

ARTICLES & NOTES

New England Classical Journal 35.3 (2008) 175-184

Enabling Books

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in memoriam D. R. Shackleton Bailey

In the summer of 56 Cicero informs Atticus, with great satisfaction, that a library has been installed and arranged in his Antium villa. He comments: *mens addita videtur meis aedibus*, “my house seems to have woken to life” (*Att.* 4.8.2, SB 79¹). The expression *mens addita*, recently explained by Dyck, alludes to the creation of “a living organism out of inert matter”; for Cicero, books do the trick. The living organism metaphor is apt: books bore fruit for Cicero, in his writings, obviously, given that he so often took the books of others as starting points or models for his own books, but also fruit in the form of friendships and political connections.² My focus in this essay is on Cicero’s use of literature as a form of social glue, with particular attention to his exchanges—correspondence, mostly—with Caesar. It adds a dimension to White’s 2003 paper on tactics in the correspondence between the two men.³

Cicero’s reading was broad and in some areas deep. In correspondence he quotes Greek poets (e.g., Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Sophocles, Euripides, Menander) and Roman ones (e.g., Plautus, Terence, Ennius, Lucilius, Accius, Turpilius); he also cites Greek and Roman historians (Polybius and various annalists), characterizes the style of past orators, and summarizes (or parodies) the arguments of a whole raft of philosophers.⁴ But despite his ringing (and contextually appropriate) words in the *pro Archia* about the pleasure of intellectual pursuits (*Arch.* 16), the Cicero we meet in the correspondence manifests a quite utilitarian attitude toward books; he reads to write, or to connect with contemporaries, or both.

¹ Cicero’s letters are cited by collection and by letter number in the editions of Shackleton Bailey. Translations from the letters are Shackleton Bailey’s.

² This double function is reflected in my title: other authors’ books enable Cicero to write his own, but books—both theirs and his—also enable him to maintain serviceable relationships with powerful contemporaries.

³ I also hope it will serve as a modest tribute to the honorand of the APA panel for which this paper was originally conceived (2007: “Cicero As Reader and Interpreter”): D. R. Shackleton Bailey. A pleasant challenge in preparing the original paper was to fit in as much of his work as I could.

⁴ For a recent discussion of the philosophers see Griffin; on the poets, Malcovati.

As a quick example of this dual purpose, consider Cicero's approach to Caesar in May of 45. Atticus was urging him to address a "Letter of Advice" to Caesar, who was then fresh from his final victory in the civil wars, at Munda in Spain. First, Cicero musters models: he gets hold of the Cynic Antisthenes' treatise entitled *Cyrus II on Kingship* (*Att.* 12.38a, SB 279), plus *Letter(s) to Alexander* by both Aristotle and Theopompus (*Att.* 12.40, SB 281). Reading and writing go hand in hand: *ea lego, ea scribo*, he says (*Att.* 12.40.2, SB 281).⁵ The resulting συμβουλευτικόν, pronounced "done" on the 20th of May in 45 (*Att.* 12.49.3, SB 292) and sent to the absent Caesar's friends for preliminary comment (*Att.* 13.1.3, SB 206; 13.27.1, SB 298; 13.28.2-3, SB 299; 13.31.3, SB 302), seems to have fallen on the sponge (White 75 n. 26), but it was presumably urged by Atticus as a peace offering to a Caesar whose feathers had been ruffled by Cicero's laudatory biography of Cato, published in Rome in the late summer or early fall of 46 after Caesar left for the Spanish campaign.⁶ We will return to the *Cato* shortly, but for the moment the point to note is that, so far as we can tell, anyway, Cicero abandoned the συμβουλευτικόν when it was deemed by Caesar's handlers that it had diverged too far from his readings and approached too near to current events. Cicero seems to have advised Caesar to do what Caesar said he was going to do about Parthia, and this advice got him into trouble (*Att.* 13.31.3, SB 302). The letter was thus literary, but not literary enough. As we will see later, a more determinedly literary exchange supplies a supplementary thread to the relationship between Cicero and Caesar, one that survives political divergences and fosters *rapprochement*. It was in the interest of both men that this should be so. In maintaining a connection with Caesar the stakes were particularly high, and Cicero generally sought more neutral turf than that of the antagonistic *Cato* or the accommodating συμβουλευτικόν. Books provided the neutral turf.

