles to whom letters own an everlasting debt of gratitude. Learning has indeed lifted up its head to some extent, and support has been given to the

245 Lupus, Ep. 11.
246 McKitterick, Written Word, 151-152.
truth of Cicero’s well-known dictum, “Honor nourishes the arts, and all men are aroused to the pursuits of learning by the hope of glory. [Tusc. Disp. I.2.4]

In these days those who pursue an education are considered a burden to society, and the uneducated who commonly look up to men of learning as if seated on a high mound impute any fault which they may find in them to the quality of their training, not to human frailty. Men have consequently shrunk from this noble endeavor, some because they do not receive a suitable reward for their knowledge, others because they fear an unworthy reputation.

It is quite apparent to me that knowledge should be sought for its own sake…

Considering this is a letter of introduction and request for Einhard’s friendship, it seems prudent for Lupus to praise the elder scholar by placing him within the context of the revival of learning under Charlemagne. Here however, Lupus states that the glory of that circle was too short-lived.

It is not difficult to imagine Lupus regretting that he had not been born sooner. Nevertheless, the young scholar will not be held back by the changes of educational fortune and concludes the letter with a request for books.

If Lupus did long for a revival of the courtly school, then the attention he received from the Empress Judith created hope for the promotion of his position. He expected an appointment in 837 and would have presented himself before the court in his area of expertise, as a teacher of grammar and a Ciceronian expert. Knowledge of the classical corpus allowed Lupus to fashion himself in the light of a new courtier, one who has embraced Charlemagne’s reforms and carried the benefit of Carolingian education through to the cultivation of a valuable library. A sophisticated reading of the de Oratore demonstrates how the truly educated orator is of great

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247 Lupus, Ep. 1, trans. Regenos, Amor litterarum ab ipso fere initio pueritiae mihi est innatus, nec earum ut nunc a plerisque vocantur, superstitione otia fastidiví; et nisi intercessisset inopia preceptorum, et longo situ collapsa priorum studia peneinterissent, largiente Domino meæ aviditati satisfacere forsitæ potuisset. Siquidem vestra memoria per famosissimum Imperatorem K., cui litteræ eo usque deferre debent ut aeternitati parent memoriam, caepa revocari, aliquantum quidem extulere caput, staisque constittit veritate subnixum, praeclarum cum dictum: Homnos alii artes et accenduntur omnes ad studia gloria, nunc oneri sunt qui aliquid discere affectant; et velut in edito sitos loco studiosos quosque imperiti vulgo aspectantes, si quid in eis culpæ deprehenderint, id non humano vitio, sed qualitati disciplinarum assignant. Ita duma lli Dignam sapientiae palmam non capiunt, alii famam verentur indignam, a tam praeclarò opera destiterunt. Mihi satis apparat propter seipsam appetenda sapientia...
benefit to his state, and Lupus could have used Cicero’s dialogue as a model for his own self-fashioning. Like Cicero, Lupus was born into a decent position in his society, but neither man would have been able to use his ancestry alone to achieve a place in the highest circles of power. Instead, Cicero uses his oratory as a means of presenting himself as a cultural-intellectual heir to some of the Republic’s greatest leaders. Lupus would have required a similar claim to be considered for a place at Louis’ court, since his own family does not seem to be among the most powerful.

3.3.4 Lupus’ Contribution to de Oratore’s Survival

Of the eleven manuscripts that survive in Lupus’ hand, three are Cicero’s works, including rhetorical works de Inventione, de Oratore, and In Verrem, and philosophical works de Natura Deorum, de Divinatione, de Fato, Timaeus, Topica, Paradoxa, Lucullus, and de Legibus. If one also includes the manuscripts that may have been worked on by Lupus, a further three of nine contain works of Cicero. These include the philosophical texts de Senectute, Tusculanae Disputationes, and de Officiis. Of all twenty manuscripts considered here, Augustine’s writings are featured in second place, occupying three manuscripts in total. It is not clear from his letters whether Lupus sought copies of Ciceronian texts more than other classical authors. It is also possible that our surviving evidence does not accurately reflect Lupus’ personal library of edited and copied texts. Still, even if it is not accurate to claim that Cicero occupied nearly a third of the space on Lupus’ own bookshelves, he did work on a majority of the Ciceronian corpus. The above list is missing Cicero’s epistles and nearly all his speeches, but of the philosophical corpus only de Re Publica, Hortensius, Consolatio, de Finibus, and de Amicitia are excluded. Lupus

248 Cicero was an expert self-fashioner. See Dugan Making a New Man and Van der Blom Cicero’s Role Models.
knew more of the Ciceronian corpus than any other Carolingian intellectual.\textsuperscript{249} His copy of \textit{de Oratore}, the Harley 2736, is the oldest that survives and contains the largest amount of text.\textsuperscript{250} Lupus’ choice to leave blank spaces for passages he knew to be missing allows a reconstruction of the now lost archetype for all the manuscripts known from the medieval period.\textsuperscript{251} His work as a text critic ensured that knowledge of Cicero’s philosophy, and an especially critical copy of the \textit{de Oratore}, would be preserved throughout the medieval period.

\section*{3.4 Conclusion}

At no point in its history of transmission was the \textit{de Oratore} assured a place of importance or even survival. While the next chapter will examine the fragility of the transmission of physical copies of the text into the modern period, this chapter has demonstrated vital moments of the \textit{de Oratore}’s reception from antiquity through the medieval period. Quintilian, Augustine, and Lupus revive Ciceronian oratory for use in their respective periods and for different purposes.

After his assassination in 43 BCE, imperial Romans were not eager to be associated with Cicero as a statesman. His eloquence was noted, but writers distanced themselves from his name and orators favored a more exuberant style than Cicero’s. The most popular stylist of the first century CE, Seneca the Younger, was especially critical of Cicero’s morality and style. Not until Quintilian did a literary critic separate the genius of Ciceronian oratory from his perceived failures as an \textit{exemplum} of morality. Although the genres and purposes of the two works diverge greatly, the influence of the \textit{de Oratore} on Quintilian’s \textit{Institutio Oratoria} is clear. Quintilian’s apology for Cicero the man allowed Ciceronian oratory to be revived. Cicero was made into the

\textsuperscript{249} Hadoard was a near second. See Beeson “The Collectaneum of Hadoard” and “Lupus of Ferrières and Hadoard.”
\textsuperscript{250} Beeson, \textit{Scribe and Text Critic}, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{251} A fuller discussion of the transmission of the \textit{de Oratore} can be found in the next chapter.
model for imitation and his speeches and oratorical texts would benefit from Quintilian’s authority. Through his curriculum, Quintilian secured Cicero’s place in the Latin rhetorical tradition. (Lupus even requested both texts from Benedict in the ninth century.)

By the fourth century, Cicero remained a vital part of rhetorical education, even if few students found the stamina to complete the curriculum. For Augustine, the most prominent rhetor in the Latin West, Ciceronian oratory was the only acceptable model. Augustine rejected the emptiness of sophistic style but embraced Cicero for his insistence that true oratory comprised the marriage of eloquence with wisdom. In his role as bishop, Augustine defended Ciceronian oratory for Christian preachers. (He even claims that Ciceronian philosophy can lead one to Christ!) Since Augustine became an authority on theology and doctrine, his expertise on rhetoric was also valued in the early medieval period. He did not preserve the text of the *de Oratore*, but his writings upheld the Ciceronian model for medieval scholars like Lupus.

As a rhetorician and then abbot, Lupus also found himself in similar roles to Augustine, although the ninth century was not divided culturally between Christianity and the classical tradition. These parallels may help to explain Lupus’ interest in the writings of Cicero. His efforts to study and emend Cicero’s corpus indicate the importance Cicero still had in the ninth century even after his oratorical writings have been eclipsed by the more practical handbooks. Cicero embodied an intellectual model that would allow a relatively unconnected man to achieve great power and prestige. Lupus’ pursuit of Ciceronian texts, leadership at Ferrières, and cultivation of ties with the imperial house suggest that he drew upon the Ciceronian model for Carolingian sociopolitical success. His editorial work on the *de Oratore* carefully preserved the text for the medieval period and he used its model in his own career.
Cumulatively, these moments of reception added layers of significance to the *de Oratore* and its definitions of the educated man, one who possesses *humanitas*. Quintilian ensured Cicero’s orator would be welcomed into the classroom, along with Cicero’s style. Augustine baptized the ideal for a Christian society that still required wide knowledge to spread the faith. Lupus demonstrated how Cicero’s model might be able to work to create success for a medieval courtier and ensured *de Oratore*’s survival in the manuscript tradition. These intellectuals were influenced by Ciceronian ideals of education and oratory, but, perhaps more importantly, they offered the *de Oratore* an intellectual framework and context that permitted a successful transmission to the fifteenth century and the advent of print.

4 MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS TO RENAISSANCE PRINT

The oldest surviving manuscript of Cicero’s *de Oratore* is the Harley 2736. This copy was transcribed by Lupus c. 840. It is also the most complete of the surviving medieval manuscripts, all of which are classified as *mutilii*, or incomplete copies. The earliest complete manuscript was discovered in 1421 but lost again soon after. Most modern scholarship has focused on reconstructing the text of this Laudensis manuscript by examining other fifteenth century manuscripts. The medieval texts received far less attention until recently, and many efforts have been made in reconstructing their stemmae. The four main texts are known as H, A, E, and K, and each will be considered in detail here. An examination of the *mutilii*, their dates of creation and a geographical mapping of where they and their copies travelled, demonstrates the use of the *de Oratore* in medieval Europe. The dialogue was known well-enough during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Italy to influence those engaging in humanist activities. Cicero’s ideal orator, with his broad learning and cultivation of *humanitas* served as a model for the changing status of literary scholarship among the traditional hierarchy of law, medicine, and
theology. While demonstrating the fragility of the text’s survival, this chapter also provides the context necessary for understanding the significance of the discovery of the Laudensis manuscript in 1421. The development of humanist literary circles across Italian cities is related to *de Oratore*’s “rediscovery,” and their desire for classical texts explains why the first printers in Italy chose the *de Oratore* for their major publishing debut in 1465.

### 4.1 The Manuscript Tradition

Three manuscripts of the *de Oratore* survive from the ninth century. These were copied or edited by Lupus of Ferrières and Hadoard. Lupus’ text was much closer to being complete when he wrote it and remains the most complete medieval manuscript that survives. Avranches 238, A, is another ninth century copy of *de Oratore*. Its original scribe is unknown, but soon after its completion, Hadoard emended the text and added parts of *Orator*. Hadoard also created a florilegium, known as K, that includes many selections from *de Oratore*. Finally, the last of the mutilli considered here is Erlangen 380, E, a known descendant of A with close associations to the papacy and Holy Roman Emperor. These texts and their relationships have recently enjoyed some scholarly attention that demonstrates the transmission of Cicero’s text during the medieval period.\(^\text{252}\) Their movements and descendants, as can be determined, demonstrate how a mutilated version of *de Oratore* was known across Europe and in Italy as humanist attitudes were honed and practices began to appear more frequently in scholarly and pedagogical records.

#### 4.1.1 H

The Harley 2736 was copied by Lupus from Einhard’s borrowed text in the late 830s. Lupus made his transcription either at Fulda, from where he wrote his letter of request, or in Ferrières, where he returned to teach grammar and rhetoric soon after. We have considered

\(^{252}\) See especially the works of Renting, discussed and cited below.
Lupus’ motivations for copying classical works, especially Cicero’s, and here will briefly mention some of the techniques Lupus used that make the Harley an especially important copy. Lupus crafted his copy with care toward its textual perfection. He was careful to indicate words and passages that were corrupt and left space for those that were missing from his exemplar.\(^{253}\) His priority was to make as reliable a copy of Cicero’s original text as possible. Lupus would later strive to secure additional copies of the de *Oratore* for comparison and to fill in the gaps he determined had been left in Einhard’s copy. He sought textual purity. His work differs from that of a professional scribe whose concern with the final appearance of the text matched concern for Latinity. Lupus’ scholarly focus meant that he did not always balance the number of lines on a page or his spacing. Further, scribes did not routinely challenge corrupted readings, as Lupus did. Through his efforts, Lupus’ copy preserved the most complete text of de *Oratore* available in the ninth century. His notes indicate that the archetype from which Einhard’s text derived lacked only passages 2.90-92, and this seems to be because of a repeated phrase, “*ea diligentissime persequator,*” in both 90 and 92. Lupus also left spaces for 1.28-57; 1.193-2.13; 2.90-92; and 3.17-110, indicating that these passages were absent from Einhard’s copy.\(^{254}\) Lupus indicated that another copy existed in Rome, but since his request to Pope Benedict was unsuccessful, it is impossible to determine whether that copy was more complete. Lupus’ copy is the oldest surviving text and it demonstrates that at his time the majority of de *Oratore* was available to those who knew where to look for it.


\(^{254}\) The missing passages indicated here are often marked by readers in the early printed copies. This is especially true of 1.30-34 and 1.200. This might indicate the interest sparked by the Lodi copy’s discovery and circulation in the fifteenth century.
Very probably, Lupus first got possession of the *de Oratore* at Fulda. His own copy remained with him at Ferrières, and he returned Einhard’s copy to Seligenstadt immediately after completing H. After Lupus’ death, the text was transferred to Cormery by Odoacer.\(^{255}\) Odoacer was one of Lupus’ correspondents and the Abbot of Cormery. H contains two poems which were added in a hand after Lupus, and these poems refer to events that occurred during Odoacer’s abbacy, including the dedication of a cell monastery of Cormery and an epitaph to a benefactor of Comery. It is difficult to know for how long the text remained in the possession of

\(^{255}\) Beeson, *Scribe and Text-Critic*, 5ff.
the abbey for the next mention of H is not until 1719 when it was purchased by Edward Harley in London.

4.1.2 A, E, K

From the other family of de Oratore manuscripts, Avranches 238 is the oldest. It was written by two scribes in the middle third of the ninth century and belonged to Mont-Saint-Michel. The first scribe wrote the de Oratore, although with several missing passages. In addition to the passages that were absent from H, A originally lacked 1.157-93; 2.13-18; 2.234-87; and 3.149-71. Soon after this text was completed, a second hand added 2.234-45 and 3.149-171. Very likely this scribe also added the passages missing from books one and two, however in its current state, A is missing everything from before 2.19. The second scribe also added passages from Orator to this manuscript; 91-191 and 231 to the end of the text. Neither H, E, nor K contain this material, so it is unlikely that the scribe found it in the same source as the missing de Oratore passages.

The other members of this family are Erlangen 380, E, and Vatican Reg. Lat. 1762, or K. The filiation among these texts has only recently been fully reconstructed, although a nineteenth century stemma was used for over a century. In 1883, Eduard Stroebel published a doctoral dissertation entitled, “De Ciceronis de Oratore librorum codicibus mutilis antiquioribus.” Stroebel did not know K, but he argued that E was a descendent of a gemmellus of A. This stemma was accepted by many who worked on the de Oratore, including AS Wilkins, Leeman

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256 Texts and Transmission, 103-106, surveys the creation and movements of A, E, and K. The discussion of this family of manuscripts draws from Beeson, “The Collectaneum of Hadoard” and “Lupus of Ferrières and Hadoard;” Bischoff “Hadoardus and the Manuscripts of Classical Authors from Corbie;” Ganz Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance; and Renting “The Manuscripts of Cicero’s De Oratore: E is a Descendant of A” and “The Early Descendants of Avrances 238.”
and Pinkster, and Winterbottom, Rouse, and Reeve. Examinations of the manuscripts in the latter twentieth century cast doubt on this filiation, and the discovery of K also demanded an explanation of its place in the stemma.

K is older than E. Sometime between 845 and 860, Hadoard, the self-proclaimed custos bibliotecae, created this florilegium at the Abbey of Corbie. Hadoard begins his text with a poem that outlines his plan for the work and mentions some of the texts he included. Throughout, he employs references to Ovid’s corpus to demonstrate his affinity for classical authors. He also writes that in a dream he found a treasury of manuscripts which became his sources. Hadoard signed the poem, but we have no other evidence to provide evidence of his life or his works. What can be determined about Hadoard comes from this florilegium, and another he composed from the works of Augustine. He removes portions of the texts which did not conform to Christian doctrine, however, his efforts can be regarded as “a monument of Carolingian humanism” even though he was not as philologically scrupulous as Lupus. Nor does the florilegium uphold the rigorous standards for “an official product of a medieval scriptorium.” Instead, “it is the work of a man who was fond of books but whose knowledge of Latin was not equal to the demands made upon it…Apparently prompted by the presence in his library of an extensive corpus of the philosophical works of Cicero, he conceived the idea of collecting in a handbook of his own the flowers of ancient philosophy and rhetoric assembled and arranged to suit his own notions.” The text drew on several of Cicero’s works, including de Natura Deorum, de Divinatione, Timaeus, de Fato, Topica, Paradoxa, Lucullus, de

258 Bernhard Bischoff, “Hadoardus and the Manuscripts of Classical Authors from Corbie” Didascaliae (1961), 44.
Legibus, de Officiis, de Amicitia, de Oratore, de Senectute, and Tusculanae Disputationes. Most likely this forms the original scope of the work. Hadoard cramps his script to fit within the final lines of the folio, however, selections from additional authors follow the works of Cicero.

The filiation between A and K is interesting. The two texts seem to have been produced at very nearly the same time. A came first, but Hadoard himself appears to be the second scribe who added the missing passages to de Oratore and all the parts from Orator. His script is a match to the additions in A, and since Corbie produced many classical texts during the ninth century, it is possible that Hadoard had access to some part of Orator there. All indications point to A being produced in the Loire Valley and then belonging to Mont-Saint-Michele, so it is possible that Hadoard requested the manuscript from there and did his work at Corbie. Perhaps he had to return it before completing the copying for his florilegium. This seems a reasonable explanation for his switching to a different exemplar at §§429. While Renting carefully demonstrates the filiation between A and K, he does not reconsider the dating of the two manuscripts. It is not too difficult to imagine Hadoard borrowing, emending, and copying §§401-428 from A within a few years of its completion. However, it does seem more troublesome that he used another distinct copy of A to complete §§429-441. When and where would this copy have been produced? Although this is not impossible, the timeline is rather tight, and any evidence external to the surviving manuscripts themselves is completely lacking.

261 Ibid., 564-568. Renting has demonstrated that Hadoard used two sources for the de Oratore, by comparing lists of conjunctive errors. Selections 401-428 were copied from A, while 429-441 come from a close relative, probably a copy of A, which has not survived.
The final manuscript of this family to consider is Erlangen 380. This text was produced between 983 and 991 by the monk Ayrard of Saint-Geraud of Aurillac. It was presented to Gerbert, Archbishop of Reims who later became Pope Sylvester II. Renting has demonstrated that Ayrard used a copy of A, now lost, to write his manuscript.\textsuperscript{262} The text was copied with the least amount of care among the four manuscripts considered here and was corrected by two distinct hands shortly following its completion. An examination of these hands suggests that Gerbert himself corrected the text at the end of the tenth century, and that he used H to do so.\textsuperscript{263} Gerbert and Ayrard were both from Aurillac, and E and E\textsuperscript{3} use similar scripts. E\textsuperscript{3} also sought to

\textsuperscript{262} Renting, “E is a Descendent of A.”
emend via conjecture and added the cryphias to the text, suggesting his activities to be motivated by scholarly and not just scribal concern. Probably E\(^2\) was another scribe at Rheims who was tasked with simple corrections to the text, while Gerbert approached the text with more philological concern. Gerbert was a scholar and teacher. Although both tenures as Archbishop of Rheims and as Pope were short, he promoted learning and demonstrated his mastery of mathematics and astronomy as learned from the Arabs in Spain. Since Gerbert valued classical scholarship and had great influence at the end of the tenth century, it is not difficult to imagine him borrowing H from Cormery to improve upon his copy of *de Oratore*.

The next mention of E comes from a catalog of texts of St. Mary’s at Heilsbronn in the fifteenth century. Its travels from Rheims to Heilsbronn can be accounted by Gerbert’s relationship with the Emperor Otto III. In 969, Otto I had appointed Gerbert as tutor to his son Otto II. He served in this capacity until Otto II became sole emperor in 973. From here, Gerbert went to study and teach at Rheims, becoming Archbishop in 991. By this time he had possession of the Erlangen manuscript. He was forced from this position a few years later, but his service was again required by the imperial family as tutor to the young Emperor Otto III. In 999, Otto III appointed Gerbert as Pope Sylvester II. Otto III died suddenly in 1002, without an heir, and his cousin Henry II assumed his titles of King of Germany, then Italy, and finally Holy Roman Emperor over the next twelve years. Sylvester died in 1003, and it is possible that he had given his copy of *de Oratore* to his pupil. Both Otto III and Henry II were known patrons of Bamberg Cathedral, and it is very possible that either of them could have dedicated works from their libraries to the Cathedral. In 1132, the Bishop of Bamberg founded St. Mary’s, and a catalog of Bamberg’s collection from later in the twelfth century includes a copy of *de Oratore*. The text
must have passed from Bamberg to St. Mary’s between the compilation of the twelfth and fifteenth century catalogs.

