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Introduction

“SO THIS, THEN, IS MY LIFE. Everyday I read or write something.”¹ This notice, almost absurd in its vagueness, begins the last section of Cicero’s letter to his friend Papirius Paetus, composed towards the end of year 46. There are no letters to Atticus between November of 46 and March of 45, when Cicero, still in deep mourning for his daughter, left Atticus’ house for Astura. This reference to writing, then, may be the only surviving mention in the correspondence of the composition of the protreptic dialogue *Hortensius*.² We lack circumstantial information about the composition, the kind of detail that we often find in the correspondence with Atticus and that reveals so much about Cicero’s compositional process (decisions about the title, the dialogue speakers, and the dedication, as well as requests that Atticus check a reference in a book and consultations about the translation of Greek terminology). This lack is more than matched by the dismembered state of the little that survives of the work itself. But the text was crucial to Cicero’s philosophical activity during the difficult years of Caesar’s domination, and it is equally important to our attempts to come to terms with the corpus of writings that he produced during those years, a corpus overwhelming in its ambition and sheer size, hailed as a triumph of the spirit by some and condemned (or pitied) as a failure by others.³

Cicero returned to the *Hortensius* many times in the prefaces to other philosophical works, for it was there that he had made his case for philosophy in the broadest terms.⁴ The dialogue inaugurated what has often been called Cicero’s philosophical encyclopedia, a systematic attempt to present the major areas of Greek philosophical thought, reconceived, reworked, and rearranged with an elite Roman reader in mind. That this massive project was very much a product of its author’s particular circumstances is beyond doubt. On the most basic level, Cicero’s forced retirement from politics as a result of Caesar’s new order is what enabled the production of this—the largest—portion of the *philosophica* by giving him the unoccupied time that he desperately wanted to put to use. But more importantly, the very fact of Caesar’s new position, and the destructive

¹ *sic igitur vivitur. cottidie aliquid legitur aut scribitur* (*Fam.* 9.26.4; SB 197).

² On the date, see Ruch 1958b.35–37 and Bringmann 1971.90–93.

³ Steinmetz 1990 provides a useful overview of Cicero’s output during this period.

⁴ Cf. Bringmann’s (1971.118–19) reconstruction of Cicero’s speech in the dialogue as avoiding engagement with specific views of individual philosophical schools.

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war that led to his ascendancy in the state, revealed to Cicero the weaknesses of the political system that he, in his own way, had consistently supported⁵ and, to no small degree, had idealized. The fragility of that system, the instability of Roman tradition, was as clear to Cicero as it was to Caesar: both men throughout their careers had exploited traditional ways of doing things as well as the rhetoric of tradition.⁶ Now Caesar was grasping for ways to remake the Roman state, and Cicero was looking for a solution of his own. For him, the question was, what could stabilize this structure that we call *res publica*? What could provide a theoretical backbone that would be able to support our traditions, our *exempla*, in a way that would prevent their being manipulated in the future? Cicero answered these questions by appropriating in a new way yet another segment of Greek cultural capital: philosophy.⁷

From the very beginning, one of the main ways in which the Roman elite interacted with Greek culture was to excerpt and appropriate pieces of what they encountered that they could immediately exploit to their benefit. Their choice of what to take and what to leave behind was frequently influenced by suspicion of, and even contempt for, those Greek cultural practices that were apparently less relevant to their needs, such as philosophy. Although the discipline was very familiar to many elite Romans by Cicero's time, it was relegated to a marginal place in their lives: it played an important part in a young man's education and later acquired a somewhat decorative function. A house philosopher could be a status symbol, but philosophy was, for the most part, kept strictly separate from the arena of public business. Thus, Cicero's desire to dedicate most of his time to Romanizing a field of study viewed with distrust and approached with great caution by preceding generations, could be construed as contrary to the traditional Roman way of dealing with Greek culture. If his audience were to share that impression, it would be sufficient to throw suspicion on his project. But another interpretation is possible: on a deeper level, what Cicero attempts to do with the *philosophica* is actually quite consistent with the *mos maiorum*, is, in fact, a logical extension of earlier Roman ways of approaching Greek knowledge. Just as the *maiores* assessed the utility of individual elements of Greek intellectual material for their contemporary cultural and political needs, so Cicero, in assessing his own situation, comes to the conclusion that embedding philosophy in

⁵See Flower 2006.98–104 on how Cicero's own actions may have contributed to the destruction of traditional politics; cf. Gotter 1996a. 247–54.