Cicero's utilitarian approach to books can be contrasted with that of Atticus, who reads and recommends a book on Homeric accentuation about which Cicero himself is polite but clearly unenthusiastic. What Atticus values as intellectual fare—as Cicero puts it, *scire enim vis, quo uno animus alitur*, "knowledge is your desire, the only food of the mind" (*Att.* 12.6.2, SB 306)—Cicero regards as *tam tenuis* θεωρία, "so rarefied a study" (one of Shackleton Bailey's inspired translations). To continue with his version:

⁵ This brief statement has many longer-winded parallels in the correspondence, including *Att.* 4.14, SB 88; 4.16.3, SB 89; 8.11.7, SB 161; 12.21.5, SB 260; 13.32.3, SB 305; 16.11.4, SB 420. *Qfr.* 2.12(11).4, SB 16 suggests that Quintus works similarly: thinking of writing a history, he is presently "wrapped up in" the historians Callisthenes and Philistus.

⁶ It was being copied in July 46 (*Fam.* 16.22, SB 185). Cicero credits Brutus in writing for having encouraged him to undertake the *Cato* in the first place (*Orator* 35, published October 46); one of Cicero's correspondents says that Cicero made Brutus his "ally" thereby (*Fam.* 6.7.4, SB 237; Dec. 46 or early 45). Cicero says that he fears that Caesar will take it as *quasi Catonis* μείλιγμα "a kind of peace offering after the *Cato*" (*Att.* 13.27.1, SB 298).

“But, pray, what bearing has any of this stuff about grave and acute on the *summum bonum*?” None, perhaps, but Cicero will nevertheless read the thing because Atticus liked it. Or at least he’ll try to persuade Atticus that he read it, for it was a bond between the two men.⁷

In saying that Cicero’s reading generally has practical ends, I do not mean to imply that he does not get pleasure from his reading. One cannot read his letters with their wonderfully varied use of quotations—Hutchinson (15) calls it “an area of artistry with language which belongs specifically to the letters”—without a lively sense of how much fun he got out of nailing a description or a feeling with an apt tag.⁸ We will see some examples a little later. He also turned to books when he needed distraction from pain: at various dark moments in his political career (*Att.* 2.4.1, SB 24; 2.5.2, SB 25; 4.10.1, SB 84; *Qfr.* 3.5(5-7)4, SB 25; 3.7(9).2, SB 27) and after his daughter’s death (*Att.* 12.18.1, SB 254; 12.20.1, SB 258; 12.38a.1, SB 279). But books are effective only up to a point. In the desperate days in 49 before his departure for the Pompeian camp, for example, he begs Atticus for letters; books he has, he says, but they are a remedy too weak for the disease (*Att.* 10.14.2, SB 206).

He does like them, however. Indeed books in the aggregate were an object of lust. In 67 as Cicero was furnishing his Tusculan villa he was in active pursuit of both statues (*Att.* 1.6.2, SB 2; 1.8.2, SB 4; 1.9.2, SB 5) and a library (1.7, SB 3; 1.10.4, SB 6). Atticus happened to have purchased a library in Greece just then, and Cicero wants it: *bibliothecam cave tuam cuiquam despondeas, quamvis acrem amatorem inveneris*, “Mind you don’t engage your library to anyone, no matter how ardent a wooer you may find.”⁹ An entire library may be an attractive proposition, but I do not see Cicero curling up with a good book hoping to lose himself for a few blissful hours.¹⁰ If anything, books were stimulants: after the death of Tullia in 45 he reads every *Consolatio* he can get his hands on in Atticus’ well-stocked library,¹¹

⁷ Similarly, perhaps, Cicero may have read Lucretius’ poem because Quintus had urged it on him (*Qfr.* 2.10(9).3, SB 14), and Nepos Cicero’s works because of his friendship with Atticus (*Att.* 16.5.5, SB 410).

⁸ Two indications that his quotations are not generally from current reading: first, he repeats quite a few of them at wide intervals, and second, they seem to be given from memory, since many are slightly “off,” either in text or in point.