![Figure 3](image-url) Map of known locations of E

### 4.1.3 Transmission to the Fifteenth Century

At the start of the fifteenth century, H was probably at Cormery, A was at Mont-Saint-Michele, E was at St. Mary’s at Heilsbronn, and K was owned by professor of law Antoine Leconte at Bourges or Orléans from 1526-1586. Additional copies of A had spread across France and western Germany, and even reached northern Italy. A copy is recorded in the eleventh century at Saint-Gildas near Bourges. A twelfth century fragment containing 3.110-121 and 3.186-196 is now contained in Avranches 162. The Harley 4927, produced in central France in the middle to late twelfth century contains both *de Oratore* and *Orator*. And another copy at
Rheims also had been produced during the middle to late twelfth century. This text, Phillips 1732, also contains both *de Oratore* and *Orator*, and its location suggests it was related to Gerbert’s copy. By 1300, copies of A had reached northern Italy. Troyes 552 is a large collection of Ciceronian texts owned, but not compiled, by Petrarch. In 1338, Simon of Arezzo left a copy of A (possibly Egerton 2516) to the Dominicans of his city as part of another collection of texts. And Padua, Bibl. Capt. B 41 contains both *de Oratore* and *Orator* and was written nearby in the early fourteenth century. While other descendants of A are known, this sketch indicates how the text spread across Europe during the later medieval period.

Several mutilii of *de Oratore* are known or referenced which cannot be definitively assigned to either the A or E families.\(^{264}\) *de Oratore* is listed in the catalog at Lobbs from 1149-1160 and at Cluny from 1158-1161. The *Florilegium Gallicum* used a manuscript other than A when it was created at Orleans in the mid-twelfth century. John of Salisbury bequeathed a manuscript to Chartres in 1180, and the Paris lat. 7701 was compiled in the late twelfth century including the *de Oratore*. Due to their location, these two texts may have been related to the circulation of H. Finally, Poggio discovered a mutilus in 1417 near Langres that contained parts of *de Oratore* absent from A, but this text has since been lost so further examination of its filiation is impossible.

Nearly all the surviving manuscripts from the medieval period have a known or suspected filiation from either H or A. The significance of these manuscripts cannot be overstated for the surviving importance of *de Oratore*. Cicero creates an imitable model for the would-be humanist leader. Lupus may have imagined himself as a successor to Cicero’s model, but his hopes of creating a humanist court for Louis the Pious were never realized. *de Oratore*

\(^{264}\) These include Florence, Laur. 50.33, Oxford, Lincoln College Lat. 38, and Milan, Ambrosiana E 127, in addition to the others mentioned here.
continued to be prized by those who devoted themselves to humanist studies over the next five centuries. Hadoard, Gerbert of Aurillac, William of Malmesburg, John of Salisbury, and Alexander Neckham used the *de Oratore* in their works or recommended it as reading for educators. The text was copied and spread across western Europe. Even in its incomplete state, the *de Oratore* remained an integral part of the Ciceronian corpus and inspired those individuals who sought a career built on rhetorical capital.

![Map of known locations for the *de Oratore* at start of 15th century](image)

**Figure 4** Map of known locations for the *de Oratore* at start of 15th century

At the close of the fourteenth century, Cicero served as the Latin prose author *par excellence*. Petrarch’s letters to Cicero demonstrate his importance as a classical *auctoritas* on

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Latinity and cultural sophistication. The *de Oratore* offers a model of education that is based on rhetorical training, broad learning, and the cultivation of an elite who share *humanitas* and appreciate its power in unifying and governing their state. Cicero’s circle of interlocutors served as a model for the intellectual circles developing in the schools of individual humanist thinkers. The text does elevate rhetorical instruction and the sociopolitical capital of the orator, but it also creates an ideal for a cultured, urban elite who would steer their state with dignity and refinement. The dangers of authoritarianism lie in the subtext and imply the stifling of scholarship and learning. *de Oratore* was not universal classroom reading, but it was essential to the identity of Renaissance humanism.

### 4.2 *de Oratore* in the Renaissance

Copies of *de Oratore* were available across Europe during the fourteenth century, although incomplete to varying degrees. Without considering the ideal he presents in this text, it is not possible to reconstruct the role Cicero and his corpus played in the ideological development of humanism. An examination of humanism at the opening of the fifteenth century in Venice and Padua serves as an example of Italian intellectual developments at this time. The place of Ciceronian scholarship within the Paduan circle is significant for understanding the impact of the Lodi manuscript and its immediate circulation. It is not surprising that the person at the center of Paduan humanist pedagogy is also the Ciceronian expert called upon to examine the Laudensis in 1421.
4.2.1 Fifteenth Century Humanism

At the opening of the fifteenth century, humanist literary circles had formed in cities across Italy and throughout Europe.266 Scholars like Petrarch and Salutati had devoted themselves to the discovery and emendation of classical texts, and they approached study and knowledge from the perspective of the ancients. These circles were informal, not institutional. They tended to value classical Latinity, and learning that was deep, broad, and life-long. The leisured classes believed that study was not just for the preparation of a career in law, medicine or theology, but that it could cultivate morality and improve one’s very self. These humanists had been taught in scholastic schools and universities themselves, and their own efforts should not be understood as a break with scholastic methodologies. Instead, their literary endeavors can be understood as a progression of educational evolution that was made possible by altering scholastic structures within the university system. Here, an examination of this system as it existed in fourteenth century Northern Italy will serve as an example of Italian education at large. In terms of the transmission of the de Oratore, Padua and Venice became immensely important locales for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so a closer look at the educational landscape of this region is fully justified.

Throughout the late medieval period, the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, education followed a prescribed pattern to prepare pupils for advanced degrees in law, medicine, or theology. The classical trivium, grammar, rhetoric, and logic, had been understood only as necessary precursors to these more important fields. Boys studied grammar and then rhetoric in the schools before advancing to logic courses at university. Professors did teach advanced

266 The literature on the development and definition of humanism is extensive. Especially significant to this study are the works of Kristeller, Black, Grendler, Witt and Grafton & Jardine as mentioned in the introduction and in the following notes. That humanist practices evolved slowly from medieval scholastic ones is understood here.
courses on literature at the universities, but these were still considered preliminary to the three major disciplines of law, medicine, and theology.

Much of this pattern was a continuation of early medieval practice. However, during the twelfth century a discernable shift emerged among the subjects of the trivium and how they were taught. Logic superseded the other subjects in terms of its importance, and school teachers approached grammar and even rhetoric from a “logical” perspective. This was known as grammatica speculativa. Donatus and Priscian were still used as the primary texts, but their approach was replaced. Instead of compiling ancient literary uses to determine the meaning of words and their proper spellings, late medieval grammarians used logical reasoning to determine meaning and spellings.  

Scholastic teaching followed the ancient and early medieval disciplinary divisions, but it created a hierarchy with logic as queen. Logic was not just more advanced or more important, but it was infused into the teaching and understanding of grammar and rhetoric.

Once students advanced to university, their programs were highly regulated and controlled by the statutes that governed the professors’ lecture topics. Authors and texts were dictated by custom, and in their ordinary lectures, professors were required to follow specific patterns of speaking. To pass the examination for the arts, a student had to follow a precise program. First, he attended lectures and disputations regularly. Then, near the end of his course, he participated in a disputation before all the doctors of the college. Finally, the student delivered ten of his own lectures publicly. These all had to be on a well-known subject and adhere to the methods of his master. “The need for standardized procedure in a teaching and

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examining body tended, by necessity, to make the university a bedrock of conservatism.”

With all these pre-requirements completed, the student could attempt the exam. He read from an assigned text and lectured on each of its parts. Each doctor could then ask questions or propose contradictions, from the most junior member to the most esteemed. The following day, the college determined whether the student would receive the approbatio or reprobatio. Most students would advance to degrees in law or medicine, however it was possible to be a school teacher or notary with only an arts degree.

The university structure did not support innovation of any kind, and this included humanist activities. Universities “did not encourage the discovery of classical manuscripts nor did they exhibit any of the other salient features which we tend to associate with the Italian Renaissance. The political and moral debates, cast in the language of ancient philosophies, were mainly conducted in private households and courtly circles.”

With this being said, there was some space within the curriculum for an expansion of humanist teachings. There were also many individuals who moved between the private humanist circles and the university (and schoolroom) faculty. Perhaps one of the earliest places to experience this shift was at the university of Padua in the classroom of Ciceronian scholar Gasparino Barzizza.

4.2.2 Barzizza’s Career

The largest portion of Barzizza’s teaching career took place at the university of Padua from 1407 to 1421, although he previously had taught at the cathedral school in Bergamo from 1396-1403, at the university of Pavia from 1403-1407, and then briefly in Venice as he transitioned between the two universities. Throughout his career, Barzizza maintained a private

268 Mercer, 30-31.
269 Mercer, 4.
position as a schoolteacher while he also served as a university professor. He represents the intersection among different educational and literary circles in Northern Italy at this time. Barzizza made the greatest use of the limited flexibility in the strict university program to incorporate humanist values to his courses on grammar, rhetoric, and literature. Alongside his teaching, Barzizza sought out Ciceronian texts for emendation, developing a reputation as the foremost Ciceronian specialist of the early fifteenth century. When the complete *de Oratore* manuscript was discovered in Lodi in 1421, it was sent to Barzizza for analysis. A closer examination of his career within the context of Paduan humanism enables a clear understanding of *de Oratore’s* significance at the start of the fifteenth century.

Barzizza’s background and education were typical for most scholars of his time. His family members were businessmen and notaries. He learned grammar and rhetoric from Giovanni Travesi at Pavia, and Travesi was known for instruction in the “speculative” or scholastic method. Barzizza’s early career is not very well documented and the majority of his own writings were composed while he was at Padua. He must have developed something of a reputation while at Pavia, because it seems that the Venetians were very eager to have him installed at their newly acquired university at Padua. Likely, his private teaching or special lectures reflected the humanist philosophies that had become very popular in Padua as a part of Petrarch’s legacy.

Petrarch and his followers had been among the first to actively seek classical texts for study and emendation. Petrarch styled himself as an expert of antiquity. His letters to ancient authors were circulated and admired for his classical Latinity. Throughout the *Quattrocento*, Petrarch’s work elevated the *studia humanitatis* as a way of life that warranted attention for its

270 Mercer, 48.
own sake. He intertwined classical learning and personal improvement making literary studies a philosophical expression once again. “His scholarship was driven by an emotional and imaginative, as well as an intellectual commitment to know antiquity in all its aspects: its history, geography, monuments, no less than its literature. Among his Paduan followers this impetus produced a transformed approach to grammar and rhetoric.”271 Throughout the rest of the fourteenth century, the Petrarchan model was emulated and eventually incorporated into pedagogical practice.272

In 1407, Barzizza resigned his post in Pavia and established a school in Venice while awaiting the new academic term at Padua. His students were members of the Veneto nobility. This class “recognized, more and more, the social glamour being attached to the practice and patronage of scholarship.”273 Barzizza taught them ancient texts in the standard established by Petrarch: a wide and deep learning meant for their moral, social, and intellectual improvement. After spending several months at the center of the Venetian literary circle, Barzizza took up his post in Padua.

The rise of the Paduan arts faculty, the influence of the revival of antiquity on the schools and the collapse of a courtly culture helped to place the university teaching of grammar and rhetoric on a more elevated level and to shape its content. From being closely allied to professional exigencies, these subjects were transformed into a widely based course in literary studies for their own sake. This was reflected in the term studia humanitatis, which was gradually coming into use in the late fourteenth century, and in the changing status of teachers, who, from being ‘part-time’ notaries or closely connected with legal studies, were expected, by the early fifteenth century, to be ‘full-time’ masters of the humanities. This was, perhaps, partly a self-conscious change. Petrarch’s avowed distaste for lucrative careers was to become a common stance among quattrocento humanists. It was probably no coincidence that the humanist masters, Barzizza, Vittorino, Guarino da Verona, and their followers, were free from other occupations. The term umanista, which was coined in the universities in the early sixteenth century,

271 Mercer, 20.
272 Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine explore the long transition from humanist ideology to the realization of the “humanities” in their book From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe.
273 Mercer, 29.
represented a profession in itself and, like all new terms, described an existing practice. When classical texts were given a new importance in themselves, the expositors of those texts correspondingly gained a more important footing in the university. Moreover, the professor of grammar and rhetoric probably had a freedom enjoyed by no other university master: only a few texts had to be taught according to the statutes. Beyond these he had an almost unlimited range and choice. It was Gasparino Barzizza who was the first to realize the full possibilities of this and to consolidate and further the intellectual changes within the studium which we have outlined.274

Barzizza devoted himself to teaching and textual emendation. He used the vagueness of the university statutes for literature, because it was considered a less important subject, to choose texts that complemented his humanist ideology. For his particular project of study, Barzizza worked to emend the entire Ciceronian corpus.275 At Padua, he spent most of his time working through the rhetorical works. By collecting multiple mutilii, Barzizza confirmed that de Oratore and Orator were indeed separate works that sometimes had been copied together in medieval texts. He owned such a copy in 1407 and spent the next several years working through additional copies to determine which had the best readings of each section of text. He divided the text into chapters and sections and added marginal commentaries. “He showed a scrupulous respect for the given text, resisting the temptation to insert what he thought might be a plausible bridge; by his marginal supplementa, he merely reconnected the thread of the discourse in a tentative way. He was also at pains to give alternative readings from other codices in his glosses.”276

His thorough study of Cicero’s works became known to a more international community through the circles he belonged to through his correspondence. Although he could not be personally involved with the quest for new texts, Barzizza’s Venetian contacts, especially

274 Mercer, 22-23.
275 This work has been thoroughly analyzed in Remigio Sabbadini Studi di Gasparino Barzizza su Quintiliano e Cicerone, (Livorno: Giusti, 1886).
276 Mercer, 73.
Guarino, kept him abreast of all new discoveries. Through some of these connections, Barzizza served in 1417 for two months as a secretary at the Council of Constance. Here, he acquired a complete text of Quintilian, and most likely made a name for himself as a Ciceronian expert. This was demonstrated by his involvement with the Lodi discovery of 1421. Bishop Landriani immediately sent the Ciceronian text to Barzizza in Milan, where the former teacher had recently retired as a man in his sixties. Although Barzizza’s pupils did most of the technical work, he was responsible for overseeing the task as it relied on his expertise. His contemporaries believed his work to have been integral to the text’s emendation, and literary historians still made note of him in the sixteenth century.277

Barzizza’s career demonstrates the influence that humanist vision and philosophy could have in both institutional and private learning in the early fifteenth century. Like many other humanists born in the fourteenth century, he received an education firmly rooted in scholastic principles and structures. However, Barzizza made the greatest possible use of classical texts in his institutional teaching by keeping himself fully immersed in the humanist circles started by men like Petrarch. This allowed him to keep his lectures up-to-date, and he often used newly discovered texts to edit his own writings. The transition from scholastic thinking and methodologies to humanist ones was slowly incorporated into school and university structures. Barzizza was an exemplary figure from the early fifteenth century in the ways that he combined the emendation of classical texts with his university lectures and schoolroom writings. His familiarity with the de Oratore provided him a model for ideal education and for the way an umanista should conduct himself. Barzizza was not the first Renaissance scholar to consider the

277 For example, Marcantonio Sabellico’s De Latinae Linguae Repartione (Venice, 1505) and J.P. Forestus’ Supplementa Chronicarum (Venice, 1513).
importance of the *de Oratore*, but his literary and teaching career demonstrated how integral Cicero’s dialogue was to the humanist movement and its impact on education in Italy.

### 4.2.3 The Lodi Manuscript

The manuscript that Bishop Landriani discovered at Lodi was a complete copy of three of Cicero’s rhetorical treatises, *de Oratore*, *Orator*, and *Brutus* as well as the handbooks *ad Herennium* and Cicero’s *de Inventione*.\(^{278}\) The text was described as ancient and difficult to read, and this is part of the reason why a Ciceronian expert was required for its analysis. Barzizza and his pupils deciphered the text and used it to supply the passages that Barzizza had identified as missing from his earlier emendations of *de Oratore* and *Orator*. For the *Brutus*, the Laudensis represents the earliest known copy. This manuscript does not appear to have ever been copied in full. Instead, it was used to supply missing passages to older copies. There is no reference to the Laudensis after 1428. It was apparently lost.

Considering it was only in circulation for about seven years, the Laudensis had a significant impact on the understanding of Cicero’s rhetorical works. Experts like Barzizza now read the *Brutus* for the first time and could definitively separate *de Oratore* and *Orator* in their respective entireties. By 1400, Cicero already enjoyed a place of admiration in humanist circles, not just for his incomparable Latin style, but also as a model of a scholar who believed in the value of broad learning. As discussed previously, Cicero most clearly and fully describes his cultural program in the *de Oratore*. This text was crucial for understanding the Ciceronian corpus, as Barzizza demonstrated through his prolonged emendation efforts. The Laudensis provided missing passages that had been lost since before the reign of Charlemagne (as

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determined by Lupus’ work on Einhard’s copy), and its demand might help to explain why scholars sought to fill in the gaps in their own copies instead of taking the time to transcribe the full text.

Most modern scholarship on de Oratore manuscripts has focused on reconstructing the lost Laudensis through fifteenth century copies.\textsuperscript{279} Texts and Transmission details the primary copies involved in this reconstruction for each of Cicero’s three rhetorical treatises, including Vatican lat. 2901 (V), Vatican Ott. Lat. 2057 (O), Vatican Pal. Lat. 1469 (P), Vatican Pal. Lat. 1470 (R), Naples IV. A 43 (N), Bologna 468 (B), and Cornell Univ. Lib. B. 2 (U) for reconstructing the de Oratore portion of the Laudensis. While this work has confirmed that the Laudensis did possess a completed copy of the dialogue, it also signals how in demand de Oratore became in the fifteenth century. A fair number of emended texts have survived, and Barzizza would even use the newly discovered copy to update his school manuals in his retirement.\textsuperscript{280} The unmutilated de Oratore was in high demand as humanists sought to correct their copies of the text. These activities fit within their overall literary program, but it cannot be dismissed that the de Oratore provided a model for the humanist program itself. That the text would become the first major printing in Italy in 1465 further substantiates its significance.

4.3 de Oratore and the Advent of Print

Within three decades of the Lodi discovery, Gutenberg revolutionized the construction of knowledge with his printing press. It is not necessary to recount that story here, however, the press at Mainz seems to be where the first “Italian” printers learned their craft. A brief
examination of their background and analysis of the state of European printing from 1450 to 1465 situates Sweynheym and Pannartz’s Subiaco *de Oratore* of 1465.

### 4.3.1 The Coming of Print to Italy

Very little is known about Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz before their arrival in Subiaco around 1464. They were esteemed in their own time as the first to establish a press in Italy, and a Vatican archival record describes them as “printers of books” and “clerics” of Mainz and Cologne. What is clear is that the partners arrived in Italy with great command of the printing process, as evidenced by the quality of their typefaces and the beauty of their earliest editions. “A tentative biographical reconstruction would find them by the late 1450s in the Mainz printing ateliers learning not only the techniques associated with printing itself, but also the difficult and highly skilled process of cutting type punches and casting type sorts. There was at the time no place other than Mainz where these things could be learned.” Sweynheym and Pannartz must have worked extensively with the early presses in Germany before establishing their own press at the monastery of Santa Scholastica in Subiaco.

There is no explicit evidence to indicate the reasons Sweynheym and Pannartz came to Italy. Some years after they began printing, their shop became associated with powerful intellectuals who may have had a stake in this decision, and arguments have been made that Sweynheym and Pannartz came at someone’s request. In 1468, Andrea Bussi became the editor for the press. Bussi had been the secretary to Nicholas of Cusa, a cardinal known for his humanist scholarship. Bussi dedicated the 1468 edition of Jerome to Cusa and claims that the scholar had wanted to see print brought to Italy. There is no indication, however, that Cusa had

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281 Gaspere da Verona’s biography of Paul II (1464-1471) and the Chronicle of Riccobaldo da Ferrara (c.1469-1474) are the two best sources.

any knowledge or influence on the partners’ move several years earlier, and his death in August 1464 meant that he never read anything printed in Italy. Another potential patron has been identified in Cardinal Torquemada (Turrecremata). He had been appointed abbot in Subiaco in 1456, but only administered from afar. Further, he had his own works first printed by Ulrich Han in Rome, which does not make sense if he had been responsible for establishing the Subiaco press.