⁶Cf. Flower 2010.21: "... the dramatic changes Roman society was undergoing produced a discourse of tradition and an insistent claim to a timeless heritage, which should in itself be regarded as a cultural artifact created for a political purpose."

⁷On imperialist ideology in Cicero's prefaces, see Habinek 1994.

the Roman cultural fabric will serve the current needs of the state and the elite.

Moreover, Cicero presents his project as a response to the abuse of the concept of the *mos maiorum* that, after several generations, had culminated in civil war and dictatorship. What he is attempting is much more than a comprehensive presentation of Greek philosophical knowledge to a Roman audience. It is an integration of that knowledge with *exempla* drawn from Roman history and tradition and the values that he believes lie behind them. For such is the peculiar nature of the *mos maiorum* that it is only the *exempla* that are stable; no overall conceptual framework restricts their interpretation. This is what made the tradition at once flexible and yet able to present a consistent façade, so that it could survive constant change and innovation.⁸ But the lack of a conceptual framework was also its weak point. Cicero implies that by placing the *exempla* into such a framework, one provided by Greek philosophy, his *philosophica* would prevent misappropriation of the *mos maiorum*. Of course, it is not the case that, when traditional Roman ideas are embedded in a Greek philosophical frame, some essential true message of the *mos maiorum* emerges. The ethical and political message that Cicero brings forward is a result of interpretation as well, and that message is geared toward the restoration of the republic in a form that meets with Cicero's approval and that he believes will be more durable than the one that collapsed in the run-up to the civil war.

Anyone familiar with Roman culture knows that philosophy was far from an easy sell. It was still foreign in Cicero's time: though many a distinguished contemporary would be comfortable stating a philosophical affiliation, philosophy as a discipline was, and would, despite Cicero's efforts, remain Greek. Proposing a philosophical solution to Roman political troubles could, therefore, be seen as a slap in the face of the proud ancestral tradition. A skilled manipulator of public opinion, Cicero knew this well. That is why the introductory segments of his philosophical works—the relatively short portions of text whose job it is to convince the readers to continue with the text and to allow the possibility that what they are about to read might make a real contribution to restoring their world—are so interesting and so rich. These texts are the subject of my study.

⁸ On exemplarity and the *mos maiorum* see, e.g., Roller 2009, 2004; Walter, chs. 2 and 8; and Hölkeskamp 1996. Cf. Wallace Hadrill 2008, ch. 5, esp. 217 on the flexibility of tradition, 225–29 on rhetorical use of the *maiores*, 229–31 on Cicero on the demise of the tradition. Cicero's use of exemplarity is studied by van der Blom (2010) in the context of his *novitas*; on the flexibility of *exempla*, see 16 in general and her discussion of Cicero's references to the Gracchi, 103–107.

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Cicero's response to the challenge that he faced in presenting his philosophical project to the reader was twofold. On the one hand, he had to justify the project as a whole. Why is he, a man of consular rank, writing philosophy at this time? What does he hope to contribute to the state? How will philosophy fit the context of Roman tradition, of elite values? He expected his readers to ask these kinds of questions, and he responded to them explicitly as he introduced each individual work. On the other hand, no one knew better than Cicero that persuasion does not function on the level of explicit pronouncements alone. Everything matters: the tone, the words, the allusions, the associations that hide beneath the surface of words. These two levels of engagement come together seamlessly in the prefaces, intricate little texts, carefully crafted, and highly rhetorical. Exploring how Cicero negotiates his introduction of philosophy with the reader not only contributes to a better understanding of the *philosophica* as a body of work and Cicero as its author, but also bears on broader cultural and social issues, such as the intercultural relations between Greece and Rome, the place of philosophical discourse and intellectual activity in Rome, and the manipulation of tradition by skillful cultural practitioners in the service of innovation. As much of the scholarly work on the corpus of the *philosophica* seeks to inscribe Cicero the philosopher within the larger context, both synchronic and diachronic, of Hellenistic philosophy, so I hope with this study to contribute to an understanding of the corpus by exploring its place in a number of other, mainly contemporary, frameworks. Thus, the questions I ask have to do with the cultural, social, and political positioning of the *philosophica*. On the most basic level, what I am investigating is the very act of producing a body of philosophical work, given the specific cultural and historical circumstances of its author.

