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Kinship, Republican statesmen, and virtus in Roman Imperial literature

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Dissertation

**KINSHIP, REPUBLICAN STATESMEN,
AND *VIRTUS* IN ROMAN IMPERIAL LITERATURE**

by

MAYA CHAKRAVORTY

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Approved by

First Reader

James Uden, Ph.D.
Professor of Classical Studies

Second Reader

Hannah Čulík-Baird, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Classics
University of California, Los Angeles

Third Reader

Zsuzsanna Várhelyi, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Classical Studies

DEDICATION

quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum (Catull. 101.5).

For my darling Eva – I miss you so very much.

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**KINSHIP, REPUBLICAN STATESMEN,
AND *VIRTUS* IN ROMAN IMPERIAL LITERATURE**

MAYA CHAKRAVORTY

Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2024

Major Professor: James Uden, Professor of Classical Studies

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines how literature written between the Flavian and Nervan-Trajanic-Hadrianic eras (ca. 69-138 CE), specifically Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, Pliny the Younger's *Panegyricus*, and Juvenal's *Satires*, depicts the ways in which exemplarity, a sociocultural practice wherein idealized and glorified examples (*exempla*) are used to instruct, guide and shape individual and cultural expectations of Roman-ness (*Romanitas*), both goes awry and consequently needs to be reshaped and refashioned. Studying the fallibility of exemplarity requires an understanding of the systems which enable the transmission of *exempla*.

Pedagogy is often the only method of transmission discussed by scholars who examine the ways in which *exempla* are passed down from generation to generation. Furthermore, while there has been much interest in the broader role of exemplarity in Roman culture, there has been less focus on the ways in which it affects specific individuals who are compelled to maintain the exemplary traditions of their families. In this dissertation, I offer a methodology which introduces a new language identifying two distinct but interlocking modes of transmission: genetic and educational. I argue that both modes of transmission ensure the preservation and propagation of elite Roman culture, but

are also always in tension with each other. In the following chapters, I explore the often-detrimental impact of these *exempla* upon individuals, particularly aristocratic men and women, for whom these exemplary heroes were more than just generic guides; rather, these *exempla* informed their sense of identity, the decisions they made throughout their lives, and the manner in which they presented themselves to the Roman public.

I begin with Silius Italicus' *Punica* which features the ancestors and descendants of famous regal and early Republican heroes. Using two case-studies, Serranus, the son M. Atilius Regulus, and Crixus, a descendant of Brennus the Gaul, I observe that both stories complicate a problematic aspect of genetic transmission: the expectation that all traits inherited are positive, and worth emulating. Chapter Two argues that Quintilian, in teaching his readers on how to educate an aristocratic statesman in Imperial Rome, blurs the boundaries of the modes of genetic and educational transmission. His *Institutio Oratoria* focuses on the innate talent (*ingenium*) of his students, rather than inherited familial virtues, and encourages them to both embrace adaptation and innovation, as well as show critical judgment when imitating *exempla* from the past. The third chapter examines Pliny the Younger's adoption of the above principles from his teacher Quintilian. I observe that Pliny's use of Quintilianic elements throughout the *Panegyricus* is in and of itself a form of educational transmission, and that his discussion of Trajan's adoption, the subsequent prayer for Trajan to have his own biological children, and the incorporation of elements of the traditionally Republican *laudatio funebris*, all encourage the reader to reevaluate expectations associated with both genetic and educational transmission. My final chapter examines Juvenal's *Satires* 1, 2, 7, 8, and 14, as texts which reject the

expectations linked with the genetic and educational transmissions of character traits, both of which are predicated upon the repetitive and cyclic process of exemplarity. I argue that this obsession with continuity and exemplarity has several consequences, namely complacency, hypocrisy, and unachievable standards, all of which contribute to Juvenal's poetic *indignatio*.

To conclude, this dissertation offers new insights into the overwhelming effects of exemplarity upon its aristocratic practitioners, whose families, as both guardians and propagators of virtue and morality, were the primary societal norm-setters in Rome.

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TEXTS PRINTED, NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS, AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

I print the following texts. Where applicable, I replace the consonantal *u* with *v*.

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Russell, D. A., ed. and trans., 2001. *Quintilian: The Orator's Education, Volume 1: Books 1-2*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———, ed. and trans., 2001. *Quintilian: The Orator's Education, Volume 2: Books 3-5*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———, ed. and trans., 2001. *Quintilian: The Orator's Education, Volume 3: Books 6-8*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———, ed. and trans., 2001. *Quintilian: The Orator's Education, Volume 4: Books 9-10*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———, ed. and trans., 2001. *Quintilian: The Orator's Education, Volume 5: Books 11-12*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

All other texts come from the Loeb Classical Library series, unless otherwise indicated. Similarly, all translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated. I spell and abbreviate the names of authors, texts, and characters according to the guidelines of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition, 2012). When the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* does not suggest an abbreviation, I instead follow the guidelines of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* for Roman authors and Liddell-Scott-Jones for Greek authors.

<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
<i>AClass</i>	<i>Acta Classica</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>CPh</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>ICS</i>	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>Loeb</i>	The Loeb Classical Library
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, Scott, and Jones' <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i>
<i>OED</i>	The Oxford English Dictionary
<i>OLD</i>	The Oxford Latin Dictionary
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>

INTRODUCTION

Nam saepe ego audivi Q. Maximum, P. Scipionem, <alios> praeterea civitatis nostrae praeclaros viros solitos ita dicere, quom maiorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissime sibi animum ad virtutem accendi. Scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere, sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flammam egregiis viris in pectore crescere neque prius sedari quam virtus eorum famam atque gloriam adaequaverit.

For I have often heard that Q. Maximus, P. Scipio, and other distinguished men of our state were accustomed to speaking thus: that whenever they looked upon the *imagines* of their ancestors, doing so most ardently kindled a desire in their minds to pursue virtue. It is clear that neither the wax nor the effigy possess such influence in and of themselves, but rather that this flame in the hearts of these pre-eminent men springs up from the memory of those achievements, and is not stilled until their virtue has been made equal to the fame and glory of their ancestors (Sall. *Jug.* 4.5-6).

Mirabile visu indeed. However, what else did esteemed statesmen Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus feel when they gazed upon the *imagines* of their ancestors? Sallust's impassioned and fiery vocabulary (*vehementissime, accendi, vim, flammam*) highlights the uncontrollable urgency and compulsion these aristocratic *imagines* generated in the following generations of successors.¹ *Vis*, an exceptionally violent and aggressive word, emphasizes the overwhelming pressure felt by descendants both to maintain and add to the reputation established by their *maiores*.

Sallust's language, which expresses a powerful emotional force, suggests that there is a supernatural force at play, much like the irresistible and irrepressible force of love. Indeed, he takes the time to specify that it is not that the *imago* itself is some sort of magical object bewitching its viewers. Rather, *flamma* represents a nagging pressure to continue

¹ The reaction evoked by viewing these *imagines* is far more powerful than what has been suggested by other scholars. Baroin 2010: 25 describes them as “compelling and forceful”, and Langlands 2018: 99 writes that “Thus in the passage from Sallust *Jugurtha* mentioned earlier (4.5), Scipio and Fabius are in direct competition with their glorious forebears, as they strive to become, not just like them, but better than them”.

adding to the *fama* and *gloria* accrued by their ancestors, a pressure that does not dissipate until this lofty goal is brought to fruition.

Such rituals form the basis of exemplarity, “a cultural phenomenon encompassing a particular set of social practices, beliefs, values, and symbols”, which is inextricably connected with Roman morality.² As Matthew Roller has written, such “*exempla* were persuasive thanks to their moral authority: they provided norms for others to accept as their own and models for them to imitate...they constitute a form of moral discourse; and they evince a particular historical consciousness”.³ Republican heroes, esteemed aristocratic⁴ statesmen and military leaders, were forged by the spectacular feats they performed in service to the Roman state. In so doing, their achievements became *exempla*, “examples set by figures from the past who were famed for performing great deeds for the benefit of the community”.⁵ Exemplarity, then, established prominent Republican aristocratic families, already the primary societal norm-setters, as both guardians and propagators of virtue and morality.⁶ This in turn provided continued enjoyment of celebrity, influence, and elevated social standing.

² Roller 2018: 4.

³ Ibid. 1.

⁴ Throughout this dissertation, my use of the adjective “aristocratic” and its corresponding noun does not distinguish between patrician and plebeian *gentes*. I will describe any individual who has ascended the ranks of the *cursus honorum* and served as a member of the Senate as “aristocratic”. This is because this project focuses on literature from a period of time when the majority of traditional Republican patrician families had long become extinct. Cf. Chapter Four for more detail.

⁵ Roller 2018: 1.

⁶ Cf. Gruen 1992: 1: “Roman *nobiles* projected themselves as custodians of the nation’s principles, champions of its characteristic virtues, and guardians of the *mos maiorum*”.

The definition of *exemplum* can be further expanded to include the heroes themselves – the individual who could produce such marvelous achievements was himself an *exemplum* to be admired and emulated. The customary deep-seated respect which families already held for ancestors was amplified when their *maiores* had numerous accomplishments to their names. As such, each hero to whom these families could lay claim was yet another string to their bow. Furthermore, various traits or qualities which frequently resurfaced from generation to generation came to be directly associated with specific families. For instance, members of the *gens Iunia* accrued the reputation of ridding Rome of its tyrannical leaders: Marcus Junius Brutus, one of Julius Caesar’s assassins, was descended from Lucius Junius Brutus, made famous for expelling Rome’s final king, Tarquinius Superbus, as well as serving as one of the newly founded Republic’s first consuls. Competition for dominance and supremacy was fierce – the advantages of being Rome’s number-one family were innumerable. As such, one or two heroes throughout the history of an aristocratic *gens* was nowhere near adequate; in order to remain competitive, each generation of the family was duty-bound to continue adding to the ever-growing agglomeration of honours and achievements.⁷ This overwhelming pressure which descendants of famous *maiores* feel to surpass ancestral achievements is clear in this passage from Cicero’s *De Officiis*:

Quorum vero patres aut maiores aliqua gloria praestiterunt, ii student plerumque eodem in genere laudis excellere, ut Q. Mucius P. f. in iure

⁷ Dixon 1992: “The children of the elite might not have faced the same necessity to bring in an income from the earliest possible age, but it was equally vital for them to learn the tasks appropriate to their station and, in their own way, to contribute to the maintenance or improvement of the family’s status. The Roman senatorial class was one to which membership had to be re-earned in each successive generation...The younger generation needed to acquire a range of skills that affirmed and perpetuated membership in this elite...” (109-10).

civili, Pauli filius Africanus in re militari. Quidam autem ad eas laudes, quas a patribus acceperunt, addunt aliquam suam, ut hic idem Africanus eloquentia cumulavit bellicam gloriam;

Indeed, those whose fathers or ancestors have distinguished themselves with some form of glory or other, are for the most part eager to excel in the very same category of glorious action, just like Q. Mucius, the son of P. Mucius, in civil law; and Africanus, the son of Paulus, in military affairs. Moreover, certain men add some of their own *gloria* to these honours, which they have inherited from their fathers; for instance, this very same Africanus heaped up his martial glory with eloquence;... (*Off.* 1.116).⁸

These are the eagerly anticipated results of Scipio Africanus and Fabius Maximus' contemplation of their ancestral *imagines* described in Sallust. Their *maiores* have fulfilled their duties by being memorialized for their exemplary achievements, and the unstated expectation is that their descendants will in time serve as *exempla* for future generations. As the *De Officiis* illustrates, Scipio Africanus has done just that.