The last potential candidate is Cardinal Bessarion. His involvement with the press is most thoroughly argued by MD Feld, who claims that not only did Bessarion bring the Germans to Subiaco, then Rome, but that their entire printing program was designed to support Bessarion’s Neoplatonist agenda. Again, there is no explicit evidence to support such an intimate connection. Rather, Feld argues that Bussi, a papal secretary and friend of Bessarion’s, was installed at the press to carry out the Cardinal’s agenda. Feld examines the political circumstances in Rome in the 1460s to argue that Bessarion was the protector of humanist interests in the city, explaining Sweynheym and Pannartz’s decision to print the texts of Apuleius and Bessarion in 1469. Feld sees the influence of Bessarion as being so strong in 1468-69 that he must have instigated the press’ establishment in Subiaco in 1464. The evidence that Bessarion used his influence to protect and even guide the press in 1468-69 is compelling. However, this is not enough to retroactively demonstrate his influence in the Subiaco period. Bessarion does not have a connection to Subiaco, so why would he establish a press there instead of within the city of Rome? Further, Sweynheym and Pannartz print with a distinctive sophistication from their earliest work to the last, both before and after Bussi’s period as editor. This suggests agency and foresight on the part of the printers themselves, traits that are

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undervalued or even ignored in Feld’s interpretation. It seems that Feld’s argument is strongest in connecting Sweynheym and Pannartz to Roman humanism directly, and to Bessarion as a later supporter of theirs, but not the party responsible for the founding of the Subiaco press.

By the middle of the fifteenth century, Rome had become another center for humanist activities in Italy. Their work and demand for classical texts likely drew the partners to the area to establish a press of their own. Feld demonstrates that Sweynheym and Pannartz were not operating blindly, but that they could have used humanist curricula, most fully articulated by Bruni, to determine where and what they should print. In the 1420s, Leonardo Bruni wrote a treatise on the study of literature and addressed it to Lady Battista Malatesta of Montefeltro. The work explains which texts she should study and how she should read them. Bruni emphasizes religious works, but this can be attributed the addressee’s gender. He mentions specific authors, with Cicero as critical among the ancients.284 An important theme that Bruni asserts is that ancient authors can provide wisdom for the present day and can encourage linguistic ability that allows for persuasive communication. He writes, “The person aiming at the kind of excellence to which I am calling you needs first, I think, to acquire no slender or common, but a wide and exact, even recherché familiarity with literature. Without this basis, no one can build himself any high or splendid thing.”285 In addition to literary skill, which Bruni outlines at some length, he urges wide learning. “Let her despise no branch of learning, hold all the world as her province, and, in a word, burn marvelously with a desire for knowledge and understanding.”286

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284 Bruni describes Cicero as “a man-Good God!-so eloquent! so rich in expression! so polished! so unique in every kind of excellence!” Tullium...quem virum, deus immortalis! Quanta facundia! Quanta copia! Quam perfectum in litteris! Quam in omni genere laudis singularem! He then lists Virgil, Livy, and Sallust as others to read. Translation from Kallendorf Humanist Educational Treatises, 99.

285 Kallendorf, 95, homini quidem ad excellentiam illam, ad quam ego nunc te voco, contendenti in primit necessariam puto non exiguam neque vulgarem, sed magnam et tritam et accuratam et reconditam litterarum peritiam, sine quo fundamento nihil altum neque magnificum sibi aedificare quisquam potest.

286 Kallendorf, 105, ita ut nullum genus disciplinae aspernetur, nullum a se alienum existimet, rapiatur incensum mirabilia aviditate ad intelligentiam et cognitionem rerum.
He encourages reading the moral philosophers, historians, orators, and poets, pointing to ancient authors for their purity of style. Bruni concludes, “And so, literary skill and factual knowledge are in a manner of speaking wedded to each other. It was the two joined together that advanced the glory and fame of those ancients whose memory we venerate.”

This treatise was copied at least 127 times and printed fifteen times during the Renaissance. It presented a reading list much in the vein of Quintilian’s from the Institutio. Although a short treatise, it enjoyed enough circulation to conclude that Sweynheym and Pannartz were aware of its contents in the 1460s. Certainly, their printing program supplies the very texts that Bruni recommends. Rome must have seemed a promising site for the German partners. The opportunities for attracting patrons and buyers was great considering the Papacy and intellectual academies within the city. But the Germans did not go directly into Rome. The town of Subiaco was not far outside the city, however it was not a great choice for an industry that requires the import of paper and the export of printed volumes. Although less than ideal from this perspective, Subiaco had recently become a more international, and particularly a more German, monastery than any other so close to Rome. This would have seemed welcoming to Sweynheym and Pannartz. Further, there is some evidence that the monastery took up a financial stake in the enterprise. The publishers did not print their names in any of the three surviving texts produced at Subiaco, however they began to do so immediately upon moving their company to Rome. This might indicate that Sweynheym and Pannartz were not at liberty to claim publishing rights at Subiaco. Additionally, they left their equipment in Subiaco with monks who had learned to operate it. A 1471 letter found in the binding of a Melk manuscript

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287 Kallendorf, 123, *Atque ita coniugata quodammodo sunt peritia litterarum et Scientia rerum. Haec duo simul coniuncta veteres illos, quorum memoriam veneramus, ad celebritatem nominis gloriamque provexere.*

288 Hall, 30-33 details the history of the monastery as it relates to Sweynheym and Pannartz.
describes a request for Augsburg to have a breviary printed at Subiaco. Also, a Roman customs register records a payment by the monastery for importing copies of Augustine’s *de Civitate Dei*.\(^{289}\) If this was a joint financial venture, in a monastery with a German population near the humanist circles of Rome, then Subiaco’s appeal to Sweynheym and Pannartz cannot be denied.

By the time Sweynheym and Pannartz had arrived in Subiaco, European printing was almost fifteen years old. The Germans dominated the industry and presses had been established in Mainz, Bamberg, and Strasbourg, with Vienna and Cologne to shortly follow suit. The vast majority of texts printed before 1465 were ecclesiastical in nature. There were some exceptions, including Donatus’ grammar for boys, the *Ars Minor*. Also, a fragment of the 1454 Türkenkalender survives, suggesting non-ecclesiastical tracts were printed also. This changed with the earliest printings of Cicero’s texts. The first dated Cicero came from the press of John Fust and Peter Schoeffer in Mainz. They released an edition of *de Officiis* and *Paradoxa Stoicorum* in 1465. Another edition of *de Officiis* was printed on its own by Ulrich Zell in Cologne. This copy was not dated, but its technique suggests it was printed earlier than Zell’s 1466 edition of Chrysostum. Whether these philosophical texts appeared before the *de Oratore* or not, Cicero was the first classical author to be printed anywhere.

Sweynheym and Pannartz also recognized the need for classical texts in the market, since their four Subiaco printings are all classical and late antique authors. Although no copies survive, the press probably began with three hundred copies of Donatus’ *Ars Minor*. This text had been printed in Germany as early as 1452, and its continued use in classrooms from late antiquity make it an unrisky choice for a first running. The work is short and would only fill a dozen modern pages. Many presses used the short *Ars Minor* as a sort of advertisement for the

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\(^{289}\) Hall, 47.
establishment of their press. The only evidence for this printing comes from a list of Sweynheym and Pannartz’s completed bibliography printed 20 March 1472. The list appears in the preface to the fifth volume of Nicholas of Lyra’s Postilla as a part of a plea to the Pope for financial assistance. They list their works by author and title and include the number of copies of each. However, they do not include dates or distinguish between original runs and reprints. Some titles are grouped with later editions even though the subsequent printings include compilation with different texts. The de Oratore belongs to this group. It is first printed on its own, then later with Brutus and Orator, but appears on the list as de Oratore cum ceteris. The Donatus text appears at the top of this list and is noted in the letter with the phrase “inde initium impremendi sumpsimus,” indicating that this was their first printed work. The other three texts are witnessed from surviving copies. These included Cicero’s de Oratore, Lactantius’ Opera, and Augustine’s de Civitate Dei. These texts established the tone of the partners’ career. The works they printed from 1465 to 1473 prioritize classical authors, specializing in first editions. Within the context of European printing, Sweynheym and Pannartz seem to have a grasp of the humanist market and what kinds of works it demanded, even if they were unable to efficiently determine an appropriate number of copies for the best profitability, as implied from their 1472 request for aid.

Sweynheym and Pannartz came to Italy to establish a press that catered to humanist learning. Their location and choices of texts demonstrate this, and the timing of their first printings suggest that they made these plans while Germany was still focused on ecclesiastical texts. de Officiis and de Oratore do appear in the same year, however the timing suggests that our printers were already at work in Subiaco in 1464. Their decision to print classical texts must

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290 British Library Incunabula Catalogue, IV, viii.
have been reached even earlier, and certainly before the *de Officiis* appeared in Mainz or Cologne. Still, among this group of four texts, the *de Oratore* stands out as the only to have been written by a non-Christian. It does not have the financial guarantee of a classroom grammar text, nor would it appeal to the traditional university curricula. The *de Oratore* is not just a classical work for Sweynheym and Pannartz to print and create a niche for themselves. It is a text that defines the humanist program and encapsulates the scholarship of textual discovery and emendation accomplished by the previous generation.

### 4.3.2 The Subiaco *de Oratore*, 1465

Twenty copies, or approximately seven percent, of the copies of the *de Oratore* survive from Subiaco’s first major printing. These copies are scattered across eighteen institutions in Europe and the United States. All evidence points to this text having been the first substantial work printed in Italy, however no date was included. The Lactantius includes 29 October 1465 in the colophon, along with “*in venerabili monasterio Sublacensi*.” The Augustine gives a date of 12 June 1467, but not a location. If their 1472 list accurately records the Donatus as Sweynheym and Pannartz’s first printing, that leaves the *de Oratore* as the only of the four to be situated. Some scholars have suggested that Sweynheym could have been one of the workmen who was ousted from the shop of Fust and Schoeffer when Mainz was sacked on 27 October 1462. If correct, based on his taking his name from the nearby town of Schwanheim and the Vatican reference to a cleric from Mainz, other migration accounts suggest that he would have needed at least two years to move to Italy, establish a press, and print a work as substantial as the *de Oratore*. This suggests that Sweynheym and Pannartz could not have started producing the *de Oratore* much before November 1464.
The partners begin dating their work with the Lactantius in October 1465, and since they continue to include dates in each work for the rest of their career, it seems most likely that the *de Oratore* was printed earlier. Some evidence to support this can be found in a marginal note in the Leipzig copy, now kept in Moscow. This copy contains notes and emendations throughout, and an inscription on the final leaf records the text as belonging to Antonio Tridentone. He claims the scholarship of the emendations were his work with the help of a Giovanni Tiburtino, and dates the inscription 30 September 1465. Other inscriptions place Tridentone in Rome for the entire summer of 1465, and the notes throughout the *de Oratore* are extensive, suggesting they required several weeks or longer to complete. It is likely that the *de Oratore* was printed much earlier in the year.

This can be further corroborated by comparing the *de Oratore* with Lactantius’ *Opera*. The *de Oratore* was printed on royal paper in quarto size, while the Lactantius was printed on median paper in folio. Sweynheym and Pannartz would have completely finished the *de Oratore* before switching paper stocks to print the Lactantius. That they used the same type to print all their Subiaco texts further establishes sequential publication. It is possible to estimate the time needed to complete both works, as Hall demonstrates. Riccobaldo da Ferrara recorded that Sweynheym and Pannartz printed 300 *cartae* per day. Although “*cartae*” is ambiguous, the amount of times that Riccobaldo recorded this figure suggests that it was plausible. Since our partners usually ran 275 copies of their texts, with four exceptions when they ran 300 copies, it seems that they printed one leaf, or two pages, of an edition each day. (It is possible that Sweynheym and Pannartz could only print one page on a sheet at once, which would lengthen the amount of time described below.) It is also likely that the partners used two presses at

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291 Tridentone records, “Correctus & emendatus fideliter hic Codex per A. Trindentonē conferente optimo & doctissimo pre meo frater Iohanne Tiburtino pridie kal. Octobres, M.cccclxv.”
Subiaco as evidenced in some copies of the Lactantius. Hall concludes that the two presses produced 150 *cartæ* each day, or one leaf per edition daily. Assuming six working days per week, the 186 leaves of the Lactantius would have required *at least* thirty-one weeks to complete. With a dated colophon of October 29, 1465, the partners must have started printing that text by March 29. Without allowing for a single day in between completing the *de Oratore* and starting the Lactantius, the 110 leaves of the *de Oratore* required over eighteen weeks to print and must have been started by November 18, 1464. The Donatus is only a few leaves and could have been completed within a few weeks. This is a very demanding production schedule, so it is not unreasonable to think that the *de Oratore* was completed even earlier to allow time for the Lactantius. Without any other evidence however, it seems most prudent to date the *de Oratore* to the first quarter of 1465.

The *de Oratore* was printed with a distinctive type, which appears only in the three works of Sweynheym and Pannartz printed in Subiaco. This type was the first font to be wholly based on humanistic handwriting, and proves that the Cicero, Lactantius, and Augustine came from the same press. Sweynheym and Pannartz created many special characters and maintained irregularities of handwriting in their type punches, creating an overall effect that is calligraphic and highly distinctive from the fonts used in Germany. That the *de Oratore* was printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz in Subiaco has never really been questioned. The font, inclusion on the 1472 bibliography, and internal evidence from the surviving Leipzig copy confirm that the book was the first substantial work printed in Italy.

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292 Hall, 45.
293 Applying the same formula to the 1465 productions of Fust & Schoeffer, the *Decretalium* of December 17, 1465 required 23.6 weeks to print, meaning work began by July 4, 1465. If they also turned straight from their *de Officiis* to the *Decretalium*, their Cicero may have been completed a few months after Sweynheym and Pannartz’s *de Oratore*. With so little datable evidence on the editions of Zell before 1467, it is reasonable to conclude that *de Oratore* is favored as the earliest printed classical text.
Sweynheym and Pannartz printed the *de Oratore* completely on its own, without any notes to identify themselves, the date or place of their work, or editorial aids to instruct or guide their readers. While at Subiaco, the partners left no evidence about who did their editorial scholarship. Neither Sweynheym nor Pannartz seem to have been trained for this work, so it is possible that one of the brothers at Santa Scholastica did it for them. It is also unclear which specific manuscript may have been used. Although several fifteenth century copies survive, there is not conclusive evidence of any particular one being in Rome at the time. In any case, the text they printed is complete, incorporating the sections discovered at Lodi in 1421.

Five of the twenty surviving copies of this edition were surveyed for this analysis, including those at the Pierpoint Morgan Library in New York, the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome, and the Biblioteca Classense in Ravenna. Digitized copies from Barcelona and Madrid were also consulted. The text was printed in quarto size on 110 leaves, and each page has thirty lines with a printed surface of 179 mm by 105 mm. The copy at the Morgan Library has elaborate initials decorating the start of each book, but not an owner’s coat of arms or other signatures. At least three contemporary individuals read the text and left behind marginal notes. The first hand is a golden brown, very tidy humanist script. Most of these notes are guide words, noting in the margins any terms that would interest a person reading an oratorical text. These usually include names of people or places, topics like *historia* or *philosophia*, or when the speaker of the dialogue changes. These reader aids were common in manuscript commentaries, and later, some publishers would even print these directly into the margins. The second hand is in a much darker ink, but the handwriting is less precise, though still legible. This hand is not present on every leaf, as is the first, and most comments are either corrections or additional guide words. Since the outer margin was already filled with comments, this hand often worked in the inner one, and
these comments are difficult to read because the pages were trimmed and more tightly bound in
the nineteenth century. There is no evidence, however, that the second hand deviated from his
efforts to correct the text or add guide words in these inner marginal comments. The final hand
is a gray ink and also marks certain words from Cicero’s text. However, the terms copied into
the margins are not exactly what one expects. In book one, after which this hand disappears, the
reader records *Artifices* (craftsmen), *ludicra* (games), and *prutaneo* (the sacred hearth of a Greek
city). These are not terms that a reader would customarily be looking for in a treatise on oratory.
Perhaps the reader found some personal interest in Cicero’s use of these kinds of terms. In any
case, he does not leave enough commentary as to his decision to mark them.

Although the majority of comments in the Morgan’s copy seem formulaic, the first hand
has left behind two notes that are of significance. First, he marks the passage at 2.148-150 in the
margin and notes, “Aurea de DILIGENTIA.” In this passage, Antonius is discussing invention
and how an orator should master his case. He says there are three elements, “intellectual ability,
secondly method (which we can call art, if we like), and thirdly diligence,” which are required
for the orator to be successful.294 And diligence is the quality that brings it all together, “the
quality that we must particularly cultivate, this we must always apply, this knows nothing it
cannot accomplish.”295 By attending to his opponent’s speech and expressions while organizing
his own thoughts, the orator masters the case and wins the argument. This requires advanced
preparation as well as great focus in the moment. Antonius then proclaims that diligence is “the
single virtue on which all other virtues depend.”296 This is high praise of diligence, but it should
be noted that Cicero does not use any form of *aureus* in this passage. The commentator also

294 *de Oratore*, 2.147, *acumen, deinde ratio, quam licet, si volumus, appellamus Artem, tertium diligentia.*
295 *de Oratore*, 2.148, *Haec praecipue colenda est nobis; haec semper adhibenda; haec nihil est quod nn
assequatur.*
296 *de Oratore*, 2.150, *diligentia; qua una virtute omnes virtutes reliquae continentur.*
assigns his own value to diligence. This could be in relation to the humanist emphasis on life-long study. A fifteenth century humanist would also rely on diligence to continue his literary studies and to make an impact in his academic or civic duties.

The other passage that this reader notes is on mimicry. This is part of Caesar’s excursus on wit, and he warns the orator not to go too far in any employment of humor. “For taking imitation too far, just like being obscene, is something that actors in mimes and mimics do...the orator must give proof of his own good manners and modesty by avoiding dishonorable words and obscene subjects.” Although in many ways an ancient Roman orator was performing, he had a duty to his family, the state, and the other elite to maintain his dignitas before the public. This meant he should not be critiqued for looking, sounding, or moving as stage actors did. It seems that this was of concern to the commentator as well, for he writes in the lower margin, “ethologus i. moris expssor: qui gestu ipo corporis & sono vocis ita expmit mores hominu: ut gestus corporis mores hoium loqui videatur.” This reference must have been significant to the commentator since it is the only time he writes in the lower margin, or at such length. However, it is not clear why this matters to a fifteenth century reader who did not perform in the same ways as an ancient orator. It must have had a more personal significance to the reader.

The Subiaco copy at Rome’s Biblioteca Angelica has been bound with two texts of the Neopolitan printer Methies Moravius, the Rhetorica ad Herennium and Cicero’s Partitiones Oratoriae, both printed in 1476. The de Oratore has decorated initials not present in the other works, and these must have been done for an earlier owner than whomever had the three rebound

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297 de Oratore, 2.242, Mimorum est enim ethologorum, sin imia est imitation, sicut obscenitas. Orator surripiat oportet imitationem ut is qui audiet, cogitet plura, quam videat; praestet idem ingenuitatem et ruborem suum, verborum turpitudine et rerum obscenitate vitanda.
together. However, there is not any internal evidence to suggest the owners’ identities. Further, no reader has left any comments or corrections throughout the text.

The Barcelona copy shows evidence of several readers. One hand has copied a single word into the first book. Two others draw manicules, but the color of ink and style suggest that the annotators are much later than the period of interest. Finally, one annotator drew in a dozen pattes-de-mouche to mark passages. Most appear in book two, and it is difficult to determine the annotator’s emphasis. Some seem to demonstrate an interest in platitudes such as, “For it is easier for the inexperienced to criticize stupid things you have said than to praise what you have wisely left unsaid,” or “Well then, the qualities that are desirable in a human begin and those that are praiseworthy are obviously not identical.”