OBJECT OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

G rard Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* treats verbal and non-verbal objects that mediate the presentation of the text and its reception by the public.⁹ After emphasizing the liminal nature of these elements—quoting others, he refers to the paratext, in turn, as “threshold,” “vestibule,” “undefined zone,” and “fringe”—he gives a definition that crystallizes why the prefaces are the right place to search for answers to the questions I want to ask of Cicero's project:

⁹Genette's (1997) objects range widely, from features of a printed book's appearance, such as the title page and the illustrations, to prefaces, dedications, postscripts, and notes, to external objects, such as publicity materials and reviews.

Indeed, this fringe, always the conveyer of a commentary that is authorial . . . constitutes a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition, but also of *transaction*: a privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that—whether well or poorly understood and achieved—is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies).¹⁰

That is, if we are looking for the ways in which an author is trying to condition audience reaction to his text, if we are trying to understand his strategies and investigate their sources, then the paratextual elements are the right place to look.

The goal of this book, from its inception, has been to approach the corpus of philosophical works that Cicero produced under Caesar as a whole, as a coherent project. The questions that interest me have to do with writing philosophy as a cultural act specific to its place, its time, and its agent. Given the scale of Cicero's production during this period, it would, however, be impossible to tackle these questions by engaging with the corpus as a whole: I could not hope to do justice to every dialogue, and a focus on some in favor of others would inevitably result in a skewed picture. But in choosing to explore the prefaces, I have not simply followed the lead of Genette and others who have found these transitional and transactional moments fertile ground for investigation. More importantly, in framing my project in this way I have also taken a cue from Cicero himself. That Cicero thought of the works he was producing as a unified project and that he treated the prefaces as a distinct rhetorical space in which the nature of both the project and the individual work was to be negotiated is abundantly clear. The evidence comes, in the first place, in the preface to the second book of *De Divinatione*, the first preface composed after Caesar's death, in which Cicero looks back at the state of his project to date; second, it is demonstrated by the existence of the *volumen prohoemiorum*, a book of draft prefaces; and, finally, it is inherent in the nature of the prefaces themselves.

The first of these is the least decisive proof precisely because it is retrospective: in presenting an overview of what he had accomplished, Cicero reached back and incorporated most of his prior output, including in his list works composed in the 50s, which belong to a different time and a different, if related, set of motivations. The *volumen* is much more significant.¹¹ We know of its existence only because Cicero made a mistake: in a letter to Atticus, who often acted, in effect, as his publisher, Cicero reports that he noticed that he had accidentally reused one of the prefaces:

¹⁰ Genette 1997.2.

¹¹ Cf. Steel 2005.138.

nunc negligentiam meam cognosce. de gloria librum ad te misi, et in eo prohoemium id quod est in Academico tertio. id evenit ob eam rem quod habeo volumen prohoemiorum. ex eo eligere soleo cum aliquod σύγγραμμα institui. itaque iam in Tusculano, qui non meminissem me abusum isto prohoemio, conieci id in eum librum quem tibi misi. cum autem in navi legerem Academicos, agnovi erratum meum. itaque statim novum prohoemium exaravi et tibi misi. tu illud desecabis, hoc adglutinabis. (Att. 16.6.4; SB 414)

Now learn about how negligent I've been. I sent you the book *On Glory*, and in it a preface, the one that is in the third book of the *Academica*. This happened because I have a notebook of prefaces. My practice is to choose one from it when I've completed a piece of writing. And so, when I was already in Tusculum, since I had no recollection that I had already used that preface, I threw it into that book which I sent to you; but when I was reading the *Academica* during the sea voyage, I recognized my error. And so right away I drafted a new one and sent it to you. Please cut the other one off, and glue this one on.

A comparison of the two prefaces would no doubt illuminate some of the issues raised by this passage. But neither *De Gloria* nor the third book of the *Academica* has survived. As a result, the *volumen* has sometimes been cited as evidence that the prefaces were unimportant—detached throw-away bits of texts. After all, Cicero himself forgot that he had already used one. Recently, Ingo Gildenhard, in his monograph on the *Tusculan Disputations*, a book centered on incisive readings of the prefaces to that work, has rightly countered this interpretive trend. But in seeking to validate the importance of the prefaces to the *Tusculans* for our understanding of the work, he downplays the existence of the *volumen* as meaningful in its own right.¹² By contrast, my approach embraces the *volumen* as a crucial indication that Cicero, during the years of Caesar's domination, was thinking of his philosophical production as a unified project. We should not imagine Cicero unthinkingly drawing a more or less random preface from his notebooks and affixing it to a freshly completed treatise: his casually self-deprecating rhetoric of cutting and pasting is misleading.¹³ In fact, as recent work on the *Tusculans* by Gildenhard and Lefèvre has made clearer than ever before, Cicero did carefully tailor those prefaces whose basic material he may have drawn from the *volumen* to the individual works in which he placed them. But the fact that he was able to compose some prefatory material without a particular work in mind shows, crucially,

¹² Gildenhard 2007.89–90.