Rebecca Langlands describes *exempla* as “capable of exerting an extraordinary, transcendent force upon those who contemplated them...Exempla struck or dazzled the viewers, goaded and aroused them, inflamed the soul, and ultimately transformed them – through the process of emulation – into someone else, someone better”.⁹ If this is the effect upon an ordinary Roman viewer, how much more potent must it have been for a member of the hero's family, one who has no choice but to follow in his footsteps?¹⁰

Statement of Argument

This dissertation contributes to the rapidly growing conversation surrounding exemplarity in Imperial Latin literature written between the Flavian and Nervan-Trajanic-

⁸ Translation from *Loeb*.

⁹ Langlands 2018: 2.

¹⁰ Cf. Baroin 2010 for a compelling discussion of the metaphor *vestigia sequi*.

Hadrianic¹¹ eras (ca. 69-138 CE): Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, Pliny the Younger's *Panegyricus*, and Juvenal's *Satires*. Although an unlikely quartet, all four of these authors depicts the ways in which exemplarity both goes awry and consequently needs to be reshaped and refashioned.

Studying the fallibility of exemplarity requires an understanding of the systems which enable the transmission of *exempla*. Scholars often treat pedagogy as the primary mode of transmission when examining the ways in which *exempla* are passed down from generation to generation. Furthermore, although there has been much interest in the broader role of exemplarity in Roman culture, there has been less focus on the ways in which it affects specific individuals who are expected to maintain the exemplary traditions of their families. I introduce new language which identifies two different but interlocking modes of transmission: genetic and educational. I argue that these modes of transmission serve as ways of ensuring the preservation and propagation of elite aristocratic culture, but are also always in tension with each other. Silius and Juvenal represent two extreme ends of the spectrum: Silius raises the fewest objections to the modes of genetic and educational transmission, while Juvenal is the most averse. Quintilian and his student Pliny the Younger fall somewhere in the middle – in offering solutions and ways to reimagine these modes of transmitting virtue, they do more than just call the exemplary tradition into question. Yet, they are also not as extreme as Juvenal, who bitingly mocks and derides both modes of transmission.

¹¹ Cf. König and Whitton 2018: 3-4 on the most appropriate way to describe literature from this era.

Key-Terms

i) Genetic Transmission

The concept of “family” is multivalent throughout this dissertation. Traditionally (and most frequently), it refers to individuals related by blood, marriage, and/or adoption.¹² However, kinship can also be used metaphorically to describe a variety of other relationships, all of which are connected by the notions of origin and descent. For instance, in the study of Ancient Greek and Roman epic, Homer is treated as a revered literary “ancestor” of sorts. His influence on later authors like Apollonius of Rhodes, Vergil, Ovid, and Lucan (and many more), leads us to classify them as his literary descendants.¹³

At its core, genetic transmission entails the manifestation of similar (and at times, identical) traits in different family members. Of course, the Romans did not possess the same understanding of genetics and biology as we do now; I use the adjective “genetic” to emphasize the consanguineous element of this mode of transmission. There was certainly an awareness that family members could have physical and personality traits in common. Catherine Baroin’s wonderful chapter “Remembering one’s Ancestors, Following in their Footsteps, being like them” provides an excellent overview of Roman understandings of “genetics”. The primary focus of the chapter is to view the active role of memory “in the construction of gentilician identity, established by the transmission of names and

¹² Cf. the discussion of Neil W. Bernstein’s *In the Image of the Ancestors: Narratives of Kinship in Flavian Epic* (2008) below. Bernstein’s broad interpretation of the term “kinship” was pivotal when generating my own definition.

¹³ Cf. Langlands 2018: 8: “The ethical imitation (*imitatio* or *aemulatio*) that is a key element of this learning process therefore has much in common with the literary *imitatio* much practiced and theorized in ancient literature, which emphasised the independence and creativity involved in engaging with and reworking the words and ideas of one’s literary predecessors”.

genealogy and by the performance of religious rites and actions”.¹⁴ Baroin argues that imitation, as embodied by the metaphor *vestigia sequi* (“to follow in the footsteps”) is pivotal to the ways in which a young Roman aristocrat both learns about and commemorates his family. While Baroin is more interested in memories and displays of moral behaviour, she offers some important insights on physical resemblance, particularly through the analysis of the word *similitudo*: “many texts insist on the physical and moral resemblance (*similitudo*) between son and father or any other ascendant of his”.¹⁵

Although physical resemblance is one of the most obvious ways to establish biological connections between individuals, it is rarely addressed in great detail:

*Interea absenti et huic qui adest imagini animi et corporis tui,
constantissimo atque optimo filio tuo, stadium, officium, operam,
laborem meum iampridem et pollicitus sum et detuli...*

Meanwhile to you while absent and also to this man who is currently present: the very image of your mind and body, your most steadfast and excellent son, I have for a long time now promised and deployed my eagerness, duty, service, and hard work (Cic. *Fam.* 6.6.13).

and

*nam si quid dignum censoris fecerit ira
quandoque et similem tibi se non corpore tantum
nec uultu dederit, morum quoque filius et qui
omnia deterius tua per uestigia peccet,*

For if he [your son] ever does something that warrants the anger of the censor, and displays that he resembles you not only in body and facial features, but also your true son by committing more egregious deeds in following your footsteps... (Juv. *Sat.* 14.50-53).

In both of the above passages, neither Cicero nor Juvenal¹⁶ specify the shared physical traits. *Corpus* is used as a catch-all to establish a mutual resemblance between father and

¹⁴ Dasen and Späth 2010: 9.

¹⁵ Baroin 2010: 20.

¹⁶ In the above excerpt, Juvenal highlights that parents can serve as counter-*exempla* as well. The

son. More importantly, authors use shared physical resemblance as a means of reinforcing genetic relationships – not only do they share similar personality and character traits, but they also physically mirror each other as well.

However, shared physical resemblance between relatives is not assured. Indeed, ancient authors vacillate on the accuracy and predictability of genetic transmission; there is no guarantee of identical duplication of biological traits and characteristics:

*Et commiscendo quom semine forte virilem
femina vim vicit subita vi corripuitque,
tum similes matrum materno semine fiunt,
ut patribus patrio. sed quos utriusque figurae
esse vides, iuxtim miscentes vulta parentum,
corpore de patrio et materno sanguine crescunt,
semina cum Veneris stimulis excita per artus
obvia confligit conspirans mutuus ardor,
et neque utrum superavit eorum nec superatumst.*

*Fit quoque ut interdum similes existere avorum
possint et referant proavorum saepe figuras,
propterea quia multa modis primordia multis
mixta suo celant in corpore saepe parentes,
quae patribus patres tradunt a stirpe profecta;
inde Venus varia producit sorte figuras
maiorumque refert vultus vocesque comasque,
quandoquidem nilo minus haec de semine certo
fiunt quam facies et corpora membraque nobis.*

*Et muliebre oritur patrio de semine saeclum,
maternoque mares existunt corpore creti;
semper enim partus duplici de semine constat,
atque utri similest magis id quodcumque creatur,
eius habet plus parte aequa; quod cernere possis,
sive virum suboles sive muliebris origo.*

It sometimes happens also that the children may appear like a grandfather and often reproduce the looks of a great-grandfather, because the parents often conceal in their bodies many first-beginnings mingled in many ways, which fathers hand on to fathers received from their stock; from these Venus brings forth forms with varying lot, and reproduces the countenance, the voice, the hair of their ancestors; for these features come from a fixed seed no less than our faces and bodies and

idea of negative *exempla*, examples which an individual should avoid imitating, will be revisited later in the introduction.

limbs. Female children also spring from their father's seed, and male children appear made of their mother's substance; for the birth always is made out of both seeds, and whichever parent the offspring resembles, of that parent it has more than half; which you may discern, whether the child be male or female (Lucretius, 4.1209-32).¹⁷

Iam illa vulgata sunt: varie ex integris truncos gigni, ex truncis integros eademque parte truncos; signa quaedam naevosque et cicatrices etiam regenerari, quarto partu aliquorum originis nota in brachio reddita

Now it is generally known that disfigured children are born from perfect parents, and from disfigured parents perfect children, as well as those who are disfigured in the same way, and that certain birthmarks and moles and even scars can be reproduced; sometimes a mark which resurfaces on an arm of someone from four generations later than the original (Pliny, *NH.* 7.11.50).

De similitudine autem oris et totius corporis altiore doctrina praediti subtilius disputant, eorumque alii in ea sunt opinione ut existiment illam origini et contextui sanguinis respondere, nec parvum argumentum ex ceteris animalibus trahunt, quae fere gignentibus similia nascuntur. alii negant hanc esse certam Naturae legem, sed species mortalium prout fortuita sors conceptionis obtulit attribui, atque ideo plerumque ex speciosis deformes et ex robustis invalidos partus edi. <igi>tur, quoniam ista quaestio in ambiguo versatur, pauca inter alienos conspectae similitudinis exempla referemus.

But there are those who, possessed with loftier education, quite accurately engage in debates about the resemblances of the face and the entire body; some are of the opinion that resemblance correlates with origin and consanguinity, and draw out a not-small argument from other animals, who for the most part are born more like their parents. Others deny that this is one of Nature's fixed laws, but rather that the appearances of mortals have been assigned according to how the fortuitous lot of conception displays them, and it is put forth, therefore, that unsightly children are often born from good-looking parents, and weak children from strong. Therefore, since this very question is situated in doubt, allow me to recall a few *exempla* of obvious resemblance between different peoples (Valerius Maximus, 9.14. *Praef.*).

While Lucretius and Pliny the Elder examine why some children more closely resemble their mother instead of their father, and vice-versa, it is Valerius Maximus who clearly outlines some of the debates on the utterly unpredictable nature of genetics. In my dissertation, I aim to demonstrate that such uncertainty is also present when examining the genetic transmission of exemplary moral *similitudines*. Logic dictates that if physical

¹⁷ Translation from *Loeb*.

characteristics can be passed down from generation to generation, so too can character traits and qualities. However, if there is no guarantee of a reliable transference of physical features, tangible qualities predetermined at conception (as seen in the above excerpt from Lucretius), then the transmission of exemplary morals and character traits is more tenuous still.

When discussing the continued relevance of traditional *exempla* in the empire, Rebecca Langlands observes that they “continue to be highly influential on Roman literature, even when they are not mentioned by name or directly discussed – perhaps *especially* when they are not directly discussed”.¹⁸ This same outlook can be applied to the lack of ancient and contemporary discussion concerning genetic transmission. The importance of heredity should not be dismissed – the emphasis on the emotions evoked by the *imagines* in the excerpt from Sallust’s *Jugurtha* cited at the beginning of the introduction attests to that.