There are also passages that reflect accepted rhetorical advice, such as at 2.310; 2.325-327; 2.333; 2.351; and 3.224. In the excursus on wit, the annotator marks two of the examples, perhaps thinking them humorous. In general, this reader seems interested in rhetorical principles, but not the major themes of the de Oratore.

Two copies present evidence of expected engagement with an oratorical text. The Madrid copy is a black and white scan. This makes it impossible to determine ink colors, and some of the marginalia cannot be deciphered. However, the majority is legible and consists of guide words of oratorical terms and proper names. The copy housed at the Biblioteca Classense in Ravenna is bound in white vellum over boards, which are likely contemporary, or nearly so, to the printing. The first page contains a decorated initial, a coat of arms, a possessor’s marks, and a medallion image with “OMNIBUS NON OMNIBUS” in the ribbon. None of these marks of ownership could be identified, except for the Biblioteca’s own stamps. This copy also contains evidence of two contemporary readers through its marginalia. One of these limits himself to

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298 de Oratore, 2.301, homines enim imperiti facilius quod stulte dixeris reprehendere quam quod sapienter tacueris laudare possunt; 2.342, Perspicuum est igitur alia esse in homine optanda, alia laudanda.
adding some guide words that would be expected for an oratorical text. He is not present on every page and is therefore not as comprehensive as the annotator of the Morgan’s copy. The other hand does not simply copy words into the margins, however all comments either correct the usage and spellings of the Subiaco text or mildly restate the topic. This commentator never uses all capitals or highlights passages (either by underlining or decorating the margins) to draw particular emphasis to a passage. The work is that of someone who seems to have some familiarity with the text, or at least is not especially moved by anything Cicero has to say.

These five copies demonstrate the range of responses made possible by a text’s internal evidence. The Angelica copy shows no evidence of ever being read. The Madrid copy has standard guide words in the margins. The Classense copy was read at least twice, and each of these annotators recorded generic statements from Cicero’s words. The expected oratorical topics were marked in the margins, but not every proper noun. Improvements were made to incorrect Latin, and oratorical principles were restated in the margins, perhaps to help the reader remember them or to be able to find them again. The Barcelona copy demonstrates evidence of several readers, but none of these engaged thoroughly and consistently with the entire text. Finally, the Morgan’s copy is thoroughly annotated. One hand carefully records every proper noun and topic of interest. This is certainly done for the benefit of other readers, although the annotator may yet have been the book’s owner and not a hired scholar. This copy also contains evidence of a reader taking personal interest in the text; emphasizing words not directly related to rhetoric and oratory and assigning value to passages that directly relate to the humanist program. On its own, internal evidence does not deliver a clear indication of how readers understood and valued a text. For one thing, these five copies only represent about two percent of those printed in Subiaco in 1465. For another, the commentators are almost completely
anonymous, with handwriting and ink analysis allowing us to only identify broad time periods or regions. Still, this range of responses does indicate the possibilities, and when compared with later editions, this evidence demonstrates a more general, humanist approach to reading the *de Oratore*.

In the case of the Subiaco edition readers are still practicing emendation as they have been doing to manuscripts for a century or more. They are also taking notes on ancient oratorical principles, although it is not perfectly clear how these principles might affect their scholarship. And they occasionally highlight and emphasize passages that lend authority to elements of their own humanist program.

### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that it was no small coincidence that Sweynheym and Pannartz chose the *de Oratore* to be the first book printed in Italy. Although there are only three known manuscripts that survive from the ninth century, their copies and circulation allowed the *de Oratore* to be known by a persistent scholar well into the early modern period. The text also can be traced to Italy in the fourteenth century, a time when humanism became more systemic and popular among elite literary circles. The program that Cicero espoused in 55 BCE had found a new audience. Like the Roman Republican statesman, humanists valued broad, life-long study that created an elite committed to serving the public while their philosophical and literary inquiries improved their own humanity. Humanists also valued classical Latinity, and Cicero provided the very best prose for imitation as well.

At the opening of the fifteenth century, the most renowned Ciceronian scholar was also the teacher whose instruction best embraced humanist ideals in both primary and university classrooms. Barzizza’s career had embodied the program that Cicero details in *de Oratore*, in
spite of the fact that Barzizza’s own teachers adhered to a scholastic methodology. Then, in his retirement, Barzizza was called upon to examine and transcribe the Lodi manuscript, the first complete copy of the *de Oratore* (and *Orator* and *Brutus*) to be read since the time of Charlemagne, (at least from what we know about Lupus’ efforts). Barzizza oversaw the work to emend and copy the *de Oratore* and used it to revise his own educational treatises. Many other manuscripts were emended from the Laudensis, even though it was again lost by 1428. Cicero’s oratorical dialogue was central to the work of fifteenth century humanist teachers, and Barzizza was the example *par excellence*.

By 1465, Italy was ripe for printed classical works. Humanist circles had expanded in Rome, even including leading figures of papal authority. Sweynheym and Pannartz deliberately moved to Subiaco to meet these needs, and they knew that a Latin classic would establish their identity as a press. The *de Oratore* directly appealed to their market. Cicero was the best prose author for ensuring good Latinity, but these German printers did not choose one of his philosophical works as did those working in Cologne and at Mainz. Instead, Sweynheym and Pannartz chose a work that most closely identifies with the interests of their Roman humanist readers.

## 5 PRINTING THE *DE ORATORE*

The Subiaco press established Sweynheym and Pannartz as printers for Italian humanism, while demonstrating the market for other potential printers in Italy. Sweynheym and Pannartz are the first to print from the city of Rome itself, but their competitors, especially Ulrich Han, arrived very close on their heels. The increase in presses operating in Rome, and later in Venice, flooded the Italian market and prevented Sweynheym and Pannartz from completing their mission to print all the known Latin classics by author. In fact, their commitment to print first
editions of Latin works contributed to their economic hardships. While their press and Bussi as editor did so much to prepare such texts, their competitors could run editions using the Swynheym and Pannartz first edition at much greater profit margins. In 1473, Swynheym and Pannartz dissolved their partnership after failing to secure adequate papal patronage to continue their work.

The 1470s witnessed the rise of Venice as the capital of print in Italy. Venetian leaders encouraged the industry as a cultural and economic benefit for their city. The city’s proximity to the Northern European markets aided the presses’ success, and after a serious contraction in 1472 and 1473, Venice dominated the Italian industry. During the final decade of the fifteenth century, it comes as no surprise that the city attracted that scholar who would become the most famous publisher of the sixteenth century, and perhaps of all time.

Aldus Manutius’ commitment to the classical corpus could be said to follow the pattern established by the Subiaco press. However, Aldus was a scholar in his own right, and he prioritized Greek texts in the earliest part of his printing career. His innovations made the classical corpus more accessible for a larger number of humanist readers. His edited collections further cemented the importance of authorship and *oeuvre* for Latin texts. The Aldine press serves as an example of a long-term, financially successful enterprise that continued to promote humanist texts.

This chapter examines the world of Italian print from the establishment of the first press in Rome through the end of the Aldine press in the late sixteenth century. Changes within this industry affect the way that *de Oratore* was presented and understood, especially in relation to Cicero’s other rhetorical works, however its continued re-printings demonstrate that its importance did not diminish. Finally, this chapter contributes to the critical analysis of the
humanist creation of the author by demonstrating the role of print technology in collecting the works and prioritizing the authorship of Cicero.

5.1 The Arrival of Print in Rome

Sweynheym and Pannartz were exceptionally busy after completing the Lactantius on October 29, 1465. Although they left behind no evidence for their activities during this period, it is clear that they printed the Subiaco edition of Augustine’s *de Civitate Dei* by June 1467, secured premises and equipment in the city of Rome, developed a new typeface, and printed Cicero’s *ad Familiares* there in 1467. The *de Civitate Dei* was their first work to be printed on the royal paper in folio format, which may have required longer printing times than the quarto size used for the *de Oratore* and must have occupied much of their time from the end of 1465 onward. Motivations for their move to Rome are undocumented, but since they left their equipment in Subiaco, they required new presses, typefaces, and laborers as well as space to set up shop. Further, they were likely operating from both locations simultaneously, as it is difficult to imagine moving and then printing the *ad Familiares* between June and the end of the year.

This work contains a simple colophon:

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Hoc Conradus opus Suueynheym ordine miro
Arnoldusque simil pannartz una ede colendi
Gente theotonica : rome expediere sodales.
In domo Petri de Maximo .M. CCC. LCVIII.
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This is the only recorded evidence of their movements. The Massimo palazzo faced the Via Papale, a main thoroughfare crossing the city from east to west. A short street connected it to the Campo de Fiori, making it an ideal location to print and then sell their works.\(^{299}\) Since the partners continued to reference the Massimo through 1473, in most, but not all, of their works, it

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\(^{299}\) Hall, 57-59.
is likely that Pietro Massimo acted as their patron and not just a landlord. However, evidence
detailing the relationship has not survived. In any case, the Massimo palazzo continued to be
their home until their partnership dissolved in 1473, and Pannartz continued to work from here
after that date.

5.2 Sweynheym and Pannartz’s Roman Printing Program

In 1468, Andrea Bussi became the editor for the press. Bussi’s career had surrounded
him with books, and it seems a natural fit for him to end up working as a press editor. He spent
time as a schoolmaster and freelance writer until being named a papal secretary in 1456. Part of
his responsibilities was likely as a copyist. From 1458 to 1464, he served as the secretary to
Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa. The Cardinal had a reputation as an intellectual known for book
collecting, his humanist sympathies, and his philosophical writings, and Bussi was tasked with
managing the library and obtaining works for him when they traveled to Germany. Bussi does
write that Nicholas wanted to see a press in Rome in the dedicatory preface of the 1468 Jerome
edition, but there is no evidence that he had any role in Sweynheym and Pannartz’s move to
Subiaco. Most likely, Bussi took the opportunity in the preface to honor his former mentor’s
memory and impact on his own current position. While working for the press, Bussi was named
Bishop of Aleria in 1469. He continued to work with Sweynheym and Pannartz until being
named papal librarian in 1472.

Bussi served as more than mere corrector or even editor for specific volumes. Instead,
Bussi worked with the intellectual tone of the Subiaco press and early Roman editions. He took
the lead on deciding which titles to print, however not all the works he mentions in his prefaces
ended up being printed. Through his records, Bussi suggested that Sweynheym and Pannartz
chose some texts for economic reasons, to keep the press in operation at all times. (Incidentally,
each of their choices were ancient histories.) Bussi demonstrated a desire to print all the Latin works of an author, following the pattern of the Subiaco 1465 Opera of Lactantius. This desire to print the complete works of an author may explain the printshop’s choice to reprint the *de Oratore* with Cicero’s other rhetorical works, *Brutus* and *Orator*. It has been established that the *de Oratore* and other two treatises constitute separate printings. *de Oratore* appears almost exactly as it had in the Subiaco printing, without a colophon or any other editorial text. Its final leaf is blank on the reverse (verso), and *Brutus* appears on the next. In contrast, the final lines of *Brutus* and first lines of *Orator* appear with only two blank lines between them, on the same page. This indicates that the printers did not format the *de Oratore* in a way to incorporate the other texts. Modern bibliographies list the *de Oratore* as a separate edition from that of *Brutus* and *Orator*, noting that they were probably issued together.\(^{300}\) A few surviving copies of the *de Oratore* do appear without the other treatises, including the Vatican copy. However, it is important to note that Bussi, who was working with the press at the time this edition appeared, listed the work as *de Oratore cum ceteris* in his list of 1472. This indicates that internally, the press recognized it as a single edition. Further, if the press did not intend to sell the works together, then the 1469 *de Oratore* would be the only work printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz in Rome to fail to include any reference to the press or a date of completion. Although bibliographically these may be separate editions, it seems clear that Sweynheym, Pannartz, and Bussi intended to present a unified collection of Cicero’s three major oratorical treatises to their readers.

\(^{300}\) See the British Library’s ISTC as an example. The usual description for *de Oratore* is 110 leaves, a-i\(^{10}\), k\(^8\), l\(^12\), and for *Brutus* and *Orator* is 78 leaves, a-g\(^{10}\), h\(^8\). There is no clear explanation for why the *de Oratore* is not simply gatherings of ten, but this evidence is not enough on its own to demonstrate how the partners and Bussi imagined the collection of Cicero’s treatises.
The manuscript tradition does not offer any kind of rule for how the works should be arranged since copies of *de Oratore* appear both in combination with other works and separately. Ulrich Han printed *de Oratore* on its own in Rome on 5 December 1468. The colophon at the end of *Orator* dates the work to 12 January 1469, so the two printshops would have been working on the *de Oratore* at about the same time. It is possible that Sweynheym and Pannartz learned that Han was going to publish the *de Oratore* on its own, and that this knowledge motivated them to produce an edition of the collected treatises to be more competitive. However, while this may have been a motivating factor, it is clear that Sweynheym and Pannartz made a conscious choice to print these three works together just four years after printing the *de Oratore* on its own. They would further strive to produce Cicero’s entire *opera*. Considering the size of Cicero’s entire corpus, the partners opted to arrange his works by genre, printing his philosophical texts later in 1469 and his orations in 1471. (They never printed an edition containing all his letters, however, *ad Familiares* appeared in 1467 and again in 1469, and *ad Atticum* appeared in 1470.) Sweynheym and Pannartz did print the *opera* of a few other Latin authors, Virgil in 1469 and 1471, Cyprian in 1470, and Ovid in 1471. As the art of printing developed, many publishers collected the works of an author into a single volume or arranged them into volumes of distinct genres. In Italy, Sweynheym and Pannartz offer the first models for these volumes.

The efforts taken by Sweynheym and Pannartz to collect an author’s *opera omnia* in a single volume or series divided by genre is interesting. Speaking broadly, this was not a possibility during the age of manuscripts. The volumes would have become too large even if a scribe could secure copies of each of the author’s texts. More often, collectors seem to have been interested in creating libraries based on subject rather than by author, for example
collections of Latin philosophy or Patristic writings. Even if authorship did motivate one to collect and copy texts, as happened with the ninth century Leiden Corpus of Cicero’s philosophical works, the logistics for obtaining and collating a large number of works were substantially more complicated prior to the advent of print. Sweynheym and Pannartz were aware of this new possibility as evidenced from the earliest days of their partnership. The Subiaco Lactantius demonstrates that the partners believed that his works were more valuable printed together than they would be separately. The editions of complete opera omnia printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz: Lactantius, Virgil, Cyprian, Ovid, and an attempt at Cicero, demonstrate the shift from how a text is privileged.\textsuperscript{301} This is not only by its subject or antiquity, but by the individual who wrote it. If Sweynheym and Pannartz had been the only publishers to participate in this kind of oeuvre-making, then it would be enough to comment on it as an anomaly. As will be shown, however, this became an increasingly common practice in the sixteenth century, most especially for Cicero and the \textit{de Oratore}.

5.2.1 The 1469 de Oratore

Although the 1469 \textit{de Oratore} was printed with \textit{Brutus} and \textit{Orator}, Bussi did not add any other editorial aids to the texts, choosing to print all three without prefaces, introductions, analyses, or an index. A colophon is included, immediately following the text of \textit{Orator}:

\textit{.M.T. Ciceronis in Brutum explicit libro. Anno xpi . M. CCCC. lxix. die vero. xii. mensis Ianuarii. Rome in domo magnifici viri Petri de Maximo.}

Neither Sweynheym, Pannartz, nor Bussi’s name appears in this text, however they use the house of Pietro Massimo to identify the shop.

\textsuperscript{301} See Michael Cahn, \textit{“Opera Omnia: The Production of Cultural Authority,”} \textit{History of Science, History of Text} (2005). He bases his essay on the idea that modern authors seek authority through having their works appear as \textit{opera omnia} because this is how classical authors are presented in print. It seems that Sweynheym and Pannartz are responsible, at least in part, for classical authors appearing in this format.
All of Sweynheym and Pannartz’s texts printed in Rome use the same typeface, including this edition of Cicero’s rhetorical treatises. This type was a more simplified and refined version of the Subiaco type, and the earliest to be considered a true roman font. The partners eliminated all gothic elements of the Subiaco type, but kept the size of the letters surprisingly similar.

“Most early printers worked with types of different size even in the printing of a single book, and from the 1470s many used gothic and roman fonts concurrently. By contrast, the Sweynheym and Pannartz books are unusually unified from a typographic point of view, with only these two closely related fonts of Latin characters, each with a single set of majuscule and miniscule letters, used sequentially for the entire output of both the Subiaco and Roman presses.”

The 1469 de Oratore cum ceteris was printed with this roman type in quarto size on 188 leaves, 32 lines per page, at 183mm x 114mm of printed surface. (All three treatises appear in this format.)

Twenty-six copies are known to survive, including those at the Pierpoint Morgan Library in New York and the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice. These were analyzed on site, while copies owned by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich and the Vatican have been digitized. The copy at the Morgan Library is well-preserved, but contains no marginalia or other notations to indicate reader habits. It does contain provenance markings, beginning with the purchase of Louis Ceisar, duc de La Vallierire, in 1783 and continuing through Morgan’s purchase in 1907. The same can be said about the Marciana’s copy in terms of marginalia. This copy was owned by Cardinal Bessarion and was therefore part of one of the most important humanist libraries of the fifteenth century. His copy is beautifully decorated on its first leaf and contains his coat of arms. Alternating contemporary red and blue rubrications have been inserted

302 Hall, 54.
303 As with the 1465 printing, there were originally 275 copies printed based on the 1472 list.
304 The copy owned by the Marciana is also available online. All digital copies can be found through the British Library’s Incunabula Short Title Catalog at http://data.cerl.org/istc/ic00656000.
to indicate new passages, and the initials for each book fill the blank spaces left by the printers. However, there are no other marks throughout the text to indicate readership.

The Vatican’s copy has also been beautifully decorated on its first leaf, including the owner’s coat of arms belonging to an unidentified branch of the House of Hapsburg. This page has been damaged so that part of the decoration and text along the gutter have been lost, however the rest of the text is in good condition. The initials have been filled with alternating blue and red capitals, but no marks to indicate new passages. Otherwise, there are no marks in the text.

The Staatsbibliothek possess a copy that at least shows evidence of having been read. The first page of printed text has been torn in half and the top is now missing. The rest of the copy is in good condition and displays the hand of two contemporary annotators. Both write the occasional correction in the margin and mark some lines without additional comment. The lighter-inked, neater hand has also entered sporadic guide words throughout the text. Some of these are what one expects from an oratorical text, including “sapietias” and “orator.” However, at other places the emphasized words are unusual, with the annotator even adding punctuation. These instances include “delicatiorem” at 2.257, “Politores!” at 2.154, and “Trutina?” at 2.159. “delicatiorem” is not a word that one expects to find in an oratorical treatise. It arises in de Oratore as part of Catulus’ excursus on wit. The man in the case he uses as an example “had a rather pleasure-loving son,” haberet filium delicatiorem, and Catulus compliments Antonius’ use of a verse to suggest that his son had squandered the money intended to bribe Antonius’ client, who was innocent of accepting anything. This passage does not seem particularly significant for a fifteenth century annotator, and he offers no evidence as to why he copied “delicatiorem” into the margin. However, it does demonstrate how closely the text was being read.
The other examples come from an important passage where Cicero details his cultural program. Catullus is claiming that Rome had always been open to philosophy by first citing Numa Pompilius, the pious king of Aeneas’ line. He then states, “Also this community has certainly produced none of more splendid renown or more venerable authority or more refined humanity than Scipio Africanus, Gaius Laelius, and Lucius Furius, and they were always openly in the company of the most learned men from Greece.” For Cicero, it was vital to make Greek philosophy not just acceptable to his Roman audience, but an integral part of the development of humanitas. Our commentator takes interest in the use of aut humanitate politores, the “more refined humanity” or “possessed of more polite learning” used to describe the three Romans. He is surprised by the use of politores, but whether from a philological perspective or in its connection to Scipio, Laelius, and Furius is unknowable. Still his attention is drawn to a key element of Cicero’s ideal, the cultivation of humanity through Greek philosophy.

Only a few lines later, this hand has copied “Trutina?” into the margin. At this point, Antonius responds to Catullus and demonstrates the limitations of certain branches of philosophy as models for oratory. He says that the style of the Stoic is not suitable for addressing a crowd, because the Stoic would care only to judge an argument and not present it eloquently and convincingly. Antonius states that the orator’s responsibility is to “prove things that are weighed not in the balance of the goldsmith, but, so to speak, in common scales.” Here, the annotator questions sed popullari trutina examinatur or “common scales.” Again, it is unclear his interest in this particular word, perhaps he is even unfamiliar with it. However, it does appear that he read this conversation about the Roman attitude toward philosophy, in both general and specific

\(^{305}\) de Oratore, 2.154, Et certe non tullit ullos haec civitas aut Gloria clariores aut auctoritate graviorum aut humanitate politores P. Africano, C. Laelio, L. Furio, qui secum eruditissimos homines ex Graecia palam semper habuerunt.