¹³ Cf. his similarly dismissive reference to his treatises themselves in another letter to Atticus (12.52.3; SB 294) as transcripts that don't require much effort: ἀπόγραφα sunt, minore labore fiunt; verba tantum adfero, quibus abundo.

that he thought it likely that in negotiation with his readers he would repeatedly face the same kinds of objections and concerns, and that he saw the prefaces as his main opportunity to address them in a coherent way.

By “preface” I designate the general remarks that begin the work but stand outside of it. In the case of a dialogue, this means leaving out of consideration the dramatic setting that tells of the place and the circumstances of the characters’ meeting: of great interest in themselves, these introductory texts are not what will concern me here. Hegel’s distinction between the “preface” and the “introduction” to a philosophical work, which Jacques Derrida discusses in his own anti-preface to *Dissemination*, “Outwork,” is relevant here:

The *preface* must be distinguished from the *introduction*. They do not have the same function, nor even the same dignity, in Hegel’s eyes, even though the problem they raise in their relation to the philosophical corpus of exposition is analogous. The Introduction (*Einleitung*) has a more systematic, less historical, less circumstantial link with the logic of the book. It is *unique*; it deals with general and essential architectonic problems; it presents the general concept in its division and its self-differentiation.¹⁴

It is precisely the historical and circumstantial nature of the preface—the fact that it contains “an explanation of the author’s aim, why he wrote the book, and the relationship in which he believes it to stand to other earlier and contemporary treatises on the subject”¹⁵ (which Hegel finds “inappropriate and misleading” in a philosophical work)—that holds the answers to the historically and culturally specific questions that I wish to answer. Unlike the more integrated and embedded introduction, it is also the locus of the most intense and explicit engagement between the author and the reader. While each preface, to a greater or lesser degree, prepares the reader for some of the features of the particular work he is about to experience, the prefaces as a group make the case for the philosophical corpus as a whole. That is why key themes recur in so many of them. Seen in this light, and read together, they are the best window that we can have into Cicero’s thinking about the overall meaning of his project and the best way to achieve success with his audience.

Another feature of the prefaces themselves supports this approach to reading them as a corpus: references to specifically philosophical content and motivation are largely absent. And, for the most part, Cicero refrains as well from delving into the doctrinal differences between various philosophical schools as he does in the body of many of the treatises, focusing

¹⁴Derrida 1981.17.

¹⁵Hegel 1977.1, quoted in Derrida 1981.9–10.

instead on a unified idea of “philosophy.” In offering his work to his Roman audience, however, Cicero does not locate his contribution exclusively, or even primarily, within the field of philosophy. He does not speak of his goals in terms of presenting philosophical ideas, though that is what he actually goes on to do. Instead he locates his work in the realities of his, and his intended readers’, lives. In Cicero’s various accounts of composing the *philosophica* he situates his motivations and goals—which range from benefiting his fellow-citizens and bettering the Roman state to relieving his personal grief following the death of his daughter—in the extra-philosophical parts of his life and persona: it is Cicero the politician who speaks of his political goals, Cicero the private man who, addressing his audience as a group of friends, grounds his philosophical writings in the personal events surrounding their composition.

Following Cicero’s lead, then, I will focus on the rhetoric of the prefaces, broadly understood. I will investigate and evaluate the claims that Cicero makes for himself and his project and seek to illuminate their meaning given Cicero’s position as a Roman writing to a Roman audience on a primarily Greek subject; as a consular forced to withdraw from active politics and writing philosophical works meant to be read by his peers; as a man who, having earned the title *parens patriae*, now bewails the demise of the political entity he was supposed to have saved. In addition to examining his explicit statements, I will explore the more implicit rhetoric of the prefaces—their structure, quotations, and allusions—for what they reveal about the meaning and the presentation of the whole project.