⁹ Shackleton Bailey’s note on this passage brings out the underlying book lust very chastely: “The double senses of *despondeas* (‘promise’ or ‘betroth’) and *amatorem* (‘amateur’ and ‘lover’) suit the gender [the feminine gender, that is, of *bibliotheca*].” More on book acquisitions: *Att.* 1.11.3, SB 7; 1.4.3, SB 9; 4.10.1, SB 84; 9.11.4, SB 178. Also Plut. *Cic.* 27.

¹⁰ An exception: *Fam.* 16.22, SB 185 (to Tiro, July 46) *ego hic cesso, quia ipse nihil scribo; lego autem libentissime*, “I am idling here because I don’t write anything myself, though I am reading with great gusto.” Cicero has just finished his *Cato*, which is still in the process of being copied.

¹¹ *Att.* 12.14.3, SB 251; 12.15, SB 252; 12.16, SB 253; 12.20.2, SB 258; 12.21.5, SB 260; 12.22.20, SB 261; 12.24.2, SB 263; cf. Jerome *Ep.* 60.5.

but quickly decides that he can do better and writes a *Consolatio* to himself (*Att.* 12.28.2, SB 267).

The potential for connection-building that Cicero ascribes to literary pursuits is particularly clear in one instance where they seem to have failed him. Returning in 50 from his proconsular command in Cilicia, Cicero was eager for the Senate to vote him a public thanksgiving. His timing was bad: this was the period when the Senate was wrestling with the status and future of the proconsul Caesar in Gaul, and Cicero was a distraction. If, however, Cicero was to get anywhere with his *supplicatio*, Cato's support was necessary, so Cicero writes him a long letter about what he had accomplished in Cilicia (*Fam.* 15.4, SB 110), closing it with a paragraph about philosophy as a bond between himself and Cato. Indeed he sends philosophy herself as an emissary to Cato to speak on his behalf: *philosophiam ad te adlegem*, "let me make Philosophy my advocate with you."¹² In other letters written with this same purpose in mind Cicero speaks of sending human emissaries (cf. *Fam.* 15.10.2, SB 388; 15.13.3 SB 416), but to Cato he sends philosophy, and alludes even more broadly to *haec . . . societas studiorum atque artium nostrarum*, "the pursuits and acquirements we have in common." When this intellectual companionship speaks, he says, "I do not think Cato can in conscience say no" (*cui negari a Catone fas esse non puto*). His gambit did not work. Cato did not back a *supplicatio*, and when he writes to Cicero to explain his opposition to it (*Fam.* 15.5, SB 111) he mentions considerations of public utility (*res publica*) and even friendship (*amicitia*), but not philosophy.¹³ Cato, then, denies intellectual companionship—*haec . . . societas studiorum atque artium*—a role in the relationship between political actors.

Caesar, on the other hand, had long been willing to let philology, if not philosophy, serve as an intermediary between himself and Cicero. In 54 we hear that Cicero has sent Caesar his epic poem *de temporibus suis* (principally about his return from exile) for comment. He reports Caesar's preliminary assessment—Caesar had liked the beginning of book one, but found the rest of it, "up to a certain point," "mechanical" (Shackleton Bailey's translation for Caesar's Greek term ῥαθυμότερα; *Qfr* 2.16(15).5, SB 20). It is pleasant to imagine Caesar in the middle of his conquest of Gaul trying to come up with comments that will suggest to Cicero that he has in fact read the poem—that being, I take it, the point of "up to a certain point." But Caesar's critical terminology is (perhaps deliberately) vague, and Cicero wants to know more: did either the subject matter or the style displease? He presses Quintus to find out—to give, that is, philology a hand in keeping things

¹² Cf. later in the same letter: *tecum agit* (sc. *societas*) *de mea laude*, "this companionship of ours pleads with you on behalf of my renown."

¹³ Shackleton Bailey has a nice dry comment on Cato's letter: "It would have been more in keeping with the accredited character of the writer if he had defended his opposition as a matter of principle instead of resorting to the humbug of paragraph 2."

running smoothly between Caesar and Cicero. His concern is not for the poem's sake. He says that whatever Quintus discovers it will not make him one whit less pleased with himself (*ego enim ne pilo quidem minus me amabo*, *ibid.*); presumably it matters for future exchanges with Caesar.