\(^{306}\) de Oratore, 2.159.
terms, very carefully. For Cicero, reclaiming territory from the philosophers is an essential part of the creation of the ideal orator. The orator was not limited to a technical skill in rhetoric that allowed him to perform a single function in society. Cicero insists that the orator bears responsibility for the very survival of the state. The orator leads by knowing what is best for society and then convincing both his peers and the crowd of this course of action. This can only be possible if the orator studies widely, deeply, and throughout his whole life. The philosophers fail to engage in the work to maintain civil function, and therefore fail to be civic leaders. This model is crucial for fifteenth century humanists as well. The elite engage in broad learning for themselves, to become like Cicero’s orator, and support educational efforts throughout their communities. It should not be surprising that a contemporary reader was drawn to this passage.

As with the Subiaco edition, the 1469 de Oratore was collected for its values as a text supporting humanist ideology. Readers note when they find the expected teaching on oratory, classical uses of specific words, and passages that championed the humanist attitude towards education and learning. This edition also demonstrates Sweynheym and Pannartz’s editorial efforts to create a corpus of Ciceronian rhetoric. They would not print any of these three treatises again.

5.2.2 The Dissolution of Italy’s Earliest Press

Competition in the printing industry increased both within the city of Rome and throughout Italy during the late 1460s and early 1470s. Sweynheym and Pannartz’s rivals did not demonstrate the same ambition to print classical first editions, profiting off the efforts of the earliest press in producing their own editions. In the preface to their 1472 edition of Nicholas of Lyra’s Postilia, Bussi addresses a plea for financial assistance to Pope Sixtus IV. This was a five-volume edition issued between November 1471 and May 1472, and it comprised a total of
1832 leaves. “It is – by the sheer number of its pages – the single largest edition of the fifteenth century.”\textsuperscript{307} The letter indicates that books are not selling and their latest and largest endeavor has left them without the resources for necessities. They offer as many of their works as the Pope may desire in exchange for his assistance. Little help was forthcoming. Sixtus did offer the expectation of benefices, but only Sweynheym was able to secure them, and not until a year after the partnership had dissolved. This was Bussi’s last act as press editor before he became the papal librarian, and the final fifteen books printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz lack any dedicatory letters to Sixtus. They must have received assistance from somewhere, if their financial situation was truly so desperate as they claimed in March, however their final productions were much more cautious. The texts were shorter and printed on inferior papers in folio, and they chose a school text, Perotti’s \textit{Rudimenta Grammatices}, and a bestseller, Caracciolo’s \textit{Quadragesimale}, for the likelihood of their ability to sell copies. Still, the partnership dissolved after May 1473. Pannartz went on to print on his own in 1474, still in the house of Pietro Massimo, until his death around 1477. Sweynheym went on to produce engraved maps on copper plates for Calderini’s edition of Ptolemy, being the first to use this method. He also died in 1477.

Prior to 1472, the press demonstrated a clear agenda. They set out to produce quality, stylistically uniform, first-editions of classical texts that are significant to the humanist program or to figures sympathetic to humanist tenets. They did this from their first extant edition in 1465, demonstrating their preparedness to carry out an ambitious plan of work. This became especially apparent when contrasting their works to the transience and inconsistent styling of the majority of printing houses that set up shop in fifteenth century Italy. If they had the financial resources

\textsuperscript{307} Hall, 7.
to continue this program, Sweynheym and Pannartz may have been the first press to produce the oeuvre of all known classical Latin writers, including the Opera of Cicero. Unfortunately, their inability to create financial success prevented the press from surviving the market difficulties of the early 1470s.

5.2.3 Ulrich Han’s 1468 de Oratore

Only one other press printed the de Oratore in Rome during the fifteenth century. Ulrich Han’s edition appeared on December 5, 1468, just over one month before Sweynheym and Pannartz’s edition of Cicero’s rhetorical treatises. This was Han’s second printed work, having completed an edition of Turrecremata’s Meditationes on December 31, 1467. This volume was short, “only thirty-four leaves, thirty-one large woodcuts fill a substantial part of approximately half the pages, and the text itself is set in a large gothic type. Thus, it is a book that could easily have been begun after September 1467 and completed by the end of December.”

Han began work in Rome just as Sweynheym and Pannartz were finishing their first work in the Eternal City, Cicero’s ad Familiares. Han had come from Vienna and continued to print in Rome through December 9, 1478. His press did publish many classical texts, but he did not demonstrate the same commitment to the humanist reading program as Sweynheym and Pannartz. He printed a large number of ecclesiastical texts, many by contemporary authors, and did not make a similar effort to produce first editions.

Han would have been able to use the Subiaco de Oratore in preparing his own edition. He prints on ninety-two, quarto-sized leaves with thirty-six lines per page and 155x101mm of printed surface. This edition does not include any editorial text, but does present a colophon, set apart from Cicero’s text by its own type and ink:

308 Hall, 43.
Nineteen copies are known to survive, one of which was printed on vellum and is now housed at the Angelica in Rome. This text is heavily annotated by two hands. The first ink is red, even purple at places, marked the start of passages, and added common guide words to the margins of each leaf. The second hand is a brown ink that offered some corrections to the Latin, very occasionally added to the guide words, and wrote a biography of Cicero in the front flyleaves. This biography is not particularly interesting in terms of how Cicero’s life is presented, but it does demonstrate the reader’s interest in preserving knowledge of the author with the text of *de Oratore*. By the sixteenth century, this had become a task for the press editor, not necessarily to give a full biography but to offer some context for understanding the text. It is here interesting that a reader thought it worthwhile to include the full biography of Cicero’s life, when the printed text does not supply any such context.

The copy owned by the Württembergische Landesbibliothek in Stuttgart is available online. While it does have illuminated initials, there is no other evidence of contemporary readership. Another copy of Han’s edition examined for this study resides at the Morgan Library. This copy has vividly illuminated initials, but no provenance marks. Cicero’s preface in book one has some annotations, but these have faded and been rubbed out so that they are now impossible to read. The only other mark of readership is a tidy manicule at 2.317. Here, Antonius discusses arrangement and the importance of building a speech slowly. This passage covers standard rhetorical practice, so it is not clear why the reader wanted to draw attention here, but not elsewhere in the text.
Taken together, these editions demonstrate the oratorical and philological interests of readers. The margins provide a guide for locating passages related to ancient theories of rhetoric, and readers are critical of Latin usage. Additionally, one reader thought it was important that this rhetorical theory be associated with the person of Cicero. His status as a *novus homo* is addressed, as are his political successes in Rome. Possibly this biography was meant as a reminder that Cicero was the ideal orator he creates in the *de Oratore*. Or perhaps it is simply an exercise in biographical writing. However, in consideration of humanist notions of individualism and the sixteenth century tendency of publishers to promote works by author, the Angelica copy could be understood as one reader’s efforts to engage with this kind of author-creation.

5.2.4 Roman Printing Houses

In 1469, Han followed his printing of the *de Oratore* with other of Cicero’s works. First, *Tusculan Disputationes* and then *de Officiis, Laelius, sive de Amicitia, Paradoxa Stoicorum*, and *de Senectute*, the latter four of which are printed together. He continued to print in Rome through 1478, and was not the only competitor to Sweynheym and Pannartz during the early 1470s. Sixtus Riessinger worked here before moving to Naples in 1471, Johannes Philippus de Lignamine established his first press from 1470 to 1476, Georges Lauer from c.1470 to 1481, Adam Rot from 1471-1473, and two unidentified publishers were working in the early 1470s.

Han, Riessinger, de Lignamine, and Lauer released both humanistic and ecclesiastic texts, while the other three dealt almost exclusively with religious works. Even without considering the Venetian industry, it is not difficult to imagine that the availability of printed works in Rome would have prevented Sweynheym and Pannartz from selling enough of their grand first-editions of classical texts. The Italian locus for print shifts north to Venice after this
period, and from the city of canals another six editions of the *de Oratore* will be produced in the fifteenth century.

5.3 **Venetian Humanism and Print**

Martin Lowry’s study *Nicholas Jenson* examines the forces at work in Venice that made the city a Mecca for print in Italy from the 1460s through the sixteenth century. He demonstrates how humanist circles of friendship and patronage enabled the Venetians to support public education, the creation of the Marciana as a library for the public, and the establishment and survival of the printing industry in their city. Lowry examines the relationship between Venetian expansion and humanism, stating, “Venice’s acquisition of Padua and other mainland territories, and the spread of humanist ideas amongst its ruling class, can be seen as interdependent parts of the same process. New territorial responsibilities created new offices; those new offices required new skills; and those skills could be acquired at the nearby university.”

The work of men like Gasparino Barzizza in the early part of the fifteenth century cultivated an environment among the elite humanist statesmen eager and able to represent their republic’s interests across Italy, Europe, and the Mediterranean. Lowry identifies a circle of such men who graduated from Padua during the 1430s and 1440s, quickly became influential leaders through Venetian diplomacy, and worked to patronize the humanist agenda in Venice.

Of particular interest to this study is the first monopoly awarded to a printer, the motivations for awarding it, and the connections that can be made to Sweynheym and Pannartz in Rome. The Signoria awarded to Johannes de Spira a printing monopoly for five years, but this pronouncement conspicuously does not name him as the first printer in Venice. The act was

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310 Ibid, 18-21.
intended to support him personally, not to initiate or regulate the print industry in broad terms. An examination of de Spira’s works indicate that his connections to Rome, to Sweynheym and Pannartz, and to Cardinal Bessarion, brought his printing company before the interests of the Venetian elite, winning the monopoly for him on September 18, 1469. de Spira used a typeface very similar to the Roman one used by Sweynheym and Pannartz, suggesting that he was familiar with their operations and may have worked there. The partners in Rome were supported by Cardinal Bessarion to the extent that he possessed many of their works.311 (A final count includes fifteen of their books in his library, with only seven editions printed by others.) In 1468, Bessarion had bequeathed his entire library to the city of Venice, possibly in an effort to protect it from any who sought to censor Neoplatonism in Rome, including Pope Paul II. The volumes began to be transferred in 1469, around the time that Bussi dedicated the Apuleius to Bessarion on February 28. By September, Bessarion’s library had arrived in Venice, although suitable storage was not available until 1564, and a printer who possibly has a connection with Bessarion’s favorite Roman press was granted a monopoly for printing in the Serenissima.

The arrival of printing in Venice might seem a matter of economic coincidence. Given the city’s commercial importance and its close links with south Germany, an adventurous craftsman or a local speculator would have made the attempt sooner or later. Some may have made it sooner than we think. But the establishment of John of Speyer and his immediate successors was something more than coincidence. Circumstantial evidence from at least three different directions - typography, diplomacy and editorship - suggests that they came from the south and west rather than the north, and that they came not by chance but as one part of a complex process of political planning.312

311 Feld has argued that their press’ movements in Italy and its printing program were designed with the sole intention of supporting Bessarion’s Neoplatonism. This argument requires speculation and removes agency from the Germans. The evidence does suggest that Bessarion wanted to purchase their books, preferring their editions to those of other printers, and they do print his work in 1469.
312 Lowry, Jenson, 20-21.
de Spira died not long after his privilege was issued, and his brother did not secure a similar monopoly for himself. In any case, there is no evidence of how the Venetian authorities would have protected such a monopoly.

Six editions of *de Oratore* were printed in Venice during the fifteenth century. Two were printed in the industry’s early years and appear without any additional texts. The other four are printed after an eight-year gap which included the market crisis and a currency scandal in Venice. Each of these editions appear in conjunction with other texts and a commentary produced by Ognibene Bonisoli.

5.3.1 The 1470 Edition by de Spira

Vindelinus de Spira does continue to print in Venice after his brother’s death, and he is the first to produce a *de Oratore* around 1470. Twenty-nine copies survive. Vendelinus printed this text without identifying himself through a colophon or dating the work. However, he is the first to include any kind of editorial text in an edition of *de Oratore*, in the form of simple introductory lines at the start of each book. The first is, “*M.T. Ciceronis ad Quintum Fratrem In Libros De Oratore Prefatio Incipit Foeliciter.*” Then, at the start of the dialogue, “*Dialogus Incipit narratio.*” Some owners did copy similar phrases into the editions that lacked this text, occasionally red ink was used to do so, and Vendelinus seems to be including a more common reading practice into the production of the printed text. This edition is in 110 quarto leaves, with thirty-two lines per page and 175x114 mm of typed surface. Five copies were analyzed for this study. The Morgan copy is almost completely unmarked. There are no reader’s notes, and only the first initial was filled with blue and red ink. The copy in Treviso shows a bit more evidence of readership. Its first page is illuminated, all initials were decorated, and the start of new
passages are marked in red and blue ink. A reader left some short notes throughout the text, and also wrote long notes at the bottom of a page in book two and across half of one of the rear flyleaves. Unfortunately, someone, possibly a new owner, took some offense at the presence of these notes and had all of them removed. Without any indication of what the annotator wrote, it is hard to speculate his interest in the nearby passages.\textsuperscript{313}

The annotator of the Marciana copy shows interest in platitudes about the perfect orator: his responsibilities, his virtues, and the precariousness of this position. This reader draws manicules at such passages. At 1.116 he marks, “It is a huge burden and a huge responsibility you undertake, when you claim that, before a vast assembly of people where all others stand silent, you alone are to be heard on affairs of the highest importance.”\textsuperscript{314} At 1.125, “For we are judged every time we speak…if some fault is found with a speaker, he will earn a reputation for slow-wittedness that will last forever, or at least for a very long time.”\textsuperscript{315} Finally, at 3.100 and 102, “Since in everything else, then, the greatest pleasure borders on aversion…‘the wise man aims for honor as a reward for virtue, not as its spoils.’”\textsuperscript{316} These passages are not crucial to Cicero’s program or the humanist mindset, but they describe the person that both are trying to create.

The Staatsbibliothek copy has been extensively annotated. This reader endeavors to supply a historical commentary on the interlocutors, all named people and places, and the court cases mentioned. There are also corrections to the Latin, sometimes with marginal explanation.

\textsuperscript{313} The notes could have had nothing at all to do with the \textit{de Oratore}, but the book happened to be open when a note needed to be taken down.

\textsuperscript{314} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.116, \textit{Magnum quoddam est onus atque munus, suscipere, atque profiteri, se esse, omnibus silentibus, unum maximis de rebus, magno in convent hominum, audiendum}.

\textsuperscript{315} \textit{de Oratore}, 1.125, \textit{Quo etiam gravies iudicium in dicendo subimus…cuius autem in dicendo aliquid reprehensum est, aut aeterna in eo, aut certe diurnal valet opinion traditatis}.

\textsuperscript{316} \textit{de Oratore}, 3.100 & 102, \textit{Sic omnibus in rebus voluptatibus maximis fastidium finitimum est…‘Nam sapiens virtuti honorem praemium, haud praeedam petit.’}
There is nothing to suggest that this reader sought to elevate a philosophical agenda, but he demonstrates the importance humanists placed on the historical context of a treatise.

The copy at the Huntington possesses two notes. Although these were trimmed for a later rebinding, it is clear that the annotator draws attention to passages at 2.31 and 3.200. In the first, Antonius has indicated that he is willing to speak on whether he considers oratory to be an art. Catullus encourages him by saying that the group wants to hear from him because he “did not begin by boasting, but took the truth of the matter as [he] saw it for a starting point, rather than some high view of the subject.”\(^{317}\) Antonius does not consider oratory a “true art” because it is based on two individuals speaking to convince the audience of opposing viewpoints. For Antonius, art must stem from an absolute truth. He still elevates the person who is the perfect orator, for such an individual transcends the limitations of the discipline. It is difficult to know the annotator’s specific interest here, but this is the start of a very significant passage to Cicero’s program. The other note at 3.200 refers to Crassus’ discussion of style where he compares the orator’s words to a gladiator’s arms. He claims that both need to wield their weapons with grace. Again, this is an essential element of Cicero’s program. The orator, armed with eloquence, was the true leader of the state. A man in possession of humanitas should be privileged over a man at the head of an army. Coming near the end of the dialogue, this metaphor might be understood as an important synopsis for the fifteenth century humanist.

5.3.2 The 1470 Edition by Valdarfer

In this same year, Christopher Valdarfer established his press in Venice by printing the *de Oratore*, in folio, seventy-two leaves with forty lines per page, 222x132 mm of printed surface.

\(^{317}\) *de Oratore*, 2.31, Exorsus ex enim non gloriose; magis a veritate, ut tu putas, quam a nescio qua dignitate.
Valdarfer printed the treatise on its own but does not include those editorial “incipit” lines that de Spira had introduced. Valdarfer also uses a colophon to sign and date his first work:

ANNO. DO. M.CCCC.LXX
Si quem oratoris perfecti audire iuuabit
    Materiam: fons est hoc Ciceronis opus.
Hic tersum eloquium uelut attica lingua refulg&:
    Christophori impressus hic liber arte fuit.
Cui stirps Valdarfer: patria est[ue] ratispona tellus.
    Hunc emat : orator qui uelit esse : librum.

The colophon is interesting because it is the first *de Oratore* to have included information about who would benefit from purchasing the work. As a kind of advertisement, it may have been better placed at the start of the work, however, it is very difficult to imagine a book-buyer who would not have known what to expect from a book with this title. Instead, this colophon demonstrates the accomplished Latinity of its author. Valdarfer displays his own humanist learning, a further encouragement to buy his book and improve one’s own skill with the Latin language. Valdarfer produced four other texts in 1471, three of which include these stanzas as colophons. After this, he moves to Milan and begins printing again in 1474.

Twenty-four of Valdarfer’s *de Oratore* editions survive, three of which were examined for this study. The digitized copy from the Staatsbibliothek and that housed at the Morgan demonstrate little evidence of readership. Someone has removed two of the four decorated initials from the Staatsbibliothek copy, and two hands appear in the text. The later, darker hand included a few oratorical signposts throughout the copy. A lighter hand, probably more contemporary to the printing, drew a single manicule at 1.33. This passage is an exclamation of the praise of eloquence. Here Crassus says,

For the one thing that most especially sets us above animals is that we converse with one another, and that we can express our thoughts through speech. Who, then, would not rightly admire this ability, and would not think that he should take the greatest pains in order to surpass other human beings in the very thing which especially make humans
themselves superior to beasts…[speech enabled civilization]…let me summarize everything in a few words: I assert that the leadership and wisdom of the perfect orator provide the chief basis, not only for his own dignity, but also for the safety of countless individuals and of the State at large.318

This assertion introduces Cicero’s ideal and demonstrates the power of oratory within society. It also reflects the major tenets of humanism: personal dignity and civic leadership stem from a cultivation of learning and wisdom. Unfortunately, this reader does not leave evidence to surmise whether he read any further in the text.

The copy at the Morgan has blank spaces for the initials and only two pattes-de-mouche appear throughout the work. The second is at 3.16, Cicero’s preface to the third book. He is justifying how he writes the different styles for both Crassus and Antonius. Cicero claims that the entire dialogue was told to him by a younger interlocutor, Gaius Cotta, and he recreates the speeches of the elder orators through his intimate knowledge of their distinct, although both excellent, styles. It is unclear why the annotator found this important to note. The other pattes-de-mouche appears at 1.49. Here, Crassus discusses the distinction between philosophers and orators. It is possible for some philosophers to speak eloquently, but this does not stem from their philosophical pursuits. Instead they have, without admitting it, cultivated an oratorical ability. Crassus proves this by pointing out that some philosophers, although very wise, are horrific speakers. An orator will always have the upper hand in public perspective because his eloquence allows him to speak well on any topic, so long as he studies it first. “Thus, whatever the theme may be, from whatever art or from whatever area, when the orator has learned about it just as he learns about a case from his client, he will address the subject better and with greater

318 de Oratore, 1.32-33, Hoc enim uno praestamus vel maxime feris, quod colloquimur inter nos, et quod exprimere dicendo sense possumus. Qua mob rem quis hoc non iure miretur, summeque in eo elaborandum esse arbitetur, ut, quo uno homines maxime bestiis praestent, in hoc hominibus ipsis antecellat…consecter, comprehendam brevi; sic enim statuo, perfecti oratoris moderation et sapientia non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universae reipublicae salute maxime contineri.
distinction than even the expert who invented it can.” The conflict between orators (rhetoric) and philosophers was significant during the first century BCE, but this is not true for the Renaissance period. Perhaps, the annotator notes this passage for its emphasis on mastering the ability to speak and persuade on any subject, rather than a limited field. Certainly the humanists saw themselves as “multidisciplinary” with their emphasis on broad education and wide literary interests.