THE SCOPE

The underlying motivation for this book is my interest in philosophy’s place in society, in the tension between the universality of its claims, and the historical and personal constraints on its practitioners. While there is undeniable overlap in how Cicero presents the two categories of his works that we customarily designate as the *rhetorica* and the *philosophica*, it is the *philosophica*, the corpus that has been less studied in its various extra-philosophical contexts, that will be the center of my investigation. The *rhetorica* have at all times received more attention from scholars interested in socio-historical and cultural questions and have been particularly well served in the past decade, with a proliferation of diverse and excellent studies. Just the last five years have seen the publication of Elaine Fantham’s book on *De Oratore*, John Dugan’s on the role of *novitas* in Cicero’s self-fashioning in the rhetorical works, Joy Connolly’s on the place of speech in Cicero’s political thought, and Sarah Stroup’s on

the dynamics of textual exchange in Cicero and Catullus.¹⁶ Among the *philosophica*, the *Tusculan Disputations* have been recently treated in three monographs that range from Bernhard Koch's philosophical approach to Ingo Gildenhard's literary and political concerns, with Eckard Lefèvre staking out a middle ground between them.¹⁷ Matthew Fox has examined the role of the past in a selection of works that embraces both *corpora*. In this book I hope to contribute to this growing body of work by showing the ways in which many of the trends that have been treated in the rhetorical works are transformed through the foregrounding of philosophy. I will also expand and modify the claims that have been made for the political and rhetorical workings of the *Tusculans* by examining the philosophical project as a whole.

It will be clear by now that I see the philosophical project as beginning with the composition of the *Hortensius*, a programmatic defense of philosophy that inaugurated the following series of treatises. The dialogues that Cicero composed in the 50s, *De Oratore*, *De Re Publica*, and *De Legibus*, will therefore not form part of my discussion. The composition of those works is connected to Cicero's political fortunes as well. He turned to writing as an additional arena for political activity when his freedom of action was curtailed, first, by the increasing pressure in the framework of the renewed compact between Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus, and then by the continuing effects of the prominence of Caesar and Pompey in the ever more strained and divisive political climate that was the result of their rise to prominence. But Cicero at that time was still an active politician, however constrained, and his writings were an extension, or (to quote Catherine Steel) an "aspect" of his political life.¹⁸ The situation under Caesar was drastically different. Cicero was forced into inactivity, and the virtual disappearance of the political system that had been a central concern of his life left him distraught. Writing, and the writing of philosophy in particular, became not a facet of his political life, but rather an alternate way of being in politics, a substitution that he struggled to construct as viable.¹⁹ The claims he made for his works, and the burden of convincing the reader of their validity, were thus much greater and

¹⁶A clear and useful overview of scholarly approaches to the study of Roman rhetoric in the preceding decade and a half is Dugan 2007.

¹⁷The surge of interest in this treatise owes much to Margaret Graver's 2002 translation, with philosophical commentary, of the third and fourth books of the *Tusculans*.

¹⁸Steel 2005.137 applies this definition to the entire philosophical corpus. Her book is exemplary in integrating Cicero's writings, in all their generic variety, with his political activity.

¹⁹Opposition to Caesar himself is an important aspect of the political meaning of the *philosophica*, but I do not see it as being central to the same extent as Strasburger 1990 and Wassmann 1996 do. By contrast, Bringmann 1971.90–91 sees the Caesarian dialogues as a substitution in a different sense: for him Cicero's goals here are cultural and not political.

required a different set of rhetorical strategies. Philosophy was as important to him during this time as it would ever be to a Roman politician, and this fact in itself makes the *apologia* that the prefaces composed under Caesar constitute unique.

One final note. The negotiation of the relationship between the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* has been part of the ancient philosophical tradition since Plato and Aristotle.²⁰ Cicero's familiarity with this tradition frequently informs how he thinks about the difficulties inherent in his own attempts to reconcile the philosophical with the political.²¹ But tracing the genealogy of Cicero's engagement with particular philosophers' tackling of these ever-recurring tensions lies largely outside the scope of this book. In line with the synchronic framework of my project, I focus on the contemporary Roman resonance of Cicero's texts, even when they owe their particular shape to the diachronic line of the tradition.