The mode of genetic transmission sets the scene for aristocratic exemplarity: it always looms in the background, an omnipresent reality which the younger generations of these *gentes* are forced to grapple with. Indeed, as discussed earlier, by virtue of being born into these families, an immovable obligation to live up to, and indeed surpass the *exempla* set by *maiores*, is imposed upon the descendants. Not only are the younger generations expected to partake in the exemplary process, but there is also an unstated assumption that this genetic relatedness makes it easier to fulfill these obligations. That is to say, such exemplary behaviour should come naturally.

¹⁸ Langlands 2018: 252.

Polybius' famous description of the aristocratic funeral, a grandiose spectacle made open to the public, demonstrates that these genetic connections serve as both a source of familial pride and inspiration. In the following passage, the reader is presented with a detailed description of an *imago*, an ancestor-mask:

ἡ δ' εἰκῶν ἐστὶ πρόσωπον εἰς ὁμοιότητα διαφερόντως ἐξεργασμένον καὶ κατὰ τὴν πλάσιν καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὑπογραφὴν. ταύτας δὴ τὰς εἰκόνας ἔν τε ταῖς δημοτελέσι θυσίαις ἀνοίγοντες κοσμοῦσι φιλοτίμως, ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκείων μεταλλάξῃ τις ἐπιφανῆς, ἄγουσιν εἰς τὴν ἐκφοράν, περιτιθέντες ὡς ὁμοιοτάτοις εἶναι δοκοῦσι κατὰ τε τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὴν ἄλλην περικοπήν.

The image is a mask which achieves an exceptionally accurate resemblance in respect to both formation and outline. Then, publicly displaying these images on the days of public sacrifices, they lovingly adorn them, and whenever some esteemed member of the family passes away, they bring them to the funeral, having placed it on men that seem to be as similar as possible in respect to the size and general form of the deceased (Polyb. 6.53.5-7).

This is one of the more detailed descriptions of the mode of genetic transmission at play. Polybius intimates that these *imagines* serve as reminders to the next generation of successors, who would have been present at the funeral, that the same blood runs through their veins. Polybius offers an important additional detail: even the actors who donned the *imagines* in the funeral were intended to “bear the closest resemblance to the original in stature and carriage”. Physical resemblance to these *maiores*, then, is of great importance. These ancestors are not just remembered – they are brought back to life. While there was surely a swell of pride and fulfilment felt when recognizing that they are descended from such esteemed *maiores*, as we saw with Fabius Maximus and Scipio Africanus, there was likely also an overwhelming sense of anxiety and pressure.

ii) Educational Transmission

There are no guarantees with the mode of genetic transmission. What happens if this mode should fail, and these descendants in no way resemble their illustrious ascendants? It is pure naiveté to assume that the replication of these traits and characteristics goes without a hitch.¹⁹ This is where the second mode of transmission, educational, comes into play. The transmission of *exempla* via education involves the would-be imitator being taught about exemplary accomplishments and qualities, and how best to mimic and reproduce them. Educational transmission can be applied to a variety of scenarios, ranging from family members²⁰ being taught about their *maiores*, all the way to students learning from teachers.²¹

In regard to aristocratic families, educating the following generations about past heroic deeds, and the qualities which make a good statesman, was not just another method of preserving and propagating elite aristocratic culture; it also served as a means of reinforcing the mode of genetic transmission. If descendants failed to inherit specific exemplary qualities and traits from their ancestors, pedagogy was always an option.

¹⁹ Langlands 2018: 257 – “The idea of ‘ideal’ exemplarity located in an earlier time – where exemplum and imitator map perfectly onto one another to generate seamless reproduction of virtue down the generations, and where virtue is recognized and rewarded for what it is – is a fantasy for both modern scholars and for the ancient and post-classical thinkers who evoke it”. As we shall see throughout this dissertation, the mode of educational transmission is also not without its pitfalls.

²⁰ Cf. van der Blom 2010: 316-22 on the ways in which Cicero taught his son Marcus and nephew Quintus: “Cicero’s thoughts about family exemplarity were not just employed as a rhetorical device, but formed part of his own life too” (317).

²¹ Ie. Corbeill 2007: 69 – “Roman rhetorical education...serves, both in its late republican and imperial manifestations, to replicate and reestablish the previous generation”.

This is best reflected in the second part of the aristocratic funeral, also described by

Polybius:

πλὴν ὃ γε λέγων ὑπὲρ τοῦ θάπτεσθαι μέλλοντος, ἐπὶν διέλθη τὸν περὶ τούτου λόγον, ἄρχεται τῶν ἄλλων ἀπὸ τοῦ προγενεστάτου τῶν παρόντων, καὶ λέγει τὰς ἐπιτυχίας ἐκάστου καὶ τὰς πράξεις. ἐξ ὧν καινοποιουμένης αἰεὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς ἐπ' ἀρετῆ φήμης ἀθανατίζεται μὲν ἢ τῶν καλόν τι διαπραξαμένων εὐκλεία, γνώριμος δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ παραδόσιμος τοῖς ἐπιγινομένοις ἢ τῶν εὐεργετησάντων τὴν πατρίδα γίνεται δόξα. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, οἱ νέοι παρορμῶνται πρὸς τὸ πᾶν ὑπομένειν ὑπὲρ τῶν κοινῶν πραγμάτων χάριν τοῦ τυχεῖν τῆς συνακολουθούσης τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τῶν ἀνδρῶν εὐκλείας.

Besides, the one speaking over the man about to be buried, whenever he has completed his speech about this deceased man, he begins with the other images of those present, right from the oldest generations, and he speaks about the undertakings of each man, as well as their achievements. Because of which, with the perpetual renewal of the virtuous report of these good men, the reputation of those having accomplished something noble is made immortal, and the glory of those having served their country well becomes well-known to the public, and is passed down to the following generations. And the greatest thing is that young men feel encouraged to patiently endure every single thing on behalf of the public's wellbeing for the sake of obtaining a good reputation that necessarily follows good men (6.54.1-3).

Here, Polybius describes the *laudatio funebris*, a funeral oration delivered by a young descendant of the deceased.²² In her formative book *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*, Harriet I. Flower describes the funeral oration as the climactic moment of the event: “The procession set the scene and built up suspense towards the climax of the *laudatio* which expressed the various emotions inspired by the pageant of Rome's past history and by the deceased himself”.²³ While the initial viewing of the *imagines* roused powerful emotions in the deceased's descendants, hearing the speaker list their exploits and achievements further strengthened such feelings. Therefore, the mode of

²² Cf. Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of the *laudatio funebris* and its role in the transmission of aristocratic exemplarity.

²³ Flower 1996: 129.

educational transmission serves as a guidebook for young aristocrats – through various means and mediums, it provides the aspiring practitioner of exemplarity with specific and detailed examples of heroic individuals, traits, and deeds, to strive to emulate.

Scholarly Overview

The past two decades have seen an uptick in the study of exemplarity, particularly the dynamics of exemplary discourse, and its influence on Roman morality. Two seminal works on this topic, both published in 2018, provide excellent introductions to the field: Rebecca Langlands' *Exemplary Ethics in Ancient Rome* and Matthew Roller's *Models from the Past in Roman Culture*. Both texts define “exemplarity” and discuss its broader role in Roman culture.

Broadly, Langlands' focus is what she terms “exemplary ethics”, which are “based on a body of exemplary stories which are used as a medium for communicating not only moral values (such as ‘courage’ and ‘justice’) but also ethical issues and debates, as well as a complex of meta-exemplary principles that guide learners in handling exempla and implementing their lessons”.²⁴ Her overarching argument is that the role of the *exemplum* is primarily ethical. Furthermore, its ethical impact goes beyond the domains of rhetoric and literature to the sphere of everyday life. Matthew Roller's interest lies in exploring how *exempla*, defined as “rhetorical devices that effect persuasion” operate in various aspects of Roman culture (ie. thought, literature, and material evidence).²⁵ That is, how did the

²⁴ Langlands 2018: 4.

²⁵ Roller 2018: 1.

Romans form, implement, and recycle these rhetorical devices all the way from the early Republic to the mid-empire?

Of particular importance to this dissertation are two trends in the scholarship on exemplarity to which Langlands and Roller further contribute: 1) an emphasis on what I term the “educational” mode of transmission as the primary method of passing down *exempla* from generation to generation, and 2) the inherent tensions and ambiguities present within *exempla*, and their ensuing consequences.

When studying the ways in which *exempla* are handed down, pedagogy or education is often the only method of transference discussed by scholars of exemplarity. For example, in her compelling book on Cicero’s use of exemplarity, *Cicero’s Role Models: The Political Strategy of a Newcomer*, Henriette van der Blom observes that “as part of his intended image as a trustworthy guide and as an exemplary citizen, Cicero set himself up as a teacher and adviser to the younger generation of politicians”.²⁶ Similarly, in his discussion of the heroic characters in Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, Ben Tipping notes that “Example is also a driving force behind the heroic action of the *Punica*. Major and minor characters imitate and emulate past and present models, and, whether or not the imitation and emulation is conscious, their actions are explicitly or implicitly portrayed in terms of their relationships to models present in and evoked by the text”.²⁷ Finally, Roy Gibson and Ruth Morello’s chapter about the various ways in which Pliny the Younger’s uncle (Pliny the Elder), as well as friends Vestricius Spurinna, Corellius Rufus, and Verginius Rufus,

²⁶ van der Blom 2010: 317.

²⁷ Tipping 2010: 9.

all serve as *exempla*: “The insistence that we have important lessons to learn from the example set by national ancestors or family elders is a familiar way of investing the past with value”.²⁸

The scholarly emphasis on the mode of educational transmission is most clearly reflected in the models for the cycles and processes of learning from *exempla* put forth by Rebecca Langlands and Matthew Roller in their monographs. Langlands’ process describing educational transmission is comprised of the following steps: admiration, comparison, rivalry, modeling, cognition, and discernment.²⁹ In stage one, the audience, or “learner” who has witnessed the exemplary person or deed is awestruck, and feels a sense of admiration and amazement. The second stage, comparison, inspires a desire to compare oneself with the *exemplum*, “and to wonder whether they would be capable of achieving what the hero has done”.³⁰ Next is rivalry: this *exemplum* fills the student with “emotional pain and desire, a mixture of negative and positive motivation”.³¹ This results in the would-be practitioner feeling concern and anxiety about possessing “the same capacities as the exemplum”, as well as their ability to live up to the standards set”.³² Modeling and cognition contain the most explicit references to educational transmission: first, models or templates displaying ways in which one can also learn to be exemplary, and next, thinking critically – ie. not simply “going through the motions of virtue that they have observed in

²⁸ Gibson and Morello 2012: 105.

²⁹ Langlands 2018: 86-111.

³⁰ Langlands 2018: 87.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

the exemplum”.³³ The final stage is discernment, in which the student further sharpens their “skills of ethical discrimination, discernment and judgment...the faculties that are needed to apply general moral principles and ideas to particular situations”.³⁴

Matthew Roller provides a slightly different “cycle of four operations”: action, evaluation, commemoration, and norm setting.³⁵ As “cycle” suggests, this process is repetitive. Action refers to display of an exemplary action “witnessed by representatives of the larger community”.³⁶ Next is evaluation, when “eyewitnesses...evaluate the action’s significance for their community, judging it good or bad in terms of one or more of their shared values and thereby assigning it to one or more moral categories”.³⁷ The final stage is commemoration, when “the action, its performer, and the evaluation(s) it received – is commemorated via one or more monuments”.³⁸ This framework is not set in stone – throughout the book, Roller demonstrates that there are numerous factors at play, such *exempla* which never took place, negative *exempla*, and the idea that different individuals will manipulate both positive and negative *exempla* to either justify their own actions or condemn those of others.