The Columbia Valdarfer has been heavily annotated. Multiple hands appear on each page, filling the margins with guide words of important names, places, and oratorical terms, correcting Latin, and providing historical commentary. As with the Staatsbibliothek de Spira, the marginalia is so thick it is difficult to determine whether any reader is specifically engaging with the core of Cicero’s ideal. These copies are valuable in demonstrating the care and analysis that readers poured into the *de Oratore*, even if they are less helpful in discerning a specific annotator’s particular interests with the text.

5.3.3 The 1471-1473 Printing Crisis

Between 1465 and 1470, *de Oratore* was printed in five Italian editions by four different publishing houses. For three of these presses, the *de Oratore* was the first substantial book printed. Following Valdarfer, there is a break lasting several years before the appearance of other editions in Naples and Milan, and a total of eight years before another is produced in Venice. Much of this can be attributed to the economic principle of balancing supply and demand. We have seen that Sweynheym and Pannartz portrayed desperate financial status in 1472 when they appealed to the Pope because although rich in books they could not meet their

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319 *de Oratore*, 1.51, *Quidquid erit igitur quacumque ex arte, quocumque de genere, id orator, si, tanquam clietis causam, didicerit, dicet melius et ornatis, quam ille ipse eius rei inventor atque artifex.*
basic needs. One part of their solution was to print less ambitious and costly works moving forward. In Venice, this pressure on the market was compounded by a local currency scandal and the intimate connection between printers and their humanist circle of patrons. Not all the Venetian printers would survive this period.

It may seem that because the print industry grew so rapidly and without sufficient regulation, it could not support sustained growth. That when this reckless growth was coupled with the veneration of the manuscript culture, the Venetian elite sought to stifle, or at least regulate, print in order to preserve their intellectual status. Lowry demonstrates that these were not the forces at work in the 1470s. He uses the lending register of Sanudo to demonstrate how a manuscript owner would circulate his books among friends and family. The frequency with which these books travelled indicates that owners believed that books were meant to be read. Lowry describes the differences between fifteenth and twentieth century presumptions about manuscripts.

Looking at a finely illuminated fifteenth-century manuscript today, we may be struck chiefly by its sumptuous quality, by the extravagance of the patron who commissioned it, and by the exclusive nature of the learning that it contains. We should think also of the number of men whose work was needed to give the book that form, and who took a pride in having done so. It takes a document like Sanudo’s register to show us that manuscripts were not written to be set in the glass cases where they now repose. They may have been limited in number, slow and expensive to produce. But they were remarkably accessible, for the habits of lending, copying and exchanging washed over many of the barriers of ownership, class and intellectual bias which a wider ownership of books has since erected… We cannot understand the invention of printing unless we grasp the enormous value that already attached to the book both as a material object and as a symbol. Much of that value passed at first to the printed book. Fear came only when it seemed that the sheer number of books must undermine the whole complex of social attitudes that had made manuscript culture.\textsuperscript{320}

\textsuperscript{320} Lowry, Jenson, 43.
In Venice, the elite did not fear the press, but recognized its use for publishing their treatises and speeches to elevate personal and civic agendas. Further, throughout the fifteenth century, printers continued to cater to the needs of the established literary circles. Titles were chosen to support the humanist interests of the elite, to supply the universities with legal and theological texts, and to please the leaders of the church. There was no indication that printers endeavored to cultivate the business of the average person on the street.\textsuperscript{321} It was not at this early period that the Signoria sought to restrict and regulate publishers, and the difficulties of the early 1470s must have other explanations.

Certainly, print expanded rapidly in Italy after Sweynheym and Pannartz began work at Subiaco. In Venice, over one hundred companies can be identified as operational for some time between 1469 and 1490. Overproduction during those first years meant that printers had too many books left on their shelves. In 1473, output dropped by sixty-five percent. This was a massive reversal that was compounded by a scandal that disproportionately affected printers. In 1471, the Zen spy ring was uncovered. Elizabeta Barbo-Zen, sister to Pope Paul II, and her son Cardinal Battista Zen had promised ecclesiastical preferments to any Venetian Council members who would give information about their meetings. Cardinal Zen’s letters were circulated as evidence, and many leading figures were implicated. Unfortunately for printers like de Spira, Valdarfer, and even Jenson, some of their patrons were implicated by association. Lowry describes these printers as “hardened poker-players” constantly moving to ensure they had the right “hand” of patronage. “During the scandal of 1471-2, Jenson and Windelin, Merula and Zovenzoni, reacted not as competitors in the same business but as dependents of the same

\textsuperscript{321} Rosa Salzburg writes about the proliferation of “cheap print” and the expansion of the reading public in sixteenth century Venice in *Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016).
patrons [Jacopo Zen, Piero di Marco di Priuli, Domenico Zorizi, and Bernardo Giustinianin], their
positions threatened along with those of their protectors. Intellectuals and printers closed ranks
around their leaders.” Some, like Vindelinus de Spira and Christopher Valdarfer may have
sided too closely with those patrons who ended up without influence following the scandal.

At this same time, Europe faced a shortage of silver. In Venice, the threat of counterfeits
flooding the market at the hands of the Milanese Sforza regime brought the issue to a crisis in
1472. The Council of Ten had all silver coinage collected and reissued in new denominations.
They created the Lira Tron, which was much more difficult to counterfeit as it was worth twice
its predecessor. The Council then turned its attention to finding and arresting scapegoats, whose
numbers eventually totaled forty-nine. Common on the list are those with the profession
stampatore, which had become the name for those who printed books. (They used similar tools
and skills to make stamps for letters as those who stamp coins, and the title referred to both.)
Even if the men recorded as arrested were not book-printers, enough suspicion was cast on the
industry to affect production. By 1473, the Venetian publishing world suffered from the
overproduction of classical texts, the breakdown of its patronage network, and the suspicion cast
upon stampatores. The only printer to survive the period and prosper was Nicholas Jenson, and
he did so by creating a business built on long term capital investments and printing the legal
titles in so high demand at the university during the 1470s.

5.3.4 Venetian Interlude: Italian Incunabula of 1470s

In 1475 or 1476, Sixtus Riessinger printed a de Oratore in Naples. Only six copies
survive, and none could be consulted for this study. In 1477, another de Oratore was published
on its own. Philippus de Lavagna issued this edition from Milan on November 8, and twelve

322 Lowry, Jenson, 69-70.
copies survive. He printed in quarto format, 104 leaves, with thirty-six lines per page. de Lavagnia, like de Spira, prints simple introductory lines at the start of each book and when Cicero transitions from preface to dialogue. For this study copies at the Huntington and Munich Staatsbibliothek were examined. The Huntington copy has a decorated first initial, with the other three filled by red ink, possibly much later. Other than a single manicule at 2.51, there is no other evidence of readership. This passage is mostly a critique of Latin historians, especially in comparison to the Greeks, and Antonius concludes at 2.64 by saying that the rules of the rhetorician do not help with writing history, but that an orator must be the one to advance Latin historiography. This provides another example of the orator’s wide education and responsibilities, but it is difficult to determine from a single manicule if this was the reader’s main interest.

The Staatsbibliothek copy also contains a decorated first initial; and the subsequent three are filled with contemporary blue and red ink. This copy contains far more frequent manicules throughout the text. At 1.32, Crassus praises eloquence; at 1.51 Crassus claims that an orator will speak more eloquently than any expert because of his training and broad knowledge; at 1.68, Crassus states that “philosophy is divided into three parts, the mysteries of nature, the subtleties of dialectic, and the study of human life and conduct,” and the orator must, at least, master the third part or else he is nothing.\(^{323}\) This passage sets up the clash between orators and philosophers, and is an important element of the de Oratore’s aims. Manicules at 1.197 and 1.200 emphasize the superiority of Roman law, the vital role of the jurisconsult, and the orator’s need to learn from such vital experts. The reader marks 1.218, “if you still want to assign all the

\(^{323}\) de Oratore, 1.68, \textit{quoniam philosophia in tres partes est tribute, in naturae obscuritatem, in disserendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores}. See pages 54 and 158 for more discussion of 1.32; and page 159 for 1.51.
arts to the orator…let it be the mark of a good orator to have heard much, to have seen much, to have surveyed much in his thinking, and in his reflection, and much also in his reading, though not to have acquired these things as his own possessions, but to have tasted what belongs to others.”

Antonius qualifies or limits Crassus’ demands that an orator know practically everything. However, this is a false position he presents in book one, ostensibly to demonstrate that an orator can argue both sides of any argument. He will announce this in book two, and in fact, the reader places another manicule at the end of Antonius’ speech praising eloquence and the orator’s broad learning. This is at 2.38, and Crassus exclaims that he is glad the night “has turned you into a human being.” Antonius replies, “Yesterday it was my intention to refute you…Now…it seems to be my duty to express my own opinions.”

At 2.68, a manicule marks the passage where Antonius decrees that the orator needs to master all philosophical knowledge that would have bearing on the civil society. Here Cicero is claiming all topics of the philosophers as “fair game” for his ideal orator. Cicero is also critical of rhetoricians at this point in his text, and the reader has marked 2.76. After telling the story of Phormio, a Greek philosopher who lectured Hannibal about the duties of a general and about military tactics, Catulus remarks, “This is precisely what I think all these people are doing who set down rules for the art of speaking, for what they teach to others is something with which they have no experience themselves.”

Cicero’s orator should be trained by other orators in the

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324 de Oratore, 1.218, Ac, si iam plact omnes artes oratori subiungere…sit boni oratoris multa auribus accepisse, multa vidisse, multa animo et cogitatione, multa etiam legendo percurrisse; neque ea, ut sua, possesdisse: sed, aliena, libasse.
325 de Oratore, 2.38-2.40, Et Crassus: Nox te, inquit, nobis, Antoni, expolivit, hominemque reddidit…Tum Antonius: Heri enim, inquit, hoc mihi proposueram, ut, sit e refellissem…nunc…videor debere non tam pugnare tecum, quam quid ipse sentiam, dicere.
326 This reader also marks passages at 2.55 and 56 with manicules. Here, Herodotus and Thucydides are named as masters for writing history.
327 de Oratore, 2.76, Hoc mihi facere omnes isti, qui de arte dicendi praecipium, videntur: quod enim ipsi experti non sunt, id docent ceteros.
forum, and not rely on the handbooks of rhetoricians. Cicero wants to distinguish his orator from both philosophers and rhetoricians, and this passage accomplishes this fact most succinctly. For the humanist, this is also important. Wide-learning and practical civic engagement create good men who will govern their Italian states well, not just theorize in public lectures or dusty commentaries.

The reader does not leave evidence in book three. At the end of that book, de Lavagnia includes a simple colophon naming himself and the date of completion. On the verso, he prints a short quotation from *ad Familiares* 6.18 addressed to Quintus Lepta, “I am extremely pleased that you think so highly of my *De oratore*. I am indeed of the firm opinion that I have brought together in this work whatever I know and think about rhetoric.” Unfortunately, since this letter was composed in 46 BCE, it is not a reference to *de Oratore*, but to *Orator*, which was written earlier that year. This quotation is followed by twenty-two lines of verse.

Felices quibus insonabis aures
Onate ingenio liber peracri:
Quisis pondere ponderatus omni:
Limatus studio Fatis perenni:
Formatus venere & politus: arte
Insignis : gravitate singularis:
Doctrina eximia usque copiosus:
Tutus iudicio: &tuo refulgens
Splendore eloquii. Quid ociosi
Ultra quaerimus? at nihil par.
Huc huc contulit omne pondus :
Viros ingenii profudit omnes:
Non est ulterius locus: quod usu
E doctus iuveniliter retraxit
Que quondam sibi ab ore devolarunt.
Gotthi te modo possessere Tulli:
Nunc vulgabere nunc legere verus
Nulla barbarie ac modo inquinatus.

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The poem is another example of the publisher demonstrating humanist literary prowess. He praises Cicero and claims that any who hear these words have happy ears. The *de Oratore* is unequalled in Cicero’s works, and Cicero is “unique in dignity; overflowing in exceptional learning; safe in judgment and shining out in your splendid eloquence.” de Lavagnia concludes by claiming that the text is free from “any hint of barbarism” even though the “Goths” had possessed Cicero. He again names himself as printer in the final couplet.

This praise of Cicero and the *de Oratore* suggests to the reader how to place and understand the book within the corpus of Latin texts. Cicero is the most eloquent, and this text is the pinnacle of his work. That it is written in verse serves as another testament to the humanist promotion of literary studies. The verses demonstrate the author’s learning more subtly than a dedicatory preface may, but it serves the same purpose of bringing the reader to a particular understanding of *de Oratore* in the humanist program. Cicero’s work is integral to developing the quality of *humanitas*, as de Lavagnia himself clearly has done.

### 5.3.5 *de Oratore* After the Venetian Scandal

None of the printers who were working before 1473 would go on to print an edition of *de Oratore* after the crisis of that year. Still, newly formed companies considered this a worthwhile investment, especially since a new commentary was published in 1476. The first of this new wave of Venetian *de Oratore*’s, however, returns to the earlier pattern of printing the *de Oratore* on its own, without commentary or the other rhetorical treatises. Andreas de Paltasichis printed this edition on August 20, 1478 as one of five classical works his press completed during its first,
two-year run. He did this on eighty-four folio leaves, with thirty-six lines per page. Twenty-four copies survive, and those at the Morgan and Huntington libraries were consulted. Unfortunately, neither shows much evidence of readership. The Morgan copy is now bound with Caesar’s Commentario de Bello Gallico, and it has its initials decorated. (Although, the illustrator inked in a “D” instead of a “C” at the start of the dialogue in book one. Perhaps the “Dialogus Incipit Narratio” caused the confusion.) No other marks have been added to the printed text. The Huntington copy does not have its initials filled. Its only marks are two manicules at 1.32 and 33.329 This passage is a part of Crassus’ initial praise of eloquence. He asserts its value in the business of Rome, for example on the rostra, as well as the pleasure it provides during times of leisure. He concludes, “Who, then, would not rightly admire this ability?” It is unclear if the reader continued reading the text. Paltasichis concludes the work with a colophon stating that Cicero deserves the title pater eloquentiae and identifying himself as printer.

After this, all other de Oratore incunables are printed with other parts of Cicero’s rhetorical works, and the three Venetian editions have the text of de Oratore surrounded on three sides with the commentary of Ognibene Bonisoli. The Commentum in Ciceronis Oratorem first appeared in print on December 22, 1476 from a publishing house in Vicenza. Bonisoli operates in much the same way as a medieval commentator, making references to other passages in Cicero’s corpus, describing and analyzing issues of Latinity, and explaining historical context for Cicero’s examples. The commentary does not offer significant changes in the way the text was understood, but may have been useful for any reader who sought rhetorical knowledge from the de Oratore. In the 1476 edition, the commentary appears without Cicero’s text, so a reader would need two volumes to do a close comparison of the texts.

329 This has been considered above, on pages 54, 154, and 164.
In 1485, Andrea Torresani and Thomas de Blavis, offered a combined edition as a solution. In addition to the *de Oratore* with commentary, this edition includes Cicero’s *Topica, Partitiones Oratoriae, Brutus*, and *de Optimo Genere Oratorum*, Bonisoli’s *Oratio de Laudisbus Eloquentiae*; Quintus Cicero’s *Commentariolum Petitiones*; Aeschines’ *in Ctesiphontem*; and Demosthenes’ *de Corona*, the Greek texts translated by Leonardus Brunus Aretinus. The entire edition was edited by Hieronymus Squarzaficus, and while Cicero’s works are prominent and given pride of place, the emphasis here seems to be a synthesis of ancient rhetoric. The number of surviving copies is much higher than any earlier edition of *de Oratore*, with one-hundred six copies identified. This reflects the increasing output of the presses in the late 1470s. The book is large, two-hundred twelve folio leaves. A larger font is used for the *de Oratore* than for the commentary and other texts. This causes a variance in the number of lines per page with a range between fifty-seven and fifty-nine throughout the book. Six copies were consulted for this project. The Treviso copy is a fragment and does not contain any portion of the *de Oratore*. The copies at Columbia and Padova Seminario have neither filled initials nor marginalia of any kind. The Huntington copy is filled with marginalia and corrections, in both the commentary and Cicero’s text. This reader demonstrates the convenience of having both works on the same page for he continually emphasizes a point of Bonisoli’s comments by marking the coordinating word or phrase in Cicero’s text. The copy at Padova University contains a few notes that copy standard oratorical terms into the margins, but even these stop near the beginning of book two. These two copies, while widely different in the amount of marginalia present, demonstrate a more philological and rhetorical interest in the text.

In contrast, the Angelica copy contains more interesting evidence. While an annotator does add a handful of guide words to the margins, including proper nouns and “*humanitatis*,” he
also adds manicules at passages more directly related to the humanist program. At 1.128, Antonius lists the demands placed upon a person who would be called the ideal orator. “We have to demand the acumen of a dialectician, the thoughts of a philosopher, the words, I’d almost say, of a poet, the memory of a jurisconsult, the voice of a tragic performer, and the gestures close to those of a consummate actor. This is why nothing in the human race is more rarely to be found than a perfect orator.” 330 This passage speaks to the wide learning and cultivation of skills required for the ideal orator, and it reinforces the humanist resistance toward the narrow career preparation of the universities.

The annotator underlined sit eni mihitinctis litteris audierit at 2.85. Antonius details how he would encourage a potential orator based on his own natural ability and early training. He states:

For I would like to see him imbued with culture, he should have done some listening and reading, and have learned even those precepts that we have mentioned. I will examine in what respects his physical qualities meet the demands of appropriateness: what he can accomplish in terms of his voice, his strength, his breath, and his tongue. If I then come to the conclusion that he is capable of reaching the highest ranks, I shall not only encourage him to spare no effort, but, if he also impresses me as a good man, I shall even beg him to do so – so highly do I value the distinction that an eminent orator, who is also a good man, confers upon the entire community. 331

Of course, the annotator only underlined a short phrase, here translated, “For I would like to see him imbued with culture.” This imbuing can only be accomplished with a broad study of literature, and in Cicero’s day through the tirocinium fori. Antonius suggests that acquired culture and physical ability would be enough for him to encourage a student, but he also expects

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330 de Oratore 1.128, *In oratore autem acumen dialecticorum, sententiae philosophorum, verba prope poetarum, memoria iurisconsulorum, vox tragoedorum, gestus paene summorum actorum est requendus. Qua mob rem nihil in hominum genere rarius perfecto oratore inveniri potest.*

331 de Oratore 2.85, *Sit enim mihi tinctus litteris: audierit aliquid, legerit, ista ipsa praecepta acceperit: tentabo quid deceat, quid voce, quid viribus, quid spiritu, quid lingua efficere possit. Si intellegam posse ad summos pervenire, non solum hortabor, ut elaboret, sed etiam, si vir quoque bonus mihi videbitur esse, obserabo: tanto ego in excellenti oratore, et eodem viro bono, pono esse ornamenti universae civitati.*
to find this youth will be able to demonstrate himself to be a good man.\footnote{332}{This does not need to be understood as “pure” natural talent. The greatest Greek and Latin orators both trained to overcome a deficiency. Recall Demosthenes and his mouth full of pebbles. Cicero himself toured Asia to improve his stamina and breathing, as well as to study philosophy.} A moral improvement is an expected outcome of being “imbued with culture.” In this copy, the annotator is not exclusively interested in passages crucial to Cicero’s program, but he demonstrates that these passages are important and could be helpful in considering educational practices of the fifteenth century.\footnote{333}{The reader marked 1.200 and 203, and 2.117, but these passages offer more practical advice for an orator.}

Three years later, de Blavis reissued this volume on his own. He had worked on his own from 1476-1477 and produced five editions, disappeared for four years, then returned in 1481 sometimes printing in conjunction with Torresani. The 1488 edition is identical to the 1485 in terms of content and size, however the colophon lists only Thomas de Blavis and the date of May 16, 1488. Fifty copies survive, and five are analyzed here.

Both copies at the Marciana and the Huntington copy contain notes and guide words for the commentary. One copy at Padova University has many underlined passages in book one, but these stop abruptly in book two, while the other copy has only marked a few passages in the margins. Three of these copies have similarly marked passages and since there is some overlap, especially at 1.127-8, all will be considered in the order of Cicero’s text.