Cicero does need to learn about Caesar's taste in epic verse, since Quintus has been pressing him to write something on the theme of Caesar's expedition to Britain, the object of the exercise being to ratchet up Quintus' cultivation of Caesar: it is to be used *in isto homine colendo* "in cultivating this man's friendship" (*Qfr.* 2.14(13).2, SB 18). In a later letter Marcus promises to send Quintus some verses on that theme (*Qfr.* 2.16(15).4, SB 20), a promise that develops into a full-fledged poem, Cicero being unable to refuse the combined pressure of Quintus' urging and the fact that Caesar knew he had embarked on said poem (*Qfr.* 3.1.11, SB11; 3.6.3, SB 26; 3.7.6, SB 27). Cicero was pleased with the final result—he calls the ἔπος *suave*—but it does not seem to have been published; at least we hear no opprobrious comments on it of the sort that survive for his other epic ventures. Once again, the relationship was what mattered. In this same decade, the 50s, Caesar wrote his *de Analogia* and dedicated it to Cicero, a fact that Cicero himself recorded (again) for posterity in the 40s, that is to say, on the other side of a watershed in Roman political life, at a time when Cicero needed to press philology for all she could deliver in terms of connections with Caesar.¹⁴

I have already mentioned the aborted συμβουλευτικόν from May of 45. In July, Brutus is urging Cicero to write something else for Caesar, who was now effectively the sole ruler of Rome. What the envisaged work was we do not know, but we can see that it prompted Cicero to go in search of books. He asks Atticus for "Cotta"; "Libo," he says, he has at hand, and he has used "Casca" before (*Att.* 13.44.3, SB 336). "Cotta," "Libo," and "Casca" are books referred to by their authors' names; we don't know them thus familiarly, but Cicero and Atticus did.¹⁵ In urging Cicero to compose something for Caesar, Brutus is advising him to capitalize on the personal form that Caesar was giving to his power: as White explains (86-87), Caesar "consistently downplays the wider public domain of peer relationships and strives to redefine them in private and personal terms." Literary exchanges were ideal for this, and Cicero is happy to play Caesar's game.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Brut.* 253; the dedication is also attested at *Gell.* 19.8.3.

¹⁵ Authors, even long-dead ones, are considered friends (*Att.* 2.7.4, SB 27 with parallels), as are books (*Fam.* 9.1.1, SB 175).

¹⁶ As were others. After Thapsus, for example, we hear of two men making literary bids for Caesar's favor with compositions about Cicero: Trebonius (governor of Spain in 47-46 and future assassin) produced a collection of Cicero's *bon mots* (*Fam.* 15.21.1-2, SB 207; with an addendum at *Fam.* 12.16.3, SB 328), Caecina Alienus (a former Pompeian) something laudatory (see *Fam.* 6.7.3-4, SB 237). Alienus is openly anxious about writing to a connoisseur of style, and asks Cicero to run interference for him. On Caesar's *peracre iudicium* see also *Fam.* 9.16.4, SB 190: Cicero is confident that Caesar, like a critic skilled in distinguishing genuine Plautus from

We can see the power of literary considerations particularly well in connection with the fallout from Cicero's *Cato*, where they serve to neutralize a damaging political antagonism. Caesar responded to Cicero's praise of his intransigent opponent with the rather ill-tempered *Anticato*, written in Spain, but he also sent a letter of consolation to a Cicero grieving over the loss of his daughter (*Att.* 13.20.1, SB 328; dispatched 30 April, received c. 2. July 45). *Cato*, even dead, in fact especially dead, was an intractable problem for Caesar, but Cicero, very much alive, could be won back. Accordingly, Caesar praised Cicero's style in his own *Anticato* even as he countered Cicero's content, and praised the style again in a letter to his friend Balbus, which Balbus showed to Cicero (*Att.* 13.41.2, SB 338).¹⁷ Cicero, for his part, praised Caesar's *Anticato* in a message sent to Caesar through Balbus and Oppius (*Att.* 13.50.1, SB 348) and also directly, to both Caesar and Atticus (*ibid.*; *Att.* 13.51.1, SB 349). It took two to keep the connection alive, and neither man stood on his dignity in this matter. Cicero is quite explicit about this: he reassures Atticus that his tone to Caesar was like that of one speaking πρὸς ἴσον ὁμοίονque, "as one author to another." (Atticus has been afraid that it would have been, in Shackleton Bailey's version, "ludicrously *de bas en haut*."¹⁸)