My dissertation contains two points of departure³⁹ from the above processes. Both Langlands and Roller examine *exempla* from a macro perspective: their research focuses

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid. 88. Cf. Chapters Three and Four for a more detailed discussion on the role of discernment in exemplarity.

³⁵ Roller 2018: 4-8.

³⁶ Ibid. 5.

³⁷ Ibid. 6.

³⁸ Roller 2018: 6.

³⁹ The most basic points of departure from Langlands and Roller in this dissertation are 1) Different sources – my work is based upon close readings of Silius Italicus, Quintilian, Pliny the Younger, and Juvenal. While Langlands does offer a detailed discussion of Silian exemplarity,

on the ways in which exemplarity is understood at the societal level. Langlands is particularly interested in cultural and societal histories, and the use of *exempla* as way of inculcating certain cultural norms in all Romans, not just the elite aristocrats. Throughout her book, she discusses the story of Valerius Corvinus, and how he earned the *cognomen* “Corvinus”. While Langlands recognizes that family names are a critical part of continuity for families,⁴⁰ she focuses more on the idea that these names serve as a celebration of the contribution of these aristocratic families to the Republic, and its hallowed history:

If this story of the intrepid hero is indeed often called upon to serve the interests of a particular aristocratic family, it is able to do so because it possesses a far greater cultural resonance as a source of pride and inspiration. My primary interest in this study is in the wider moral significance of these motifs and their contribution to a Roman exemplary ethics that impacted on the moral development of members of Roman society, far beyond – though at times in collaboration with – specific political strategies.

It is certainly the case that Roman *exempla* were often used to promote the interests of leading families or the imperial household among the Roman people, and to disseminate their ideologies. They were also often used as rhetorical tools, supporting political and philosophical arguments. Such highly instrumental citations of *exempla*, which serve the needs of an argument or broader ideological or political needs, are important aspects of their multivalent role in Roman culture.⁴¹

Roller’s book adopts a similarly community-oriented focus – it examines “a series of exemplary figures from Roman legend and history, seeking to describe the social, ideological, and material building blocks out of which these [exemplary] figures are

neither Langlands nor Roller puts all four of these authors in dialogue with each other, and 2) Different dating – this dissertation focuses on a specific period of Roman history: the Flavian and Nerva-Trajanic-Hadrianic eras.

⁴⁰ Langlands 2018: 72.

⁴¹ Ibid. 74.

constructed”.⁴² All four operations in his model for transmitting *exempla*, action, evaluation, commemoration, and norm setting, are societal in nature: the action, or *exemplum*, is performed in the public eye, and when discussing the stage of commemoration, there is an extensive list of the forms in which these *exempla* are commemorated, many of which are designed to be accessible for the larger Roman community: speeches or narratives delivered orally instead of written texts, visibly honorific statues or names, collections of spoils, commemorative inscriptions or paintings, as well as actual buildings like temples, tombs, as well as roads with names or other commemorative associations.⁴³

In contrast, my research operates at the micro level, focusing specifically on the family unit and its genealogical descendants, both biological and adopted. I explore the impact of these *exempla* upon individuals with a familial connection to prominent heroes, and the ways in which *exempla* inform their sense of identity, the decisions which they make throughout their lives, and the manner in which they present themselves to the Roman public. While engaging with the broader sociocultural depictions and implications of *exempla* in a similar way to Langlands and Roller is necessary, this dissertation innovates by concentrating on the implications of *exempla* for individuals, especially aristocratic men and women for whom these exemplary heroes were more than just generic guides; rather, they were actual relatives, some of whom these younger generations of aristocrats may have known personally.

⁴² Roller 2018: 2.

⁴³ Ibid. 7.

For example, when discussing Valerius Corvinus and his descendants, Langlands emphasizes not only the family's use of the *cognomen* "Corvinus" as a form of social capital, and the opportunities it presents to advance their family status, but also as a significant way of "transmitting exemplary stories, with their reference to the impressive heritage of contemporary holders of the name, alongside the great annalistic and historic literature of Rome, and expensive visual monuments such as relief sculptures, free-standing statues and wall-paintings".⁴⁴ In contrast, my first chapter, which engages with the story of Marcus Atilius Regulus and his son Serranus in Book Six of Silius Italicus' *Punica*, does not focus on Regulus' development as an exemplary role for Roman society. Instead, I examine the impact of Regulus' *exemplum* upon his son Serranus, as well as the tensions and anxieties induced by the expectation that he follow in his father's footsteps. In addition, I highlight the problematic consequences and complexities of the inherent presumption of "genetic transmission": that by virtue of his prominent ancestry, Serranus inevitably resembles his father in a "genetically" predisposed fashion.

As stated before, although examining the sociocultural impacts of Regulus and other exemplary heroes is an important aspect of the study of exemplarity, there is a gap in the scholarly discussion regarding how individual Romans and family units engaged with the *exempla* of their own *maiores*, and furthermore, how these moral *exempla* both interacted and conflicted with the *mos maiorum*. I seek to further clarify how these aristocratic families actively embodied the *exempla* of their ancestors all the while negotiating the difficulties in trying to achieve the *fama* (or reject the *infamia*) of a famous

⁴⁴ Langlands 2018: 72

ancestor. Finally, I zoom in on the ways in which Roman educators attempted to instruct their pupils to reject negative *exempla* while still adopting the desirable *exempla* and *virtutes* of their ancestors (including “cherry-picking” virtuous traits from otherwise “bad” ancestors).

This segues into my next point of departure from Langlands and Roller. While both of their processes offer a clear way of visualizing the educational aspect of exemplary transmission, neither fully⁴⁵ take into consideration the impact of blood-relations, ie. the mode of genetic transmission. This is not to imply that there has been no scholarship on the connections between kinship, heredity, and exemplarity. Indeed, this mode of behaviour has been explored in the study of Cicero and Augustan emperors.⁴⁶ Neil W. Bernstein’s 2008 monograph *In the Image of the Ancestors: Narratives of Kinship in Flavian Epic* has been instrumental in developing this dissertation. I adopt his broad definition of “kinship”:

This book discusses three major types of kinship in the Flavian epics. The first includes unchosen vertical and lateral relationships formed at birth. Another type includes elective relationships such as marriage, fosterage, and presumptive parenthood, in which kinship is ratified not by ‘the facts of biology’ but by the acknowledgement of symbolic forms of relatedness. Social and political relationships may also be expressed in the language of kinship, such as the symbolic fatherhood of the Roman people claimed by the emperor (as ‘Father of the Fatherland,’ *Pater Patriae*) or the claims of shared descent

⁴⁵ Cf. Roller 2018: 97; 125-32 on “familial exemplarity”, which discusses how Cicero weaponizes the *exemplum* of Appius Claudius Caecus against descendant Clodius. Roller defines “familial exemplarity” as “a model for the comportment of living Claudii in any given present” (97). Roller’s analysis of Appius Claudius and Clodius briefly references the “genetic” elements of exemplarity: “That Appius is Clodius’ ancestor makes the latter’s shortcomings the more lurid, for the expectation that patterns of behavior run in families suggests Clodius should be striving to rival or outstrip Appius in the quality of his performance, the moral value it is deemed to carry, and in the monuments that commemorate it” (126).

⁴⁶ Ie. van der Blom 2010: 88 and 98; Treggiari 2003: 144, 148, 150; Cooley 1998: 206-7.

(συγγένεια) from common founders used to unite communities in political alliances.⁴⁷

The chapter on Silius Italicus' *Punica*, of most relevance to this dissertation, features Hannibal, Fabius Cunctator, and Scipio Africanus.⁴⁸ Here, Bernstein connects the family unit with politics: the obligations and relationships with family members inform the very decisions they choose to make, all of which are inextricably connected to the historical and political context of the *Punica*.⁴⁹ The case-study of Hannibal was particularly helpful, because it presents both genetic and educational transmission as interlocking and engaging with each other.⁵⁰ Bernstein identifies *furor*, “madness”, as a hereditary trait in the *gens Barca*:

Through the provision of genealogical information, the narrative emphasizes the antiquity of the legacy of vengeance that Hannibal inherits from his father Hamilcar. Hannibal's father Hamilcar ‘was descended from the Tyrian family of ancient Barcas,’ and he started from Belus in counting down his distant ancestors’...Cognizance of Hannibal's descent from Belus causes the weight of history and descent to encumber each of his actions to a far greater degree than those of Scipio who refers only to the preceding generation when describing his ancestral legacy.⁵¹

However, the presence and significance of educational transmission is not acknowledged in this observation. Bernstein hints at it, noting that “After his country's defeat in the First Punic War, Hamilcar, ‘skilled at nourishing madness, sowed war with the Romans into his son's youthful breast’ by means of a ritual in the temple of Dido (*Pun.* 1.81-139)”.⁵²

⁴⁷ Bernstein 2008b: 4.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 132-59.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 132.

⁵⁰ Bernstein 2008b: 135-139.

⁵¹ Ibid. 136.

⁵² Ibid. 135.

However, *furor* is merely labeled as a “paternal legacy”;⁵³ It becomes part of Hannibal’s “genetic”, or biological makeup, but not because he was born with it as a trait passed down from his father. While *furor* was taught by Hamilcar, in some ways, it becomes a form of genetic transmission, because this trait is now shared between two biological relatives.⁵⁴ Bernstein later quite rightly notes that Hannibal’s *furor* becomes a family trait, based on an awareness of lineage, but still does not quite bring out the educational aspect:

Following his conception of his lineage’s destiny, Hannibal attempts to reproduce his own social characteristics and to perpetuate his own ancestral legacies in his own son. He orders his wife Imilce to repeat the ritual in Dido’s temple that his father performed with him and thereby to transmit the obligation to make war with the Romans to his own son when he comes of age.⁵⁵

Here, the mode of genetic transmission has been reinforced by education; genetics could not guarantee the replication and manifestation of Hamilcar’s *furor* in Hannibal, and Hannibal’s *furor* in his son. This interlocking and at times codependent nature of genetic and educational transmission is a topic I will further explore in this dissertation. Both modes shift between my four texts, and one can rarely be identified and examined without acknowledging the presence of the other; the simplicity of both modes of transmission is a façade.

This is not surprising; the current interpretive lay of the land, as it were, in exemplary studies is the imperfect nature of exemplarity, both in theory and practice.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Cf. my discussion of Vespasian and Domitian’s shared trait of *cupiditas* in Chapter Three – there appears to be a similar dynamic at play.

⁵⁵ Bernstein 2008b: 136-37.