CHAPTERS

The first two chapters provide context for the production of the philosophical corpus by reaching outside the treatises. Chapter 1 examines Cicero's struggles with Roman anxieties about philosophy and locates them within a broader contemporary discourse that tries to expand the field of acceptable activity to include the intellectual. By reading the prefaces to Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Iugurthinum* and the preface to the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* alongside the criticisms that Cicero claims are leveled against his project, I present a broader picture of the resistance to intellectual activity that characterized the Roman elite and that Cicero was trying to anticipate. These texts provide a glimpse as well of some potential avenues for Cicero's response. The contrast between the strategies he used and those employed by these authors reveals the particular difficulties faced by an author of a philosophical project. An interpretation of Cicero's engagement with a quotation from Ennius that advocates a limited involvement with philosophy introduces the issue of the *mos maiorum* and philosophy's relationship to tradition, which is central to Cicero's self-presentation.

²⁰ See, e.g., on Plato and Aristotle, Adkins 1978, Nightingale 2004; on Plato, Reeve 1988 ch. 4, Monoson 2000; on Aristotle, Ackrill 1980, Lear 1988.309–20, Kraut 1989, ch. 1, Lawrence 1993, Richardson Lear 2004, ch. 8.

²¹ He confronts the issue most explicitly in *De Officiis*; see Dyck 1996.38. The problem permeates most of Cicero's philosophically tinged writings. I treat it in most detail in the section of ch. 2 that examines the relationship between philosophy and politics in Cicero's letters.

Using Cicero's correspondence as a guide, Chapter 2 attempts to untangle the many reasons for his project that he sets forth, paratactically, in the prefaces. The first section queries Cicero's belief in the ability of philosophy to influence and improve people's characters and actions—a belief implicit in the politically motivated goals that he cites in the prefaces. The following sections examine a number of related issues: the potential role that philosophy can occupy in a traditional political framework, a comparison of the ways in which Cicero portrays his intellectual activity in the letters with the picture he projects of that same activity in the prefaces, and the question of how to interpret the references, in both the letters and the prefaces, to philosophy as a means of personal consolation necessary to recover from grief.

With the third chapter, I move to the prefaces themselves and engage with Cicero's claims about the political content of his philosophical writings and their potential benefit to the future of the state. In particular, I examine what he repeatedly identifies as his project's major contribution: the act of translating philosophy from the Greek and making it accessible in Latin. My focus is on the cultural and political meaning of translation as a patriotic act, as well as on Cicero's response to the difficulties of presenting works in translation to an audience with a variety of often opposing cultural objectives and prejudices.

Chapters 4 and 5 move from Cicero's explicit claims about his project to the embedded rhetorical work that takes place in the prefaces. Chapter 4 focuses on a strategy of self-justification central to Cicero's self-presentation: the emphasis is on the connection between philosophy and rhetoric as disciplines and the continuity between Cicero the orator and statesman and Cicero the philosopher. I examine the role of these connections in allowing Cicero to carve out a place for philosophy within the existing structure of Roman public life by minimizing the novelty of his project and underlining (often specious) similarities between philosophy and traditional Roman concerns.

Chapter 5 moves away from the thematic approach and instead focuses on the preface as an interactive process, a journey during which the author strives to win over the reader so as to ensure a favorable reception for his text before the reader actually encounters the body of the work. I discuss the importance of Cicero's insertion of his project into the social institution of *amicitia* and the way in which texts associated with circles of *amicitia* establish relations between an author and his readers. I explore also Cicero's invoking of tradition in the form of quotations, allusions, and the choice of dialogue characters. As illustrations of Cicero's overall rhetorical strategy, I offer case studies of the two prefaces that most fully exemplify the tendencies that operate in the entire corpus: I read prefaces

to the *Topica* and *De Senectute* in order to reconstruct the step-by-step progression that Cicero creates for the ideal reader approaching his work.

The final chapter also serves as a conclusion. As a way of looking back at the unified philosophical project produced under Caesar, I examine the changes that this project undergoes once assassination changes the political landscape that gave it birth. I begin with a reading of the preface to book two of the *De Divinatione*, Cicero's first public reflection on the state of the project at the time of Caesar's death. I then proceed chronologically through the treatises that followed, arguing for a gradually evolving new direction. An examination of the trajectory in Cicero's choices of dedicatees provides an additional perspective on the evolution of his thinking about the place of philosophy in his overall plans. I conclude with a reading of the prefaces to the three books of the *De Officiis*, Cicero's final work, which was for him, I argue, a first step in a new direction.

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