So far we have been looking at Cicero and Caesar reading each other's writings, but other writers' works serve the same end. Consider the literary props in a letter that Cicero sent to Caesar in September of 45 (*Fam.* 13.17, SB 317). This is ostensibly a letter of recommendation for the son of a man named Precilius, but it is simultaneously a work of self-exculpation. Literary tags prove quite helpful in this tricky bit of rhetoric.

Cicero begins with a line from the *Odyssey* to describe his doughty (if misguided) resistance to the temptation to join the Caesarian party back in

spurious, will be able to discount offensive quips falsely attributed to Cicero. In this same letter we learn that Caesar asked his people to keep him informed about Cicero's *apophthegmata*. In 45 or 44 Cicero recommends to Caesar the freedman of a deceased friend who wants to write up Caesar's *res gestae* in Greek (*Fam.* 13.16, SB 316).

¹⁷ The opening of Caesar's *Anticato* contains an elaborate show of courtesy to Cicero (*fr.* 2–4, cf. *Att.* 13.46.2, SB 338; Aug. 45); the surviving evidence does not permit firm conclusions about its sincerity. Caesar's legate Hirtius also produced an *Anticato*, and this one, too, at least according to Cicero, included lavish praise of Cicero (*Att.* 12.40.1, SB 281). It is entirely possible that Caesar's praise for Cicero's *copia* in the *Cato* (*Att.* 13.41.2, SB 338) and in the *Brutus* (see note 14 above) is tongue-in-cheek. If so, his restraint illustrates his desire to maintain an appearance of literary parity with Cicero even better than his praise would have done. As Favorinus quipped in connection with Hadrian, the commanders of 30 legions don't have to watch their tongues (*HA Had.* 15.12).

¹⁸ This is a wonderful equivalent for Cicero's *ridicule Micyllus*, on which there is an equally good note: Micyllus, says Shackleton Bailey, "stands for lowliness, humility; as one might say, 'Uriah Heep.'" I would hate to think of a Cicero who sounded like Uriah Heep with his unctuous "umbleness," and I am grateful to the literary culture that enabled him to address the writer Caesar, at least, as an equal.

49: he was as deaf as Odysseus to the words of Calypso or Circe (*Od.* 7.258, cf. 9.33): “the heart within my breast he (Caesar) or she (Calypso or Circe) ne’er did sway.” Another *Odyssey* line represents the Pompeian call to heroic action to which Cicero eventually succumbed: “Be bold, and earn the praise of men unborn,” thus Athena, disguised as Mentès, to Telemachus (*Od.* 1.302). The results were grievous, captured again by Homer: “He spake, but grief’s dark mist the other cloaked” (*Od.* 24.315): Laertes’ grief represents Cicero’s. Cicero works Precilius into this confection by saying that back in 49 he laughed at Cicero’s Odysseus-like deafness, while now he consoles him for his Laertes-like grief. Precilius also sustains him against renewed calls for heroism, represented this time by Hector, who faces sure death with the words Cicero quotes: “no sluggard’s fate, ingloriously to die, but daring that which men to be shall learn” (*Il.* 22.304-5). Instead of Homer’s reckless hero, Precilius recommends the *vera praecepta* of Euripides: “who for himself’s not wise, his wisdom scorn” (fr. 905 Nauck; also quoted at *Fam.* 7.6.2, SB 27). Two further bits of Homer complete the circle and make it seem that Precilius’ recommender can claim some glory after all.¹⁹