Exempla, by nature, are rife with tension and contradiction. For instance, Melissa Barden Dowling's 2000 article "The Clemency of Sulla" addresses Sulla's seemingly contradictory persona. How can he exhibit both savage cruelty and the exemplary virtue of *clementia*? Dowling, in tracking "the development and evolution of the *topos* of Sullan cruelty from the earliest works of Cicero, written while Sulla was still alive and in power, through to the rhetorically informed *exempla* of the authors of the High Empire",⁵⁶ highlights the fluidity and ambiguity of exemplary (or not, as the case may be) heroes.⁵⁷

Langlands argues in her second chapter that the ethical success and appeal of *exempla* are predicated upon their inherent ambiguities and complexities: "Like other story forms, Roman exempla enhance ethical understanding because of the ability of stories to acknowledge within their plots ethical difficulties or complexities that it is hard to communicate effectively in any other way".⁵⁸ Her analysis of the story of Mucius Scaevola, the famous early Republican hero who attempted to assassinate Etruscan King Lars Porsenna and stuck his hand in a fire to prove that his body and life were of far less value than the wellbeing of Rome, depicts him as a multifaceted and ambiguous *exemplum*: "Some aspects of Mucius' behaviour – especially strong elements of ingenuity, strategy, deceit and trickery, border on the unethical and raise interesting questions about the parameters of Roman morality and the boundaries between what counts as ethical and what

⁵⁶ Dowling 2000: 305.

⁵⁷ Cf. Williams 2004: 70-98 for a similar approach with heroic statesman M. Atilius Regulus, one of the case-studies in my first chapter. When discussing the *Punica*, I engage with Tipping 2010: 10-11: "if Silius parades exemplary Romans, he also raises questions about their value as exemplars".

⁵⁸ Langlands 2018: 53.

does not”.⁵⁹ These qualities, she argues, resurface with varying levels of intensity and importance throughout the different narratives on Mucius.⁶⁰

Similarly, Roller calls into question the perceived neutrality of *exempla*: “All are tendentious and partisan, as befits their argumentative context”.⁶¹ Possible ambiguities of *exempla* include the impact of a variety of applicable scenarios upon the continued value and consequences of the *exemplum*, the veracity of the *exemplum* in terms of the time and place in which it was originally set, the ways in which it compares and contrasts with the current *exemplum*, which specific aspect of the *exemplum* is being commemorated, whether the “implied norm” has been correctly recognized by the audience.⁶²

The inherent complexities and potential for error within these *exempla* are unmistakable; the application of this outlook to the modes of genetic and educational transmission forms the basis of my dissertation. The primary goal of this project is to identify and analyze the numerous pitfalls of the exemplary process, which is certainly not infallible.

Chapter Summaries

My first chapter looks at Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, which features the ancestors and descendants of many famous regnal and early Republican heroes. I focus on the genetic transmission of virtue, using Serranus, the son of M. Atilius Regulus, and Crixus, a

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. – “A single narrative (or better still a series or collection of narratives) can communicate the complexity of a concept such as courage or justice, in a way that a simple definition or a logical philosophical exposition cannot”.

⁶¹ Roller 2018: 13.

⁶² Ibid.

descendant of Brennus the Gaul, as case-studies. Both stories reflect a problematic aspect of genetic transmission: the expectation that all traits inherited are positive, and worth emulating. Rather, the stories of Serranus and Crixus highlight the idea that one cannot rely solely on ancestral legacies; although they provide an advantage, they are not a substitute for *labor*, *pietas*, *virtus*, and other traditional Roman values.

The second chapter argues that Quintilian, in teaching his readers on how to educate an aristocratic statesman in Imperial Rome, implicitly suggests that adherence to the *Institutio Oratoria* (*IO*) should produce a new era of heroes in an Imperial age. Using subtle critiques, Quintilian calls into question the superficial simplicity of exemplarity, education, and familial relationships. I argue that Quintilian's depiction of Cato the Elder in the *IO* presents exemplarity as dependent upon adaptation and evolution, instead of blind imitation. Despite instances of genetic and educational modes of transmission throughout the treatise, Quintilian complicates these modes by blurring their boundaries. When Quintilian references these earlier authors to educate his students on Roman morality, he is not only treating his literary ancestors as examples, but is also implicitly recommending himself as an *exemplum*. Throughout the *IO*, Republican heroes appear as guides of literary style rather than ethics, yet the process of adapting their *exempla* for contemporary life is still fraught with the usual dilemmas of ethical exemplarity.

My third chapter examines Pliny the Younger's adoption of two principles from his teacher Quintilian's *IO* in the *Panegyricus*, and the insights they offer regarding both the modes of genetic and educational transmission. These two principles are 1) To be discerning when selecting *exempla* to imitate, and 2) Just as a successful orator adapts his

speech for different contexts and audiences, so too should *exempla* and traditions be reimagined and refashioned to suit various occasions and scenarios. The first two sections contain case-studies for genetic transmission: Trajan's adoption, and Pliny's prayer for Trajan to have his own biological children. I argue that both examples encourage the reader to reevaluate expectations associated with genetic transmission. The final section discusses Pliny's incorporation of elements from the traditionally Republican *laudatio funebris*, and its implications. The echoes of the *laudatio funebris* imparts a distinctly traditional and exemplary Republican flavour to Pliny's speech. However, in the spirit of the Quintilianic ethos, Pliny adapts and reshapes the *laudatio funebris*, using it both to celebrate Trajan's reign, and condemn Domitian's.

In my final chapter, I examine Juvenal's *Satires* 1, 2, 7, 8, and 14, as texts which reject the expectations linked with the genetic and educational transmissions of character traits, both of which are predicated upon the repetitive and cyclic process of exemplarity. This obsession with continuity and exemplarity has several consequences, namely complacency, hypocrisy, and unachievable standards, all of which contribute to Juvenal's poetic *indignatio* at the failures and perversions of genetic and educational transmission of virtue. For example, in *Satire* 8, Juvenal presents famous patrician aristocrats as moldy relics far past their prime, in contrast to the dynamism of plebeians. This comparison suggests that genetic transmission has not only been perverted, but has become downright undesirable.

CHAPTER ONE: REPUBLICAN KINSHIP AND VIRTUE IN SILIUS ITALICUS'
PUNICA

Introduction

Silius Italicus' *Punica*, a lengthy¹ national² epic focused on the events of the Second Punic War, is an invaluable source for Imperial conceptualizations of Republican heroism. Published sometime in the first-century CE, the *Punica*'s author, Tiberius Catius Asconius Silius Italicus, lived through one of the most turbulent periods of Roman history: he was born ca. 25 CE, in the midst of Tiberius' reign, and died in 100 CE, right at the beginning of Trajan's reign.³ One of the most striking features of the *Punica* is its catalogue of exemplary Republican heroes and their descendants: for instance, there is Cloelius, a descendant of the early Republican heroine Cloelia, and Scaevola, a descendant of Mucius Scaevola. There are also pairs of ancestors and descendants, such as Publius Cornelius Scipio and Scipio Africanus, as well as Fabius Maximus and Pacuvius, and their sons.⁴ By including prosopographical descriptions of these heroes, Silius invites his readers to consider Imperial perspectives on hereditary virtue and the ways in which it interacts with exemplarity.

¹ Encapsulated in 17 books, and containing just over 12,000 verses, the *Punica* is the longest of all surviving Latin epics.

² Tipping 2010: 7 describes it as a form of "martial epic...the heroizing form *par excellence*". Manuwald 2022: 20 labels the *Punica* a historical epic "understood on a formal level as a description of epic narratives of historical events rather than exclusively myths...". I use "national" here to emphasize the feelings of patriotism and appreciation for the Republic evinced by the epic's exemplary heroes.

³ Cf. Jacobs 2021 for an excellent beginners' guide to Silius Italicus.

⁴ Cf. Sil. *Pun.* 13.650-686 for P. Cornelius Scipio, 7.536-566 for Fabius Maximus, and 11.303-368 for Pacuvius.

Using Serranus, the son of Marcus Atilius Regulus, and Crixus, a descendant of Brennus the Gaul, as case-studies,⁵ this chapter examines how various complexities of the mode of genetic transmission hinder the seamless transfer of exemplary traits from ascendant to descendant. I argue that Silius complicates the expectation that both Serranus and Crixus, by virtue of shared biological bonds, will be able to successfully replicate the exemplary traits inherited from their ancestors. Indeed, this not only an expectation, but actually the purpose of genetic transmission. However, as addressed in the introduction, the processes of transmitting *exempla* are not without complications and the potential for error.

Ben Tipping argues that “if Silius parades exemplary Romans, he also raises questions about their value as exemplars”.⁶ In particular, the contrasting aspects of Regulus’ personality, and the ways in which they affect the worth and validity of his *exemplum* have received much scholarly interest.⁷ However, this chapter focuses on the schisms within the exemplary process itself rather than the *exempla* and the heroes who practice them. Scholars have established that exemplary heroes can at times be inherently ambiguous. For instance, Regulus’ split personality demonstrates that there are some *exempla* to embrace, and others to avoid. I propose that this outlook can be applied to the exemplary process itself; this chapter examines the impact of such ambivalence upon specific individuals,

⁵ Leach 2014: 262 briefly touches upon this: “In Silius’ *Punica* 6 we find all the positive segments of the story interwoven in an extended narrative whose overall framing theme is the transmission of a heroic mentality from father to son.” My aim is to further expand upon this observation.

⁶ Tipping 2010: 10-11.

⁷ Ie. Baier 2022, Walter 2018, Leach 2014, Augoustakis 2010 and 2006, Williams 2004, and Frölich 2000.

particularly when the transmission of these *exempla* is inextricably intertwined with the legacy and future of their families. In the cases of both Serranus and Crixus, these repetitive cycles of exemplarity are not immune to error, and must be examined critically. The fault does not necessarily lie with the *exempla* they seek to imitate, but with the exemplary process itself.

Such complexities are apparent even in the vocabulary used to describe the procedure of genetic transmission. Rebecca Langlands quite rightly distinguishes between the verbs “replicate” and “duplicate”: “These ‘new’ exempla replicate the exemplary characteristics of the old exempla, even though they are not exactly the same as their models; they replicate rather than duplicate, perhaps”.⁸ This is an important distinction to make – hopes for successfully replicating the exemplary traits displayed by their heroic ancestors are pinned on future generations. To replicate is “to create or constitute a reproduction of (an object, situation, event, etc.); to represent or recreate in a similar form or manner but in a different context, circumstance, etc.; to imitate”.⁹

Replication best describes the exemplary expectations placed upon Serranus, particularly upon learning about the legacy of his deceased father, Regulus, from faithful attendant Marus. Marus’ memories of Regulus serve as a guiding *exemplum*. However, Silius interferes with the presumed smooth transmission of such memories with the character Marcia, Regulus’ widow. Marcia’s memories of Regulus contradict those of Marus, and serve as an intertextual reference to Marcia, wife of Cato the Younger, in

⁸ Langlands 2018: 99.

⁹ *OED*, s.v. “replicate (v.), sense 1.d.”.

Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Furthermore, Marcia's conflicting memories of Regulus result in a dilemma regarding exemplary transmission, and Serranus' deviation from his father's *exemplum* ultimately saves his life.

On the other hand, Crixus seeks to duplicate Brennus; he strives "to make the double or exact copy of".¹⁰ In fact, Silius depicts him as virtually indistinguishable from the description of his ancestors in Book Eight of Vergil's *Aeneid*. Unfortunately, while this meticulous mimicry of distant ancestor Brennus should be a guarantee for attaining success and *gloria*, it actually serves as Crixus' downfall.