A reader of the Marciana’s first copy has marked 1.18-20 and 1.30. The first passage is part of Cicero’s preface, and he has listed all the skills required by a good orator. He then states,

Let us stop wondering, then, why there are so few eloquent speakers, seeing that eloquence depends on the combination of all these accomplishments, any one of which alone would be a tremendous task to perfect. Let us rather encourage our children, and all others whose fame and reputation are dear to us, to appreciate fully its enormous scope. They should not rely on the precepts or the teachers or the methods of practice in general use, but be confident that they can achieve their goals by means that are of a quite different order. It is at least my opinion that it will be impossible for anyone to be an orator endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, unless he has gained a knowledge of all
the important subjects and arts. For it is certainly from knowledge that a speech should blossom and acquire fullness: unless the orator has firmly grasped the underlying subject matter, his speech will remain an utterly empty, yes, almost childish verbal exercise.\footnote{de Oratore, 1.19-20, Qua mob rem mirari desinamus, quae causa sit eloquentium paucitatis, cum ex eis rebus universis eloquentium constet, quibus in singulis elaborare per magnum est: hortemurque potius liberos nostros, ceterosque, quorum Gloria nobis et dignitas cara est, ut animo rei magnitudinem complectantur, neque eis aut praecptis, aut magistris, aut exercitationibus, quibus utuntur omnes, sed alitis quibudam, se id, quod expetunt, consequi posse confidant. Ac, mea quidem sententia, nemo poterit esse omni laude cumulatus orator, nisi erit omnium rerum magnarum atque atriwm scientiam consecutus. Etenim ex rerum cognition efflorescat et redundet oportet oratio: quae, nisi subset res ab oratore percepta et cognita, inanem quamquam habet elocutionem, et paene puere.}

The next passage is the beginning of the dialogue and Crassus extols eloquence. He says, “I think nothing is more admirable than being able, through speech, to have a hold on human minds, to win over their inclinations, to drive them at will in one direction, and to draw them at will from another. It is this ability, more than anything else, that has ever flourished, ever reigned supreme in every free nation and especially in quiet and peaceful communities.”\footnote{de Oratore, 1.30, Neque vero mihi quidquam, inquit, praestabilius videtur, quam posse dicendo tenere hominum coetus, mentes allicere, voluntates impellere quo velit; unde autem velit, deducere. Haec una res in omni libero populo, maximeque in pacatis tranquillosque civitatibus, praceipue semper floruit, semperque dominate est.}

Crassus continues to restate Cicero’s claim that society itself was created by eloquence, and the orator is exalted above other men by his excellence in the very power that distinguishes man from beast.

This Marciana copy and the first copy from Padova University are marked at 1.116, the passage that notes the orator’s “huge burden and huge responsibility.”\footnote{See also page 156.} This passage continues as a discussion on the role of natural ability in producing the orator, and rarity of finding a man who has cultivated those abilities to the point of deserving the title of orator. Antonius concludes his speech, “For practitioners of these individual arts [dialectitians, philosophers, poets, jurisconsults, tragic performers and consummate actors] are respected if they have mastered their subjects to a moderate degree, but the orator cannot win respect unless he exhibits all of them at
the highest level.” These specific lines of text are marked in three of the 1488 editions, at Padova University, at the Marciana, and at the Huntington. Antonius’ speech at this point of book one is crucial for Cicero’s demands that the ideal orator cultivate a wide learning, and it is a principle embraced by humanism.

5.3.6 1495 Edition

In 1495, Philippus Pincius issued another edition of the de Oratore with the commentary of Bonisoli and the same rhetorical texts as the 1485 and 1488 editions, although this copy is in one-hundred thirty-two folio leaves with sixty to sixty-two lines per page. Fifty-four copies survive; three are considered here. The Padova University copy contains no evidence of readership. The Vicenza copy has some marks alongside the text in the first part of book one, but only at 1.36 is a complete passage underlined. Here, Scaevola challenges Crassus’ claim that orators created “civilization” by saying it must have been wise men who founded the state. Crassus’ reply fills the next thirty sections, 1.45-1.73, and he argues that wisdom without eloquence could never have achieved social and political unity. The annotator has only marked the part of Scaevola’s challenge, so it is not possible to determine whether he identifies this as a part of Cicero’s use of the dialogue genre to present justification for his program, or whether the annotator is marking this as the more reasonable interpretation of the creation of civil society.

The Huntington copy contains a few notes relating to the historical context of Plato’s Phaedrus as a model for Cicero. This annotator writes some guide words in the commentary as well. A second hand has drawn manicules at 2.301 and 2.363. These are platitudes: “For it is easier for the inexperienced to criticize stupid things you have said than to praise what you have

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337 de Oratore, 1.128, Quae enim singularum rerum artifices singular si mediocriter adepti sunt, probantur, ea, nisi omnia summa sunt in oratore, probari non possunt.
wisely left unsaid,” and “No one can attain the qualities of wisdom and eloquence without the
greatest devotion, exertion, and learning.” This second reader seems interested in neat, sound-
bites of the *de Oratore*’s message.

Another edition of these texts including the *de Oratore* with the commentary of Bonisoli
was issued in Nuremburg by Anton Koberger on March 26, 1497. Four copies were examined,
however, those at Columbia, the New York Public Library, and the Huntington contained no
evidence of readership and the Staatsbibliothek copy was only annotated by a much later hand.

The 1485, 1488, and 1495 editions of *de Oratore* with Bonisoli’s commentary
demonstrate that readers could use both texts together to engage with Cicero’s program.
Annotators were critical when reading the commentary, and their attention to its Latinity and
usage indicates an expectation that contemporary writers be held to the same standards as ancient
ones. In the sixteenth century, a select group developed this into Ciceronianism, an attempt to
imitate Cicero’s style and usage so carefully that only words found in his corpus were considered
acceptable. But readers also used these editions to engage the *de Oratore* directly, including
those passages that succinctly identify elements of Cicero’s program. Together, the text and
commentary explained ancient theories of oratory, and readers marked significant topics with
guide words, whether found in Cicero or Bonisoli. Usually, greater evidence of readership is
found in the *de Oratore* than in the other treatises and speeches collated in these editions, but that
could be because the *de Oratore* appeared first. The publishers meant for it to attract buyers, and
this must have been why most copies were sold. A lack of reader notes in the subsequent texts
could indicate fatigue and not disinterest in these texts, but *de Oratore*’s placement and readers’

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338 *de Oratore*, 2.301, *homines enim imperiti facilius quod stulte diceris reprehendere quam quod sapienter tacueris
laudare possunt*; and 2.363, *neminem sapientiae laudem et eloquentiae sine summo studio et labore et
doctrina consequi posse*.

339 Erasmus writes vehemently against this in *Ciceronianus*, 1528.
interest indicated it was considered most important within the volumes on ancient oratory. *de Oratore* did not appear alone in its final incunable edition nor as printed by the Aldine Press. However, these later editions moved away from a survey of ancient oratory and make Cicero as author more prominent.

5.3.7 First Ciceronian Opera, 1498-99

Alexander Minutianus produced the first four-volume *Opera* of Cicero’s works in Milan in the final years of the fifteenth century. The rhetorical works constitute volume one and include Plutarch’s biography of the author followed by a list of contents with *carta* numbers for all four volumes. Here is the table for the rhetorical volume:

| Tum Rhetoricos Cómentarios ad Herennium: quos Ciceronis similiter non putamus in quatuor libros distributos | car. .1. |
| Rhetoricos libros de Inventione duos. | car. .21. |
| De Oratore libros tres. | car. .42. |
| De Perfecto Oratore librum unum. | car. 79. |
| De Claris Oratoribus librum unum. | car. .90. |
| Topicorum librum unum. | car. .105. |
| De Partitione Oratoria Dialogum unum. | car. 109. |
| De Optimo genere Oratorum librum unum. | car. 116. |
| Aeschinis Accusationem contra Chtesiphontem. | car. 117. |
| Demosthenis Defensionem adversus Aeschinem pro Chtesiphonte. | car. 126. |
| Victorini enerrationem in Rhetoricos De Inventione | car. 138. |

The three works not by, or about, Cicero can be explained. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had been attributed to Cicero until the middle of the fifteenth century, and it expresses the most complete theory of Latin rhetoric available. The speeches of Aeschines and Demosthenes are interesting as they provide both opposing speeches from the same case. Usually, as with Cicero’s speeches, only one side has survived. These are included for that demonstration, since Cicero’s speeches will appear in volume two.

These volumes are large, printed on imperial sheets in folio, and sixty-three copies survive. Four were examined for this study. One copy at the Huntington contains no reader
marks, and the Morgan copy contains a single manicule at 2.89 where Antonius recalls encouraging Sulpicius to take Crassus as a model for imitation. The other two copies contain several guide words and a few notes that are interesting. The Ravenna copy is marked by three hands. The red ink copies phrases into the margins at 1.21 and 1.28. The latter passage was underlined in the second Huntington copy. The attention that this passage receives in the fifteenth century editions is considerable. Readers are drawn to mark the section that indicates the orator’s wide range of skills and how rare it is to discover a true orator in society. If the humanists imagine themselves to be the heirs of Cicero’s orator, it is not surprising that contemporary readers would find value in this bit of the text.

5.4  *de Oratore* and the Aldine Press

Aldus Manutius may be the most well-known printer of the early modern period. Recently his works have been much studied and celebrated at the 500th anniversary of his death on February 6, 1515. He is known especially for his Greek first editions, typefaces in four languages, and popularizing the octavo size for classical texts. The business he built with his partners experienced great longevity, with his heirs carrying on the business for a century from the time Aldus established it. The press produced twelve editions of *de Oratore*, as a part of Cicero’s rhetorical works, from 1514 to 1583. Aldus’ humanist convictions and business acumen made him a very good printer and shaped the way Cicero’s *de Oratore* is understood.

5.4.1  Aldus Manutius

Life before his Venetian press is not well documented. Aldus was born near Rome c.1450. He speaks of studying Latin there under Gaspare da Verona, from whose biography of

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340 See above, pages 50 and 103.
341 The following discussion on Aldus’ life draws on Lowry’s biography.
Paul II we first hear of Sweynheym and Pannartz. Aldus also demonstrated sympathy with the attitudes of Andrea Bussi in his 1495 preface to Theocritus. Both men claimed that printed texts, because of their wider circulation, contributed more to scholarship and the purity of classical authors than manuscripts could. There is no evidence that Aldus met or read Bussi’s prefaces while in Rome, so it is possible that this connection was made later. In any case, Aldus did not attempt a printing career as soon as he reached maturity in Rome, but instead pursued his studies in Ferrara and Carpi, while serving as tutor to Alberto and Lionello Pio, nephews of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. His commitment to Greek likely developed at the grammar school in Ferrara. It had been started by Guarino Veronese after he studied Greek in Byzantium and personally searched for manuscripts in that language. By the late 1470s, when Aldus arrived in Ferrara, the school was run by his son Battista Guarino, whose *de Ordine Docendi et Studendi* set out a program for humanist education that considered Greek and Latin language as twin pillars for true knowledge. Battista certainly left a mark on Aldus for the latter dedicates the 1495 Theocritus to the Greek master. Throughout the 1480s, Aldus enjoyed the patronage of the Pio family and is known by Pico and other first rate humanists. His choice to move to Venice to start a Greek press requires some explanation.

Martin Lowry suggests that Aldus made this career change and moved to Venice for two reasons. First, Aldus was committed to the humanist belief that literature improves character, so the more literature to be read, the more characters can be improved. Universal literacy and more expansive educations were ideals among many circles of humanists, and Aldus must have seen his opportunity to print as a way to extend his role as a teacher. A commitment to students

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342 Bussi most clearly makes these arguments in his preface to the 1469 Aulus Gellius.

of the liberal arts is clearly demonstrated in his prefaces. In his first edition, the 1495 Grammar of Constantine Lascaris, Aldus writes, “We have decided to devote our whole life to benefiting mankind. God is my witness that I wish nothing more than to help humanity; which our past life, wherever we have lived, demonstrates, and we hope will demonstrate still further, since that is our wish, as long as we live in this vale of tears full of misery. I shall certainly try to the best of my ability to be helpful at all times.”

He sees his project as of benefit to all humanity. In his second edition, he requests students of literature to freely purchase his works to enable him to continue producing. “So accept this little book, though it is not free; but give me the money so that for my part I may furnish you with all the best Greek books. If you give, I certainly will; I am unable to print without substantial funds…without money it is not possible for you to have a good supply of what you particularly desire, and we for our part continue to work at with great toil and expense.”

Aldus recognizes the importance of Greek literature, and that he is filling a gap in the market. In his third preface, to Aristotle’s Organon, he writes, “Greek books are much sought after by everyone. As there is a surprising shortage of them, I hope, with the help of Jesus Christ, to be able to remedy this great scarcity soon — not however without great personal inconvenience, difficulty and expenditure of time; but one must support students of


345 Wilson, 9 and 11, ἐλαµβάνετ᾽ οὖν τοῦτο βιβλίον, οὐ προῖκα μέντοι, δότε δὲ χρήματα, ἵνʼ ἔχω καὶ αὐτὸς πορίζοντας ὑμῖν πᾶσας τὰς Ἑλλήνων ἀπίστας βιβλίους, καὶ οὕτως, εἴ δοθέτε, δόσω, ὅτι οὐκ ἔχω ἐντυπμόν αὖν χρημάτων πολλῶν…καὶ τοῖς χρημάτων ἀνενοῦν δυνατον εὑπορεῖν ών ὑμεῖς μὲν υπερβαλόντως ἐφίεσθε, αὐτοὶ δὲ πολλῷ μόχθῳ καὶ δαπάνῃ πεπονηκότεο διατελοίμεν.
Aldus sees himself as successful in these goals, even if his work is exhausting. In 1496, his seventh year of printing work, he acknowledges his difficulties as well as his success:

“That my plan is splendid and of great values everyone declares in a chorus of praise and enthusiasm. It may indeed be so; but I have found a way to torture myself through my desire to help you and supply good books…My wish has in fact been granted: Greek books are now on offer everywhere and are being sent for sale to the book dealers.”

In addition to his commitment to teaching the liberal arts, Aldus had the business sense to realize that he had a mostly open market in Venice. He would be able to enter the city’s rapidly expanding print industry with new ideas and benefit from partnership with already successful firms. Other cities, especially Florence, would have been more comfortable choices if Aldus had been only thinking in terms of Greek scholarship and humanist idealism. His partnership with Torresani and his ability to ride out the hardships of plagiarism and war indicate that Aldus learned to be a very capable entrepreneur, and he must have had some economic foresight to make Venice his choice. By 1490, Aldus left the comfort and patronage of life as a teacher and was in Venice making business contacts, searching for premises, and securing financial capital.

In 1493, Andrea Torresani published Aldus’ *Institutiones Grammaticae*. It seems that the two men were working together provisionally at this time. Aldus needed capital to develop a quality Greek font, which was more complicated than ones used for printing with the Roman alphabet. A choice needed to be made as to whether the breathing marks and other punctuations would be attached to letters, or entirely separate pieces. The former would be more expensive at

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346 Wilson, 13, *Graeci libri vehementer ab omnibus inquiruntur; quorum quia mira paucitas est, ego adiuvante Christo Iesu spero me brevi effecturum, ut consulam tantae inopiae – nec tamen sine meo magno incommode et labore et tactura temporis; sed succurrencium est studiosis bonarum litterarum.*

347 Wilson, 27 and 29, *Pulcherrimum utilissimumque esse inventum nostrum omnes uno ore dicunt, laudant, praedicant: sit ita certe; invent tamen ipse quo excrucier modo, dum vobis prodesse cupio bonosque libros suppeditare…Sum equidem voti compos: iam passim offeruntur utro Graeca volumina mittunturque venalia ad bibliopolas.*
the outset, requiring more characters to be cut. The latter would require greater spacing between lines, costing more in paper and lengthening print times. Aldus was able to experiment with both, and he secured the services of Francesco Griffo to cut these fonts as well as ten others before he left Aldus’ shop in 1502. To be able to print in Greek in 1495, Aldus would have required capital for several years prior, and the resulting partnership with Torresani and Pierfrancesco Barbarigo, nephew of the Doge, suggests that the three were working together before signing a formal contract in 1495.

5.4.2 **Aldine Developments**

Over the course of his time at the helm of the press, Aldus achieved three accomplishments that would directly impact the *de Oratore*. Aldus’ partnership with Torresani and Barbarigo was a great departure from the networks of personal patronage and dependence that sustained early Venetian printing houses, and its sophistication allowed the press to survive the turmoil of the early sixteenth century. The early investments in creating types, establishing the print shop with its laborers, and securing and editing texts were great. Aldus needed to produce quality works that would sell at profit to satisfy his partners. He did this well, and by the opening of the sixteenth century was printing in four languages at the highest capacity experienced in his lifetime. His greatest year of production was 1502, when he produced seventeen editions. From 1501-503, a period that witnessed a great economic contraction as a result of a war with France and an increased Turkish threat, Aldus produced forty editions, doubling the output of his closest competitors.348 During the 1490s, much of the partnership’s resources had gone into developing typefaces, so that by the first years of the sixteenth century they were prepared to devote all their assets toward publishing. This allowed the Aldine Press to

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become its most prolific at the same time that his competitors were struggling to stay in business. Later, Aldus would need to leave Venice during a period of war that stretched from 1506 to 1512. However, Aldus and Torresani managed to preserve the company so that Aldus could return and print again through his death in 1515.

After he passed, first Torresani and then Aldus’ son took over the press and editorial tasks for his father. Paulus, like his father, combined the roles of scholar and printer from 1533 to his death in 1574. He is especially known for his expertise on Cicero. Aldus the younger ran the press from 1574 to his own death in 1597 and struggled with the financial difficulties of the final years of the press. The sons profited from their father and grandfather’s partnership and Aldus’ European-wide reputation as the producer of fine classical texts.

In addition to the strong business structure, Aldus left his mark on the classical text as an object. He began using an italic script and popularized the octavo format with his 1501 edition of Virgil’s *Opera*. Some have attributed these changes to an attempt to economize the book by making it more compact with more words on each page. However, there is no contemporary evidence that Aldine octavos cost much less than their quarto-sized counterparts. Instead, Aldus attempted to capture contemporary handwriting and the respectability of the manuscript. His smaller format matched his desire to put more books in more places. The octavo could literally travel outside the study or off the lecture podium. Aldus stripped away contemporary commentaries, allowing the purity of the ancients to speak for themselves. His text and the size of his margins conveyed an expansiveness that invited the reader to converse directly with the text. This format became widely popular, and Aldus was unsuccessful in curtailing plagiarism even with the monopolies he secured. This format was desired across Europe, and collectors across the continent and in England distinguished their Aldines from their other printed editions.
Aldus printed the *de Oratore* for the first, and last, time in 1514. He issued it as part of a collection of all Cicero’s rhetorical treatises, but without any commentary and in the quarto, not octavo size. Aldus often used the quarto when presenting new material, and he may have chosen this size since this was his first time to present Cicero’s rhetorical works. He did use his italic script, and Torresani used this model again in 1521 and 1533. By 1546 when Paulus issued these titles for the first time, he uses the popular, and now iconic, octavo format, and the *de Oratore* was printed in this way for the rest of Paulus’ leadership of the press, in 1550, 1554, 1559, 1563, 1564, and 1569. When Aldus the younger printed Cicero’s *Opera* in 1583, he used the folio format, making room for the *opera omnia* and his own works of scholarship.

5.4.3 The Aldus and Torresani Editions of 1514, 1521, and 1533

Aldus printed a complete collection of Cicero’s rhetorical works, including *Rhetorica ad Herennium, de Inventione, de Oratore, Brutus, Orator, Topica, de Partitione Oratoria* and *de Optimo Genere Oratorum* in a single volume in quarto format in 1514. No other works appear, demonstrating that Cicero’s authorship is the organizing factor here. He dedicates this volume to the editor, Andrea Navagero, and the letter appears after his title page with the anchored dolphin imprint. Aldus begins by complaining about how many people demand his time, either by writing letters or dropping by the shop. He claims he needs a Hercules to lift his burden that he may rest as Atlas had. Fortunately, Navagero served as Aldus’ Atlas by editing Cicero’s works, first this rhetorical collection and later the epistles and philosophical works. Aldus praises Navagero’s work claiming that he uses ancient manuscripts to achieve the purest reading.