The point of this extraordinary performance is something more than giving Precilius a better-than-average letter of recommendation, although Cicero does draw attention to this aspect of the matter (3). Shackleton Bailey sees Cicero’s disavowal of the role of doomed Hector as his carefully calibrated response to rumors spread by his nephew Quintus,²⁰ who had Caesar’s ear just then and was trying to prove his devotion to Caesar by accusing his own uncle of hostility to Caesar: “How was Cicero to react? He preferred not to recognize what seems to have been the real implication, that he might have been plotting in secret. Nor did he choose to write directly and seriously to Caesar, giving Quintus the lie; such a letter would have ‘dignified’ the calumnies and perhaps defeated its purpose. So he put his denial in a semi-serious form, and chose of all things for its vehicle a letter of recommendation.” This letter, as explained (for the first time) by Shackleton Bailey, is a lovely example of the practice that Hutchinson alludes to when he says (15) that “Greek quotations could be used to display culture and control at the most significant moments of life.” It was young Quintus, not Caesar, from whom Cicero was alienated at this period, and the various literary masks—Odysseus, Laertes, Hector, something Euripidean—he adopts in this letter help Caesar to see him as something other than the relative of an extraordinarily troubled young man.

¹⁹ Or, as Shackleton Bailey puts it *ad loc.*, “that prudence and distinction are not incompatible.”

²⁰ *Fam.* 9.11, SB 250; *Att.* 12.7.1, SB 244; 12.38, SB 278; 13.9, SB 317; 13.17.2, SB 346; cf. *Att.* 14.17.3, SB 371 (after Caesar’s death) *se a Caesare habuisse omnia* (sc. *dicit Quintus*), *nihil a patre, reliqua sperare ab Antonio — o perditum hominem!* “Quintus says he owes everything to Caesar and nothing to his father, and for the future looks to Antony—what a blackguard!” Earlier signs of trouble: *Att.* 10.10.6, SB 201; 10.11.3, SB 202.

The fact is that life just then was easier to face through a literary lens. In December of 45, when Cicero has Caesar and his entourage of 2000 to dinner at his place in Puteoli, the men in the main dining room enjoy a good meal and they converse, not of politics at all, but of literature: σπουδαῖον οὐδὲν *in sermone*, φιλόλογα multa “we talked of nothing serious, but a good deal on literary matters” (*Att.* 13.52.2, SB 353). Not everyone could put politics aside when engaging with Caesar, however; at this point Caesar has less than 4 months to live.

Throughout the post-Thapsus period Cicero is uncomfortably conscious of how pliable Caesar must find him (*Att.* 13.37.2, SB 346; 14.1.2, SB 355; 14.17.6, SB 371; cf. *Fam.* 9.16.7, SB 190), and has moments when he just wants out of the whole tissue of connections, but these do not last long, and we soon find him preening as he thinks about how influential he remains after the destruction of so much that he stood for (e.g., *Fam.* 4.13.2, SB 225 for one example among many). Literary culture helped him remain loyal to Caesar, to the advantage of the many he helped bring back from exile, and it might also have worked with Caesar’s assassin, Brutus, with whom he shared a similar web of literary dedications and stylistic commentary.²¹

Mark Antony, however, was a different story. As John Ramsey’s paper at the original APA panel showed, Cicero knew Antony’s style well—its pursuit of wit at the expense of clarity, its archaism—but these were not promising qualities for a Cicero seeking common ground.²² Antony and Cicero engaged in delicate negotiations at least three times in the last five years of Cicero’s life, but they never found any neutral territory on which to deploy niceties. Instead, we see blatant falsity on both sides.

In support of his bid to gain some freedom of movement after Pharsalus, for example, Cicero sent Antony an ingratiating—perhaps

²¹ Post-Thapsus Cicero cultivates literary connections with many a Caesarian: at *Fam.* 9.18.2-3, SB 191 he says he is “teaching school,” practicing declamation with Caesarians as a way of fortifying himself against the times and avoiding the necessity of a death like Cato’s. Hirtius, Cassius, and Dolabella were among his “pupils” (*Fam.* 7.33.1-2, SB 192). Cicero asks Q. Cornificius (governor of Cilicia in 46, praetor 45 augur, orator, and neoteric) for a plug for his *Orator* (*Fam.* 12.17.2, SB 204); here again, relationship trumps content. To Trebonius (see note 16 above) he sends another copy of the *Orator* with his own commendation (*Fam.* 15.20, SB 208). Another possible literary Caesarian is Catullus’ friend C. Licinius Macer Calvus, to whom Cicero wrote a letter (or letters) on the subject of rhetorical style (for a reference—in a letter to Trebonius, who was puzzled by Cicero’s praise for the Asianist Calvus—to the correspondence see *Fam.* 15.21.4, SB 207; this is presumably part of the exchange among Brutus, Cicero, and Calvus referred to at *Tac. Dial.* 25.5 and elsewhere). The date of this correspondence is uncertain; an *argumentum ex silentio* puts Calvus’ death as early as 54 (see SB ad *Fam.* 7.24.1, SB 260), but on other grounds the correspondence has been dated to 48-47 (see Weyssenhoff *ad loc.*, a reference for which I am grateful to John Dugan). Trebatius gets a copy of Cicero’s *Topica* (*Fam.* 7.19, SB 334). Brutus himself is of course the best example of all in this period.