The Serranus Episode

The story of Serranus occupies a sizable portion of Book Six — approximately 560 lines.¹¹ Briefly, the episode describes an injured Serranus who has survived the defeat at Lake Trasimene, and is trying to return home to his mother Marcia.¹² Marus, Regulus' trusty attendant in the First Punic War, accompanies Serranus and describes Regulus' heroic accomplishments.¹³ Regulus is best remembered as the Republican hero who, after being captured in Carthage in 256 BCE, was released to negotiate peace-terms with Rome. The terms were unfavorable, and he urged the Senate to refuse, opting instead to submit to

¹⁰ *OED*, s.v. "duplicate (v.), sense 2,".

¹¹ *Sil. Pun.* 6.62-589.

¹² Interestingly, there is no historical record of Serranus, nor Regulus' attendant Marus. Walter 2018: 205 recalls the Serranus featured in the Parade of Heroes in *Aen.* 6.841-44. Augoustakis 2010: 157 terms this fabrication of descendants of famous Republicans "a Silian invention." Shades of this "Silian innovation" can also be seen in the character of Crixus.

¹³ The relationship between Serranus and Marus echoes Telemachus and Eumaeus, who discuss the absent Odysseus in Book Sixteen of *Odyssey*. Sadly, Serranus is denied the happy reunion Telemachus enjoys with Odysseus, with his own father Regulus.

a torturous death rather than endanger the Roman state.

Silius begins the Serranus episode by immediately commenting on his ancestry:

*Serranus, clarum nomen, tua, Regule, proles,
qui longum semper fama gliscente per aeuum,
infidis seruasse fidem memorabere Poenis,*

Serranus, an illustrious name, is your descendant, Regulus; you, whose fame always spreads during a long passage of time, you will be remembered as the one who kept faith with the faithless Carthaginians (*Pun.* 6.62-64).

Here, the familial relationship between Serranus and Regulus is firmly established. Furthermore, the phrase *clarum nomen* sets up the expectation that Serranus will be as famous and renowned as his father.¹⁴ Silius uses the identical phrase on one other occasion in the *Punica*: Hannibal seeks to better understand Fabius Maximus' family history, and asks a character called Cilnius to enlighten him further. As is to be expected with Silius, no name is insignificant; he describes Cilnius as possessing a *clarum nomen* (*Sil. Pun.* 7.30). As Antony Augoustakis and Neil Bernstein observe in their translation of the *Punica*, this Cilnius is an ancestor of the Augustan literary patron Maecenas.¹⁵

Silius' Regulus is particularly easy to idealize because he is only present in the *Punica* as a memory. The reader, along with Serranus, mostly learns about Regulus' character through the eyes of the loyal Marus, and undoubtedly inherit his biases.¹⁶ Indeed, Marus'

¹⁴ The expression *clarum nomen* occurs five other times in Latin literature, and bar the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*, is used to indicate claims to prominent and distinguished ancestry. Cf. *Ov. Met.* 11.285-286, *Ov. Pont.* 1.9.39, [Sen.] *Octavia* 749, *Sen. Dial.* 6.10.1.3, and *Sil. Pun.* 7.30. Walter 2018: 205 offers another interpretation: "The poet uses the *clarum nomen* 'Serranus', immortalized in the Vergilian Parade of Heroes, to declare a person famous whom the epic poet has just created."

¹⁵ Augoustakis and Bernstein 2021: 161. Cf. *Tac. Ann.* 6.11, which suggests that "Cilnius" might be Maecenas' mother's name; *Liv.* 10.3.2 observes that it might be descended from an ancient Etruscan family in Arretium.

¹⁶ Leach 2014: 265. To elaborate further, Gowing 2005: 2, in reference to emperor Tiberius,

fond memories of Regulus profoundly influence his use of genetic transmission to inspire and galvanize Serranus:

*Cetera acerbantem questu lenire laborans
effatur senior: 'patrio, fortissime, ritu,
quicquid adest duri et rerum inclinata feramus.*

...
*sat tibi, sat magna et totum uulgata per orbem
stant documenta domus: sacer ille et numine nullo
inferior tuus ille parens decora alta parauit
restando aduersis nec uirtutem exuit ullam,
ante reluctantes liquit quam spiritus artus.*

The old man, taking pains to mollify Serranus as he continued to feel bitter with his complaints, spoke thus: Come, bravest boy, by your father's custom, let us endure whatever hardship is present, and the deterioration of our affairs... The examples of your house, which are sufficiently great and sufficiently well-known throughout the entire world, stand immovable; that father of yours, who is sacrosanct and inferior to no divinity, has achieved lofty honours by refusing to yield to adversity, and he has not let any of his virtues go before his spirit departs from his reluctant limbs (*Pun.* 6.117-119; 122-36).

Implicit in this nostalgic recollection of Regulus is Marus' insistence that Serranus, by virtue of being biologically related to Regulus, is more than capable of equaling the number of *decora alta* earned by his father. Marus comforts the discouraged and exhausted Serranus by observing that both he and his father have suffered terrible misfortunes. However, part of Regulus' *decora* comes from dealing head-on with bad luck; he refuses to let adversity hinder him from fulfilling his duty as a Roman general, which ultimately leads to his sacrificing himself for the safety and well-being of the Republic. Such

observes "however, his memory could be entirely selective, with decisions large and small hinging on what the emperor chose to remember...and forget". The same can be said not just of Regulus, but of exemplary memories in general. The characters Serranus, Marus, and Marcia, all have the option to be selective in their memories of Regulus – they can choose to remember whatever they wish. This can have a significant impact on the mode of educational transmission – the recipient of the exemplary lesson is not guaranteed an objective and impartial education.

behaviour was highly esteemed, and is often cited in Roman exemplary discourse.¹⁷ Although not expressed overtly, the moral of Marus' anecdote is that if Regulus persevered, then Serranus can, and indeed should, as well. Silius, through Marus, presents the reader with endurance as one of the *virtutes* which Serranus is expected to inherit from his father.¹⁸ In this instance, Marus reinforces the mode of genetic transmission with education: being the son of Regulus should have been enough to activate Serranus' exemplary traits. However, Marus clearly feels the need to encourage and motivate Serranus with the recollections of his father's heroic and exemplary exploits.

However, such endurance and altruism were not permanent fixtures of Regulus' character. Gareth Williams observes that "the Regulus we first witness in the *Punica*...always leads from the front, a courageous adventurer often bordering on the reckless".¹⁹ Indeed, numerous scholars have observed the ambiguities present in Regulus' heroic persona, demonstrating that he is certainly not without flaws, which seems to be a theme throughout the *Punica*.²⁰

Silius utilizes the presence of Marcus Atilius Regulus in order to encourage his readers to view exemplarity from multiple perspectives. Regulus appears in the *Punica* only through the memories of those who knew him. The principal sources for Regulus in the *Punica* are Marus, Marcia, and Serranus.²¹ The different perspectives and memories of

¹⁷ The suicide of Cato the Younger (=Uticensis), who, as a stalwart defender of traditional Roman values, opted to die rather than live in a Rome governed by Julius Caesar is an excellent example. Plut. *Cat. Min.* 71 describes how the people of Utica all gathered to honour Cato, and had no fear of Caesar's impending arrival.

¹⁸ Cf. Leach 2014: 263 and Tipping 2010: 34.

¹⁹ Williams 2004: 72; 76.

²⁰ Cf. n.7 above.

²¹ Regulus features most prominently in Book Six. However, he is also referenced in Books Two

Regulus, particularly those of Marus and Serranus, are rather optimistic. There is an oblique sense that inheriting Regulus' character traits is advantageous, because he is an *exemplum* worth emulating. However, Silius shows us that perception regarding these heroic *virtutes* is key.²²

Before doing so, a brief overview of the legend of Regulus in other Latin authors, particularly the references which establish him as a heroic Republican statesman, is needed.²³ Interestingly, as Leach observes, some of our sources on Regulus – Polybius, Sempronius Tuditanus (cited by Aulus Gellius), and Diodorus Siculus – are less than sympathetic.²⁴ None of these critical sources mention his determination to keep his oath with the Carthaginians, nor his self-sacrifice in exhorting the Roman people to not accept the Carthaginian terms. Polybius in particular is quite critical, observing the irony that Regulus, incapable of showing mercy to those in distress, now found himself in the same situation with the Carthaginians, as well as implying that Regulus' culpability lay in his reliance on Fortune.²⁵ Tuditanus and Diodorus describe Regulus' family (including his wife, according to Diodorus) as vicious avengers of Regulus, torturing Carthaginian prisoners so inhumanely that a tribune had to get involved.²⁶

and Four as a source of pride for the Romans (Sil. *Pun.* 2.343 and 4.360), along with a description of his tortured body on Hannibal's shield (Sil. *Pun.* 2.436).

²² Leach 2014: 265, n.45 also makes this observation when discussing Marcia's reaction to Regulus' failure to return home in the *Punica*.

²³ Leach 2014 and Williams 2004 do an excellent job of unpacking and discussing the inherent ambiguities of Regulus' heroism. I have only selected sources which pre-date or are contemporary with Silius Italicus. Cf. Mix 1970 for a comprehensive overview of the myths and legends surrounding Regulus.

²⁴ Leach 2014: 250-54.

²⁵ Polyb. 1.35.1-4.

²⁶ Gell. *NA* 7.4 and Diod. Sic. 24.12.

As Leach asks, how then does Silius' reader transition to the image of a heroic Regulus who maintains *fides* with the Carthaginians by upholding his oath, while also enduring horrendous torture for encouraging the Romans not to make peace with Carthage?²⁷ Regulus' insistence on maintaining his oath to the Carthaginians was, it seems, common knowledge. Cicero is the best ancient source for this legend, and makes numerous references to Regulus' *fides*.²⁸ In the *De Officiis*, Cicero extensively describes what constitutes *iustum bellum* and *ius fetiale*, "legitimate war" and "fetial law", emphasizing their importance to Roman martial ethics by comparing Regulus' *fides* with the deceitful prisoners of Cannae.²⁹ He later cites Regulus when discussing the concept of *utilitas*, or expediency, specifically whether one should act in their own interests, or on behalf of the State.³⁰ Cicero refers to Ulysses, the epitome of dishonesty and trickery, as maintaining his oath to Menelaus, despite trying to shirk such responsibilities.³¹ As Leach notes, Cicero observes that what makes Regulus an outstanding *exemplum* is his adherence to the *ius fetiale*: he could not break his oath, because the Carthaginians were a sanctioned and legitimate Roman enemy.³² Another of Regulus' *virtutes* is his *rusticitas*; Leach notes that like the early Republican legends, Regulus was also remembered for his austere rusticity.³³

²⁷ Leach 2014: 250.

²⁸ There has been plenty of recent scholarship on the presence of *fides* in the *Punica*. The 2019 volume *Fides in Flavian Literature*, edited by Antony Augoustakis, Emma Buckley, and Claire Stocks is comprehensive. Cf. the chapters "Fides, Pietas, and the Outbreak of Hostilities in *Punica* 1" by Raymond Marks, and "Hannibal as (Anti)Hero of *Fides* in Silius' *Punica* by Marco Fucecchi for specifically Silian material. Also cf. Baier 2022 which argues that Cicero may have viewed himself as Regulus' counterpart.