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349 In the years between Minutius’ *Opera* and Aldus’ edition, the *de Oratore* was printed in 1502, 1509, and 1511. The Giunti also published a rhetorical collection in 1514 that excludes the *de Inventione*. 
Aldus then explicitly states that the purpose of the dedicatory letter is for all the readers, not just the addressee, so that the publisher can make a case for the book. “The reason is not to instruct him [the addressee] (that would be quite arrogant) but to allow him to be an advocate for our work and be a judge of it; another reason is to give those who are ignorant of the subject (for we always wish to be of help) the opportunity to learn from us.” Aldus likens this situation to when Phormio addressed Hannibal, an anecdote Cicero records at *de Oratore* 2.76. Aldus claims that Phormio was not obtuse but seeking judgment on his eloquence from the most expert critic in the known world. Aldus calls Hannibal “cruel” for saying that Phormio raved like a crazy old man and is surprised that Cicero does not pass the same judgment on Hannibal. Still, Aldus is confident that Navagero will not be like Hannibal, but will understand the following summary of the book’s contents in the interest of their readers, and not as any instruction to Navagero personally. Aldus briefly offers the contents of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *de Inventione* before turning to *de Oratore*. He concludes with a summary of all the other works, but it should be noted that he has more to say about *de Oratore* than all seven other works combined. In this way, Aldus acknowledges the *de Oratore* as the central treatise for understanding Cicero’s views on oratory, and he relegates all the other texts that were written before and after to the role of supplementary material. Since the contents of *de Oratore* have been considered above in chapter two, here only Aldus’ analysis of the work will be quoted. The three books of the *de Oratore* “were so learned, brilliant, eloquent and wide ranging that Cicero, who surpassed all others in the rest of his works, in these surpassed himself.”

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351 Grant, 127, *adeo doctos, ingeniosos, elegantes, copiosos composuit, ut qui in aliis libris semper omnes, in his se ipsum Cicero superaverit.*
and also quotes from Cicero’s letters to explain what Cicero thought about his own literary choices. After summarizing all three books, Aldus concludes, “In these books Cicero seems to have followed the rich material in the works of Aristotle and not some jejune handbooks on the arts of orators.”

Aldus’ interpretation of the *de Oratore* is not particularly original. It has already been made clear that humanists had elevated the text as a crucial exemplar for their own program. But with the rise of editions that collate rhetorical texts, whether just Cicero’s or an assortment of authors, Aldus’ comments ensure that the reader understands the significance of *de Oratore* among these other texts. Anyone who read the dedication, even without any other knowledge of Cicero’s rhetorical works, would understand that Cicero is the greatest authority on eloquence and the *de Oratore* is the fullest expression of his views.

After his death in 1515, Torresani ran the press and re-issued the rhetorical texts in 1521 and 1533. The editions are essentially the same, except that by 1533 Paulus Manutius has come of age and is ready to take over the press and leave his mark. He writes a short letter to the reader to this effect and inserts it just before the start of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

### 5.4.4 Paulus Manutius: 1546, 1550, 1554, 1559, 1563, 1564, and 1569

Paulus had only been two when his father died. He studied Latin in Venice and became known as a Ciceronian scholar by the time he was ready to lead the press. After establishing control over his Torresani uncles in the early 1530s, Paulus endeavored to return the press to the prestige it had enjoyed during his father’s lifetime. He turned to his own favorite author and republished Cicero’s rhetorical works in 1546, but he makes a few changes to the format of the

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352 For example, he writes at *ad Atticum* 4 that he imitated the *Phaedrus* when having Scaevola leave after the first book’s conversation.

353 Grant, 131-133, *In his libris non ieiunas rhetorum artes, sed locupletissimos Aristotelis libros secutus videtur Cicero.*
Paulus prints Cicero in the octavo size, a choice very much in line with his father’s efforts to make classical texts more portable. The octavo size has also become a hallmark of the press’ heyday under Aldus, so Paulus is likely conscious that his readers will recognize and value the 1546 edition as they had the octavos of the early sixteenth century. Paulus also adjusts the order of how the texts are printed. Possibly, this is out of practicality, since the smaller format means that each title requires more leaves of print. Although the titles were sold together as a single edition and appear as such in modern bibliographies, Paulus prints in four parts assigning each its own collation. Part one contains the Rhetorica ad Herennium, “De arte Rhetorica,” Topica and de Partitione Oratoria; part two, a preface by Paulus and the de Oratore; part three, Brutus: and part four, Orator and de Optimo Genere Oratorum. Paulus ends each part with a registrum, colophon, and the anchored dolphin device and begins the next part with a new title page of contents and his device. Probably this was to clearly mark all parts as the authentic works of the press, even if they were to be separated by a buyer. What is interesting, is that the very first title page does not reflect the changes that Paulus has made to the order of the titles. He maintains the same order that Aldus had used in the 1514, 1521, and 1533 editions, which had Topica and de Partitione Oratoria at the end of the volume. This cannot be oversight, because Paulus has changed the size of the page and uses a more elaborate printer’s device on this title page than was used in the earlier editions. He does not just copy his father’s layout. Further, he continues to use this title page in his six subsequent editions of these works. Surely the opportunity existed to adjust the title page to reflect the contents, if that had been important to Paulus.

Instead, Paulus uses this to preserve his father’s understanding of the place of the de
Oratore within Cicero’s works. Aldus’ preface is not reprinted, but by maintaining the order of Aldus’ title page, Paulus signals to the reader that after the handbooks on rhetoric are understood, a student of Cicero should turn his attention to the de Oratore. Paulus further emphasizes its importance by writing his own preface that appears before the de Oratore. This preface is not as long as Aldus’ and does not attempt to summarize the entire rhetorical corpus. Instead, it draws comparisons between the tumultuous first century BCE and Counter-Reformation Europe, and declares that Ciceronian eloquence as presented in the de Oratore is as important for the sixteenth century as it had been during Cicero’s life. By using his father’s octavo format and the order of contents on the title page, Paulus maintains continuity with his father’s work and with his interpretation of the de Oratore as part of the rhetorical works. Then, by replacing his father’s preface with his own, Paulus creates a place for his own scholarship. This is the balance Paulus desires, between his father’s legacy and his own academic ambition.

5.4.5 The “Alternative” 1569 Volume

Paulus printed seven editions of these rhetorical works, with each of the four parts able to be sold separately. All maintained his preface and the discrepancy between the order of titles listed and as they were actually printed. In 1569, Paulus also issued an alternative version of the latter four texts. This combined the texts from parts two, three, and four of the rhetorical works into a single part two. The title page lists de Oratore, de Optimo Genere Oratorum, and de Claris Oratoribus with Paulus’ name, the anchored dolphin device and “VENETIIS, ∞ D. LXIX.” However, again the actual contents are different. He prints his dedication, de Oratore, but then Brutus, the unlisted Orator, and de Optimo Genere Oratorum. The works are printed in the same order as they had been in the four-part version, but the title page is inaccurate. This entire edition is something of an anomaly. It does not replace parts two, three, and four of the
1546 edition, but is printed in addition to it. Perhaps Paulus imagined that some of his buyers would want a single volume that contained the three major dialogues that Cicero had written on oratory, and it is something of an interesting coincidence that he chooses to do so on the one hundredth anniversary of Sweynheym and Pannartz’s edition of these combined treatises. But he does not drop *de Optimo Genere Oratoria* from the collection. But if this is the case, why exclude *Orator* from the title page? And why change its order? This version of the text does not appear again, so it is possible that a mistake was made and Paulus did not want to shoulder the costs of reprinting a title page. Economic strain was very evident just a few years later, after Aldus the younger inherited the business from his father, and sought a buyer for his grandfather’s library. Whatever the reason for this discrepancy, this alternative version of the four oratorical treatises can still be understood as a complement to the first part of the 1546 edition as reprinted in 1569, and the inclusion of Paulus’ prefaces ensured that the *de Oratore* enjoyed its privilege regardless of which format the reader chooses, two-part or four.

5.4.6 **Aldus the Younger and Cicero’s *Opera*, 1583**

Paulus died in 1574 and his son Aldus took over management of the press. Aldus the younger printed Cicero’s rhetorical works only once, in 1583, as part of a series that includes the entire *Opera*. These appear in two volumes and follow the division and order of the two-part edition Paulus had printed. However, Aldus uses a folio format, and prints many of the texts alongside new commentaries. Only the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *Brutus* appear on their own. Aldus’ choices to include six commentaries and use the folio do not reflect his grandfather’s vision of airy volumes and the purity of the ancient authors. The rhetorical volumes appear with the philosophical treatises, making this the only Aldine edition of Cicero’s *Opera*. It is unclear why he would choose to move away from the elements that so clearly
defined the press’ earlier editions, but he may have been desperate for any boost to his sales. A letter of 1580 from the Mantuan ambassador describes Aldus’ library as “one of the most beautiful libraries which a scholar could desire, even if he were a prince.” But Aldus was never able to sell, and at his death the 1,907 volumes were appropriated by the Vatican for only a partial settlement of his debts. This edition of the rhetorical works is of interest because it demonstrates an effort to unite all Cicero’s writings. If the variance in form can be attributed to an attempt to entice buyers by offering the new commentaries, then it would seem the financial structure that allowed the press to survive the first years of the sixteenth century could not be replicated at the end. Humanist ideals of aesthetic, mobility, and conversing with the ancients directly had to be sacrificed in the effort to increase the circulation of literature, and to increase income. Aldus the younger did not succeed in revitalizing the press in this atmosphere, and the company ended at his death.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter presents quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the first century of printed editions of the de Oratore. The more concrete evidence of when, where, and occasionally how many copies of each edition appeared in the fifteenth century is paired with analysis of evidence of readership in surviving copies. Although not every surviving copy could be considered for this study, patterns emerge to indicate how the de Oratore was read and understood during the Quattrocentro. In the first five years of print in Italy, five distinct editions of the de Oratore appeared. The first three came from Rome or its environs, two by Sweynheym and Pannartz and one by Ulrich Han; then Vindelinus de Spria and Christopher Valdarfer each print an edition in Venice. For Sweynheym and Pannartz, Han, and Valdarfer, the de Oratore

354 Lowry, Aldus, 60.
was the first substantial book to come off the press.

After this flurry, there was a cooling off period in these cities. Editions of *de Oratore* appeared in Naples c.1475 and in Milan in 1477. Another Venetian printer took on the text in 1478. All eight of these editions presented the text with little editorial intervention. Sweynheym and Pannartz prepared *Brutus* and *Orator* to be sold with the 1469 edition, and some of these publishers included colophons to demonstrate Cicero’s right to the title of *pater eloquentiae*. No editor prepared a preface with introduction to the text, nor were any commentary or guide words included. (The latter practice was not a possibility until marginal printing becomes possible.)

In 1485, a *de Oratore* appeared in a very different format. Ognibene Bonisoli’s 1476 commentary surrounded Cicero’s text and an assortment of materials on ancient rhetoric were printed with it. This format was printed in Venice in 1485, 1488, and 1495, and in Nuremberg in 1497. Possibly, the format reflected the kinds of texts being produced for the legal and medical curricula. In Venice, Nicholas Jenson had created a printing powerhouse by catering to these markets in the 1470s. There were also more surviving copies of the three Venetian editions than can be found of the earlier incunables. This suggests that not only had there been a change of format, but an increase in production from the 1470s to 1480s.

At the end of the century, the first, four-volume collection of Cicero’s *Opera* was presented in Milan. This large and beautiful edition presented the rhetorical works first, then Cicero’s orations, philosophical treatises, and letters. The publisher removed the commentary but did include Plutarch’s biography of Cicero’s life at the start of volume one.

The *de Oratore* was vital for the humanist program, and the Italian presses were the only ones producing it in the fifteenth century (except for the 1497 edition printed in Nuremberg). The text most fully represented humanist values when it appeared without commentary, allowing
the Renaissance reader to directly engage the classical author. Those editions which crowded Cicero’s text with commentary and the works of other authors seemed to be more influenced by the Venetian university markets than by humanist sensibilities. When Aldus, the Venetian printer most closely associated with humanist classicism, printed *de Oratore* for the first time, he returned to the forms of the earlier texts.

Readership evidence reinforces the *de Oratore*’s significance in articulating humanist ideals. Of course, some copies contain no evidence at all, but the others demonstrate that readers of printed material still look to emend errors and identify elements of ancient rhetoric. More significantly, readers engaged with those parts of the text that most succinctly state the aims shared by Cicero and the humanists, especially the importance of broad learning, including philosophy, and of education in producing leaders equipped for civic engagement. That the text was produced so frequently in the fifteenth century and readers demonstrated overlapping engagement with many such passages clearly indicate that the *de Oratore* is the Ciceronian text for Italian humanists.

Aldus continued this tradition into the sixteenth century, when print became a more widely accessible technology and humanist priorities began to be incorporated into the curriculum. He made Cicero’s authorship of primary importance by producing a volume of all Ciceronian rhetoric without interference of contemporary commentary. His italic script preserved the humanist handwriting and the octavo format freed scholarship from the traditional confines of the lecture podium. His preface reasserted the role of the *de Oratore* as the most important of Cicero’s texts, and the exclusion of other writers made Cicero’s authorship paramount. Aldus would not have readers studying ancient oratory, but Ciceronian oratory instead. His other editions of Ciceronian philosophy and letters struck a balance between the
Aldine aesthetic and the significance of authorship.

If humanist ideals of individualism created the modern author, the technology of print played an integral role. Aldus’ own efforts to increase the volumes of classical literature to encourage greater scholarship contributed to the wider circulation of ancient texts. Within a few decades of the advent of print in Italy, publishers would have had access to an overwhelming number of titles. Although some collections were arranged by subject, Aldus, the first scholar-printer, chooses to work within the corpus of a single writer. This elevates authorship as an element of textual criticism, further elevating Cicero’s role as the father of eloquence, and even the father of humanism.

6 CONCLUSIONS

This project demonstrates the significance of Cicero’s *de Oratore* to the history of western educational ideals. Analysis of the *de Oratore* within its first century context demonstrates the unique cultural ideal that Cicero creates. Cicero’s conceptualization of rhetoric does reflect the instruction of his day, as evidenced by a comparison between the *de Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. However, Cicero does not write about rhetorical instruction and practice in the *de Oratore*. Instead he constructs a vision of the orator in full possession of *humanitas*. This man leads the state with *auctoritas*, speaks in all settings with persuasive power, spends his leisure further refining his intellect, and is an *exemplum* for all others in *dignitas* and *liberalitas*. This model works for Republican Rome and is proven with Cicero’s own life and successes. However, despite modern perceptions of the superiority of his Latin prose style or the profundity of his circulating texts, Cicero did not enjoy an unbroken reign as *pater eloquentia* from his death to the modern age.
Rather, at various moments different individuals made very conscious efforts to revive *de Oratore*’s ideal for their own socio-political contexts. First, Quintilian seeks out Ciceronian models in his oratorical curriculum. He presents Cicero as the classical alternative to the rhetorical excesses of his day and saves the Ciceronian corpus from a fate determined by Cicero’s perceived failures in relation to the political turmoil surrounding the end of Roman Republicanism. Quintilian enables the *de Oratore* and Cicero’s speeches to become an oratorical model during the empire, and it is thus chosen again by Augustine in the late fourth century. For the bishop of Hippo, Ciceronian oratory is the only viable option for Christian speakers because Cicero had imbued his model with wisdom. Augustine adjusts the definition of wisdom to reflect the infallibility of Scripture, ensuring Ciceronian oratory finds a place in Christian education in medieval society.

Together these moments of reception and adaptation enabled the Ciceronian ideal to survive antiquity and inspire renaissances in the Carolingian and early modern periods. Lupus of Ferrières could use the *de Oratore* to imagine the possibility of an intellectual courtier in the service of the Holy Roman Emperor. His textual scholarship helped the *de Oratore* to remain available throughout the medieval period, and copies circulated to Italy by the thirteenth century. The activities of humanists conformed to its ideal. Even Bruni’s reading program, recorded just after the Laudensis manuscript is discovered in 1421, reflects Ciceronian principles while praising the *de Oratore*’s author. This vision of education was central to the work of the humanists, and it is for this reason that the first Italian printing house chose *de Oratore* for its inaugural run.

The work of Sweynheym and Pannartz, and then of Aldus Manutius, guaranteed the primacy of the *de Oratore* in the Ciceronian corpus. They featured this text as pivotal to
understanding Cicero’s conceptualization of oratory, which is to say Classical Latin rhetoric. This text continued to enjoy significance throughout the sixteenth century, although later it was overshadowed by scholars who focus on either Cicero’s speeches or philosophical texts. In fact, nineteenth century scholarship was cool toward Cicero in general. More recently, the *de Oratore* has enjoyed scholarly attention, especially in relation to its late Republican context, but less so its transmission or role in broader conversations about the history of education in the west.

Instead of considering the *de Oratore* as a singular part of the rhetorical works of Cicero, this project argues that it is central to understanding Cicero’s *auctoritas* at any point after his death. Cicero’s efforts at self-fashioning through the polishing and publication of his speeches were not enough to have these texts appear as part of the rhetorical curriculum. Nor was his style favored immediately following his death. He was relegated in histories and by literary critics for political and moral failures. There is no reason to grant him the title *pater eloquentia* for over a century after his assassination, and without the vision created in *de Oratore* there is no expectation that Quintilian would have turned to Cicero as an alternative to the more popular style of his day. The *Institutio Oratoria* is a curriculum for the Ciceronian ideal as understood in the imperial context of the late first century CE. Cicero’s speeches or distinctive style do not explain Quintilian’s attraction to the Republican statesman. It is the vision of a man in possession of true *humanitas* that is invoked by the *Institutio Oratoria*.

What Cicero accomplishes in his dialogue is not replicated by any other text in antiquity. The work of Quintilian or Augustine does not rival the *de Oratore*, but demonstrates how Cicero’s vision continues to be relevant over the course of time. By the fifteenth century, no other text could work to initiate a program of humanist printing as the *de Oratore* does. Its role
in western conceptualizations of education is secured by its universal applicability. Cicero does not adhere to a specific philosophical school or religion. The vision can be applied in any setting where broad learning acquired through practical study for the cultivation of a distinct group is desired. This allows the ideal orator to function across various settings and periods, including the eras of Protestantism and secularization not considered here. The *de Oratore* and its ideal run through western discourses of education and culture.

The advent of print marks a radical change for western construction of knowledge. While print technology does not instantly revolutionize reading practices, democratization of learning and authorship become increasingly possible as a result of Gutenberg’s invention. This study has touched on the role of the author in the earliest days of printing, and there is more work to be done in this area.

Renaissance conceptions of the author were crafted through the value placed on the individual. Barthes suggests that actually, authorship is created during the early modern period. “The author is a modern figure, a product of our society insofar as, emerging from the Middle Ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual, of, as it is more nobly put, the ‘human person’.”355 The thinking of Barthes and Foucault has shaped contemporary ideas about the distinctness between the person of the author and the author-function, and what genres or subjects require an author for the construction of authority. It seems that the role of print technology is central in this history, and the editorial choices of the earliest publishers are crucial for understanding changes in the conceptualizations of authorship. Cahn, in *Opera Omnia: The Production of Cultural Authority,* insists that authority is created by the notion of collected works and that this is a

post-Gutenberg phenomenon. In this sense, it is editors who make authors, rather than texts. It is in the reprinting of works that authority is created. However, Cahn is not especially concerned with the changes from manuscript culture to one of print, nor with the behaviors and choices of early printers when they construct opera for classical authors.

In particular, the present study demonstrates that some texts became commonly understood mainly in relation to their appearing in print alongside other works by the same author. Sweynheym and Pannartz show a distinct preference for printing collected works by classical authors, whenever this is feasible. Their second printing of the de Oratore is collected with Brutus and Orator, reflecting its position as first among Cicero’s treatises on oratory. Although some other groupings are used in fifteenth century editions that include the de Oratore, collections that prioritize authorship prevail. Cahn claims that bibliographical studies of opera omnia are lacking, and it seems this earliest period of print may be significant in understanding the format’s function in creating authority. If modern authors hope to be preserved in collected works to achieve equal status to ancient authors, then we need to understand how and why classical texts were presented in this form in the early days of print. The de Oratore adheres to this pattern and may prove helpful in analyzing modern notions of authorship and the significance of opera omnia. In what ways are publishers breaking with manuscript culture and how are they absorbing the practices of readers and collectors from the pre-print era? Does this change the meaning of a text, like the de Oratore, that has shaped cultural perceptions for a millennium and a half?
Primary


Secondary


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