²² “Cicero’s Deconstruction of Mark Antony’s Rhetoric in *Philippics* 2, 3, and 13.”

Uriah Heep-like—letter. We do not have the letter itself, since he uncharacteristically omitted to send a copy to Atticus, but he describes it in sufficient detail to give Shackleton Bailey an opportunity for a characteristically dry chuckle: “There is something amusing in Cicero’s indignation at the chilly reception accorded to his insincerities” (on *Att.* 10.10.1, SB 201). Next comes Antony’s patently insincere request for Cicero’s permission to restore Clodius’ henchman Sextus Cloelius from exile (*Att.* 14.13A, SB 367A). As for Cicero’s response, well, even he knew it was awful (*Att.* 14.13.6, SB 367: *ego autem Antonio facillimum me praebui*, “I have shown myself all compliance to Antony”).²³ Cicero tried particularly hard to establish a connection with Antony for the third item of business, since it was an opportunity, for once, for him to do something for Atticus instead of the other way around: it had to do with ensuring that Atticus’ friends in Buthrotum not have their land confiscated for a military colony.²⁴ Cicero tells Atticus that he will go all out (*Att.* 15.1.2, SB 377): “with Antony I shall go to work so as to convey to him that if he obliges us in this business, I shall be entirely at his disposal (*totum me futurum suum*).” He gets nowhere, however, despite a concerted effort and a lot of the “wagging of connectivity” that White speaks of (77).

Amidst all the posturing and gush, there is not a scrap of literature. It is only after Caesar’s death, when the two men come into open conflict in the fall of 44, that Cicero uses a literary approach with Antony, and then it is to taunt him: “What I am more afraid of is that in ignorance of the true path of glory²⁵ you think it glorious to have more power than the rest of us put together and prefer the fear of your countrymen to their esteem . . . Even in the play [that is, in Accius’ *Atrous*] we see how it ruined the very character who said ‘Let them hate me, so they fear me.’” (*Ph.* 1.33-34). Calling Antony an *Atrous* was not an accommodating gesture.

If we follow Shackleton Bailey’s parting advice in his biography of Cicero (280), that we judge Cicero on the charm and wit of his personality rather than on the achievements that he so wanted us to admire, we will, I think, find ourselves giving much credit to the literary culture that enabled him to engage, with some of his contemporaries at least, in a world of books, at a remove, a crucial remove, from the bloody world of late Republican politics. Cicero uses a word from the world of books to describe Atticus’ talent for cementing friendships: just as *glutinatores* glue together sheets of papyrus to make a roll (*Att.* 16.6.4, SB 414), so Atticus’

²³ Here is Shackleton Bailey on that letter (*Att.* 14.13B, SB 367B): “Like most people who talk or write better than they think, the less genuine the note the more Cicero was apt to force it.”

²⁴ The references in the correspondence are many and include: *Att.* 15.2.2, SB 379; 15.4.1, SB 381; 15.12.1, SB 390; 15.19.1, SB 396; 16.11A.6, SB 407A; 16.2.1, SB 412; 16.13.1, SB 416 (the less than ideal final decision).

²⁵ Cicero had finished writing his *de Gloria* earlier that year (*Att.* 16.3.1, SB 413; 17 July 44).

custom is *conglutinare amicitias testimoniis tuis*, to “cement friendships with [his] testimonials” (*Att.* 7.8.1, SB 131). Let me borrow his compliment and say that Shackleton Bailey’s books, with their testimonials, cement our friendship with Cicero.

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