²⁹ Cic. *Off.* 1.34-41.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 3.99-115.

³¹ *Ibid.* 3.99.

³² Leach 2014: 256. Cf. Cic. *Off.* 3.108.

³³ *Ibid.* 256.

Valerius Maximus recalls that Atilius belongs to a family which fashioned itself on Cincinnatus, while Pliny the Elder attempts to etymologize the Atilian cognomen of “Serranus”, deriving it from *serentem*, or “sowing”.³⁴

There is one other important source on Regulus which predates the *Punica*. Horace’s *Ode* 3.5 contains one of the best-known references to Regulus, and the entire poem is seemingly dedicated to extolling his numerous exemplary virtues. His mind is described as *provida*, or “prescient”, and he displays concern for the forthcoming Roman generations.³⁵ Leach describes Regulus as “looking to the future exactly as an exemplary figure should do; he foresees the long-lasting consequences of setting mistaken precedent”.³⁶

*fertur pudicae coniugis osculum
parvosque natos ut capitis minor
ab se removisse et virilem
torvus humi posuisse vultum,*

*donec labantis consilio patres
firmaret auctor numquam alias dato,
interque maerentis amicos
egregius properaret exsul.*

*atqui sciebat quae sibi barbarus
tortor pararet; non aliter tamen
dimovit obstantis propinquos
et populum reditus morantem*

It is said that he [Regulus] rejected his virtuous wife’s kiss and their small sons, just like a citizen who had lost their rights, and that he also gloomily fixed his manly gaze upon the ground until he had animated the hesitant senators with a plan never before given on another occasion, and then rushed away amongst his mournful friends, an extraordinary exile. But he also knew what barbaric

³⁴ Val. Max. 4.4.5 and Plin. *NH* 18.20. This etymology seems to be the inspiration for Silius’ decision to name Regulus’ son “Serranus”. Leach 2014: 262 suggests that it is an “agriculturally based ancient name.”

³⁵ Hor. *Carm.* 3.5.13-16.

³⁶ Leach 2014: 248.

torturer was prepared for him; however, he parted his relations who stood in his way, and the citizens attempting to delay his return... (*Carm.* 3.5.41-52).

Here, Regulus is depicted as resigned to his fate, and willing to selflessly sacrifice himself for the good of the Roman people. Horace's use of *fertur*, "it was said," leads the reader to view this anecdote as an *exemplum*, which was common knowledge.³⁷

In the *Punica*, Marus portrays Regulus as a legendary memory of the distant past whose moral and exemplary behaviour serves as a guide for future generations, citing his *fortitudo* as an *exemplum* which Serranus should strive to emulate:

*nec tibi nunc ritus imitantem irasque ferarum
Pygmalionem temptarem expromere gentem,
si maius quicquam toto uidisset in orbe
gens hominum, quam quod uestri ueneranda parentis
edidit exemplum uirtus. pudet addere questus
supplicii, quae spectauit placido ore ferentem.
tu quoque, care puer, dignum te sanguine tanto
fingere ne cessa atque orientes comprime fletus.*

And I would not now try to explain to you how the Carthaginian nation imitates the angry rituals of wild beasts, if the race of mankind had seen any better example in the entire world, than the one which your father's venerable virtue has put forth. It feels shameful to add complaints to the tortures which I witnessed him bear with a calm expression. You too, dear boy, do not stop molding yourself as one who is worthy of such a great bloodline, and also hold back that crying which is now starting to appear (*Pun.* 6.531-38).

The pointed juxtaposition of the words *exemplum* and *virtus* underline Silius' rhetorical intentions. Regulus' comrade Marus memorializes him as a hero, and everything which

³⁷ Regulus' wife is an *exemplum* too – she is described as *pudica*, or "virtuous" (Hor. *Carm.* 3.5.41). This must be Marcia, but here, Horace condemns her to anonymity, perhaps because the most important thing to know about her is *pudicitia*. We see something similar in Book One of Livy when he first mentions Aeneas' wife Lavinia. He refers to Lavinia first as Latinus' daughter, given to Aeneas as pledge of friendship. The second reference to Lavinia is as the namesake for the new settlement of Lavinium (Liv. 1.1.9-10). Like Marcia in Horace, Lavinia is only relevant because of the functions which she serves; for the moment, there is no need to name her.

Marus says invites both Serranus and, via the narrator, the reader, to draw an immediate comparison with Regulus.³⁸ Silius, through Marus, manipulates the bonds of kinship to demonstrate that distinguished character traits are passed down from generation to generation, the very essence of genetic transmission. Significantly, Silius demonstrates that this mode is cyclic in nature. When describing the torture which Regulus endures at the hands of the Carthaginians, he chastises Serranus for crying, musing that *...eritque dies, tua quo, dux inclite, fata / audire horrebunt a te calcata minores.*, '“there will be a day when, O illustrious leader, the younger generations will shudder to hear about your fate which has been trodden down on by you”'.³⁹ A key part of both the genetic and educational modes of transmission is not only learning and replicating the deeds of your ancestors, but ensuring that the continuity of *exempla* for the next generation to follow. Serranus then, at least according to Marus, must embrace the legacy of his father and endow it with further honours and merit for the young *minores* to come.

The use of *fingerere* is striking, especially in the context of exemplarity, where it means “to modify the character or behaviour of (a person or animal), mould, guide, influence, etc.; (w. pred. adj., noun) to train, influence (a person) to become”.⁴⁰ *Fingere* is used in this manner as early as Terence in his *Self-Tormentor*, where one of the characters says *sed ille tuom quoque Syrus idem mire finxit filium*, “but indeed that Syrus has trained

³⁸ E.V. Mulhern’s 2014 dissertation, “Roman Nostalgia: Exemplarity and *Romanitas* in Late Republican and Imperial Literature” offers a good survey of Regulus’ *fortitudo* in numerous ancient authors (79-89).

³⁹ Sil. *Pun.* 6.549-560.

⁴⁰ *OLD*, s.v. “fingo (v.), sense 5,”.

your son in the same manner wonderfully”.⁴¹ In a contextually similar manner to Marus, Horace uses a form of *fingere* in his *Ars Poetica: o maior iuvenum, quamvis et voce paterna / fingeris ad rectum et per te sapis...*, “Oh you elder of the youth, although you are fashioned in the right way by your father’s voice, and you are wise in and of yourself...”.⁴² Like Serranus, the addressee in the *Ars* is doubly endowed: not only is he innately clever, but Horace makes it clear that he has been well brought up and educated by his father. However, Horace, much like Silius, has a knack for contradicting, or at the very least complicating, traditional Roman values and morals. When he uses *fingere* in his *Odes*, it is for the purpose of illustrating that the act of moulding or training, when used for negative purposes, has the potential to destroy future generations:

*fecunda culpae saecula nuptias
primum inquinavere et genus et domos;
hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit.*

*motus doceri gaudet Ionicos
matura virgo et fingitur artibus*

Generations breeding sin first polluted marriages, and then the family, and homes; from this source derived disaster, and it flowed both into the fatherland, and into the people. The mature maiden rejoices in being taught the Ionian dances, and is trained in its accompanying arts (*Carm.* 3.6.17-22).

Here, *fingere* has resulted in calamity: succeeding generations are being taught the wrong things, and are therefore responsible for the ensuing pollution.

The story of Regulus promotes a multi-vision of the exemplary process, and the expectations it raises; this is best seen with Serranus’ mother and Regulus’ widow, Marcia.

⁴¹ Ter. *Haut.* 898.

⁴² Hor. *Ars P.* 366-67.

Her story negates Marus' celebration of Regulus' sacrifice for the wellbeing of Rome as heroic and indeed necessary. Marus' tales of Regulus paint a picture of hope and optimism for the future. His stories are imbued with a lively sense of enthusiasm and passion which present becoming a hero as challenging, but nevertheless worthwhile. This is a result typically expected of the exemplary process: the duplication of heroic qualities ensures the future of the following generations. Consider Achilles in Homer's *Iliad* who, glittering with dynamism and glory, is the archetypal epic hero. It is only in retrospect that Achilles sorely regrets his decision. He laments to Odysseus that, had he known that life in the Underworld was so dull, he would have happily lived on earth as a normal man.⁴³ Similarly, the story of Marcia, who represents the aftermath and reality of choosing to be a famed hero, displays the flawed nature of the exemplary process: such pursuits in practice, rather than in theory, can lead to death and destruction.

In one of Silius' first passages about her, Marcia is described as *infelix nimia magni uirtute mariti*, "made wretched by the excessive virtue of her great husband".⁴⁴ Regulus' heroism has reduced Marcia and their two children to abject poverty and destitution. Marcia is described tragically: she is characterized as *infelix*, and there appears to be no hope for a happy future. In contrast, when discussing Regulus Silius adopts a more positive and reverent tone. Unlike Marcia, who is left to live the rest of her life widowed and in poverty, Regulus' death in service to the Roman State is a source of pride. Serranus'

⁴³ Hom. *Od.* 11.487-491.

⁴⁴ Sil. *Pun.* 6.404.

attempt to remember what Regulus looked like highlights the almost mythical aura of

Regulus' memory:

...sed vana recordor,
ni, Mare, (nam primo tunc haerebamus in aeuo)
humana maior species erat. horrida cano
uertice descendens ingentia colla tegebat
caesaries, frontique coma squalente sedebat
terribilis decor atque animi uenerabile pondus.

Unless I am misremembering Marus, for I was then quite young, his appearance was greater than human; shaggy hair, descending from his white head, covered his huge neck, and resting upon his face with its filthy hair was formidable grace, and the venerable depth of his soul (*Pun.* 6.424-29).

Serranus' language is filled with awe and reverence, and Regulus' superhuman appearance renders him worthy of esteem and respect.⁴⁵ Serranus' introduction to his recollection with *sed uana recordor*, "Unless I am misremembering," introduces another complication.⁴⁶ It is a common trope in Roman *exempla* that humble and even squalid appearances serve as a façade, belying true virtue and dignity. One has only to think of Cato the Elder's *De Agricultura*, or Livy's account of Cincinnatus either digging or ploughing fields, and wiping the sweat and dirt off of his brow while being summoned to serve the state of Rome.⁴⁷ However, if Serranus can barely remember his father, how authentic or trustworthy is this *exemplum*? Regulus is more like a fable than a historical figure; Serranus' observation that "his appearance was greater than human," *humana maior*

⁴⁵ Augoustakis 2006: 147: "After Marus' description of Regulus' arrival at Rome and his encounter with Marcia, Serranus interrupts the old man relates his own recollection of the scene. What is left in his memory is a superhuman figure".

⁴⁶ Sil. *Pun.* 6.424.

⁴⁷ Liv. 3.26.7-10.

species erat, points to this.⁴⁸ If Serranus is uncertain about the validity of his memories, is the assessment of Regulus' haggard and filthy appearance as superhuman is Serranus' own? Serranus was presumably very young when his father died, and it is more likely that Regulus' tortured and aged looks were nothing short of scary and distressing. In fact, Serranus may not have even recognized his father. He must then conclude that Regulus looked more than superhuman through the mode of educational transmission.

Essentially, Serranus was taught to view his father in this manner. We have already seen how Marus glorifies and idealizes Regulus as a Roman *exemplum*. Perhaps a young Serranus was told that his father looked this way because he sacrificed himself for the well-being of Rome as well. This would certainly make an impression on a child whose only connection to his dead father was through memories. Another possibility is that Regulus may have looked nothing like this, but Serranus chooses to remember his father this way. Silius appears to be hinting that part of modelling oneself on heroes involves creating or fashioning those heroes in the first place.⁴⁹

Therefore, a messy, and even squalid, appearance takes on different meanings with Regulus and Marcia. While Regulus' unkempt appearance signals his status as a hero, Marcia's wretchedness symbolizes her misfortune. She cannot be a valiant Republican statesman, and has no choice but to accept the consequences of her husband's decision:

⁴⁸ Sil. *Pun.* 6.426.

⁴⁹ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 6.137-138. Odysseus who is shipwrecked on the island of Scheria. He is covered in salt and grit, and is in a terrible condition. Homer notes that his appearance frightened Nausicaa's companions. However, as the reader knows, Odysseus' off-putting appearance is a façade – underneath the salt and grit, he is a Greek hero. Athena later transforms his appearance to match his heroic persona (Hom. *Od.* 6.229-238). While Regulus does not have Athena to magically turn him into a handsome hero, there seems to be an epic precedent where a hero's appearance does not always match his status and personality.

Regulus dies in a blaze of heroic glory, and she is left penniless with two young children to raise.

Indeed, Antony Augoustakis argues that “Marcia’s subversive presence points to the male protagonist’s [Regulus] failure to safeguard his own family and thus questions the value of *patria* over *domus*”.⁵⁰ Although scholars have asserted that Regulus, and indeed any hero in the *Punica*, has a multidimensional personality, it is overly simplistic to label Regulus a “failure.”⁵¹ Although Regulus has to make the difficult choice between the *patria* and his own *domus*, traditional Roman ethics and morality would not consider him a failure for prioritizing the interests of the State over his own family.⁵² Indeed, this begs the question whether Regulus would even be worth remembering had he stayed with Marcia and his sons in place of doing what was right for Rome.

Leach notes that:

The very ambiguity of Regulus’ ultimate fortunes allows for a contextual malleability that builds his exemplary status incrementally until it quite surpasses that of the victorious Roman commanders in the First [Punic] War.⁵³

Leach’s use of the word “malleability” is key, since it speaks to the ambivalent nature of not only ancient Roman exemplarity, but also to the modes of educational, and here, genetic, transmission. Some of these ambiguities are apparent in the legacy of Regulus

⁵⁰ Augoustakis 2010: 158.

⁵¹ Cf. Williams 2004: 72 and 76.

⁵² This is precisely what Cicero discusses in *Off.* 3.99-115. Cf. Levene 2000 and Langlands 2018: 42 who talk about what might seem like a virtue is actually a vice, and vice versa.

⁵³ Leach 2014: 243.

when Marcia expresses her relief that Serranus is alive, rather than following in his father's footsteps:

*Hic inter trepidos curae uenerandus agebat
Serranum Marus, atque olim post fata mariti
non egressa domum uitato Marcia coetu
et lucem causa natorum passa ruebat
in luctum similem antiquo. turbata repente
agnoscensque Marum 'Fidei comes inclite magnae,
hunc certe mihi reddis' ait. 'leue uulnus? an alte
usque ad nostra ferus penetrauit uiscera mucro?
quicquid id est, dum non uinctum Carthago catenis
abripiat poenaeque instauret monstra paternae,
gratum est, o superi. quotiens heu, nate, petebam,
ne patrias iras animosque in proelia ferres,
neu te belligeri stimularet in arma parentis
triste decus. nimium uiuacis dura senectae
supplicia expendi. quaeso, iam parcite, si qua
numina pugnastis nobis.'*

Meanwhile Marus, worthy of care, was leading Serranus amongst the nervous people; and at last, Marcia, having never left the house after the fate of her husband, and having avoided the crowds and endured life for the sake of her sons, rushed forth into a grieving, similar to the past. Distressed, and suddenly recognizing Marus, she said "Illustrious comrade of great faith, you are certainly returning this young man back to me. That wound isn't too serious, is it? Or did the fierce point of the sword penetrate deeply all the way to my innards? Whatever it is, so long as Carthage does not snatch him away, bound by chains, and does not repeat the atrocities of his father's punishment, I am grateful, Gods above. Alas my son, how many times did I beg you not to bear your father's anger and spirits in war, and that the sad glory of your warlike father not rouse you to battle. For I have paid the penalty, excessively hardened by a long old life. I now ask you to spare me, O Gods, if any of you have fought against us (*Pun.* 6.574-89).

In this passage, Silius demonstrates that Marus and Marcia's stories exemplify both ends of the spectrum. From Marus' perspective, there is no question that Regulus was right to sacrifice himself for the sake of Rome. However, Marcia's speech in this passage raises an important question: what happens when doing the right thing causes pain, suffering, and ultimately death? As I observed with Achilles, dying in battle is a terrible waste of life and opportunity. This is the fate Regulus suffered, and the very one which Serranus is destined

to mimic. While from a traditional Roman ethical standpoint it is praiseworthy to pursue glory and fame, this anecdote about Regulus and Serranus demonstrates the crippling impact the pressures of exemplarity can have on future generations. Williams remarks that “Regulus’ exploits inculcate in *his* [italics original] son a seemingly suicidal urge for glory or death on the battlefield”.⁵⁴ In fact, as Augoustakis notes, Marcia’s critiques of Regulus reveal:

Her intention to interrupt generational continuity, to undo what Marus has achieved in his long narrative, from her perspective as a mother. Her (striking) advice to Serranus is to avoid imitating his father’s *ira et animus* in war, because these are the very qualities that destroyed Regulus. Marcia calls Regulus’ heroism *triste decus*, a qualification that Silius himself applies to Regulus in 2.435, when he inserts Regulus’ defeat and death in Libya as a scene on Hannibal’s shield...⁵⁵

Here, Augoustakis aptly identifies Serranus’ inherited legacy from his father with what he terms “generational continuity.” Why then does Marcia wish to disrupt the exemplary process, when it will surely yield further complications in this mode of transmission? An obvious reason is that Marcia wants to protect her son, whose survival is more of a priority than the fame and glory he could win as an acclaimed and legendary statesman. We see this very debate reflected in Thetis’ prophecy to Achilles in the *Iliad*.⁵⁶ Indeed, Silius is using the character of Marcia to voice some timeless questions about the heroic ethos. Namely, whether being memorialized and idealized is worth suffering a painful and miserable (Marcia uses the word *monstra* in line 583) death. To Marus, this is indisputable: heroic glory is worth the sacrifice. However, Marcia has already endured numerous

⁵⁴ Williams 2004: 81.

⁵⁵ Augoustakis 2010: 180-81.

⁵⁶ Hom. *Il.* 9.410-416.

hardships since the death of her husband. She has lived in grinding poverty as a single mother. It is understandable that she does not want to see Regulus' misfortunes befall her son. Furthermore, Serranus' death implies the end of this branch of Regulus' family, since Silius does not specify whether Serranus himself has any children. Based on his impressionable and youthful demeanour, this is unlikely. Indeed, Marus resembles a surrogate father figure. If Serranus dies, there will be no future generations to accept the legacy. Serranus must survive if he is to continue the lineage of Reguli statesmen, as per the expectations of genetic transmission.

Marcia's obvious relief at Serranus' return home unscathed is unusual, especially in contrast with Regulus' outlook regarding Roman traditions and *exempla*. Augoustakis describes her as "a Roman mother who nevertheless behaves in a non-Roman fashion".⁵⁷ Certainly, it is unclear whether traditional Roman aristocrats would have approved of, or even accepted, Marcia's behaviour. The emphasis here relies upon the exemplary tradition, because it seems inconceivable that notwithstanding Roman exemplarity, a mother would not want her child to return home safely.

Lucanian Intertextualities in *Punica* 6

Comparisons between the *Punica* and Lucan's *Pharsalia* have been the object of much scholarship.⁵⁸ One of the most notable passages in Book Two of Lucan's *Pharsalia* is the re-marriage of Cato the Younger and his former wife Marcia. Marcia, newly

⁵⁷ Augoustakis 2010: 159.

⁵⁸ Cf. Augoustakis 2006 and 2010: 167-76; Marks 2010; Ahl 1976: 251. McClellan 2019: 67-114 discusses the motif of decapitation in Statius, Silius, and Lucan, and the allusions and intertextual references to both Homeric and Vergilian epic.

widowed, arrives at daybreak in black funeral attire, to ask Cato to make her his partner once again. Much scholarship, like Margaret Graver's article "De Bello Civili 2.326-91: Cato Gets Married", focuses on the staunchly Stoic nature of Cato; Graver addresses the potential ambiguities of Cato as a Stoic model: "Lucan has not, however, completely thought through the implications of his characterization in terms of the Stoic theory of affective response".⁵⁹ This section focuses more on Lucan's Marcia as an *exemplum* of an unconventional Roman *matrona*, and therefore, as a source of inspiration for Silius' Marcia.⁶⁰

Before comparing the two Marcias, it is worth noting the unmistakable similarities between Cato and Regulus. Like Regulus, Cato is a patriot whose first and foremost loyalty is to the State; he goes as far as to liken the grief a father feels at the death of his sons to the emotions he feels as Rome descends into chaos, and effectively "dies".⁶¹ They even look similar. Serranus remembers Regulus as a white and shaggy haired old man, and Cato attends his marriage to Marcia in an equally scruffy and disheveled state:

*Ille nec horrificam sancto dimovit ab ore
Caesariem duroque admisit gaudia voltu,—
Ut primum tolli feralia viderat arma,
Intonsos rigidam in frontem descendere canos
Passus erat maestamque genis increscere barbam:
Uni quippe vacat studiis odiisque carenti
Humanum lugere genus...*

And he did not remove the frightful hair from his venerable face, and he did not permit joy to show on his harsh face – as soon as he had seen that the fatal weapons had been raised, he allowed uncut

⁵⁹ Graver 2011.

⁶⁰ Augoustakis 2010: 167: "As I have already observed, the literary predecessor of Regulus' Marcia is Lucan's Marcia, the wife of Cato".

⁶¹ Luc. 2.297-302.

hoary hair to creep down upon his rigid brow, and a wretched beard to spread across his cheeks, leaving time for him alone to mourn the human race, free from love and hatred (Luc. 2.372-8).

The language in this passage is almost identical to Serranus' recollection of Regulus. Both men are no longer young and handsome statesmen, yet in both instances, their ragged and unkempt appearance is treated with respect and reverence. Graver suggests that "it is in token of this quasi-familial devotion to the state that he allows his hair and beard to grow long, a ritualized practice of mourning..."⁶² While Regulus' appearance has deteriorated as a result of the torture and trauma he endured, Cato pointedly neglects his appearance as a way to signal his support and devotion to the *res publica*; he is mourning the decline of the State and its traditional Republican values.

Interestingly, the two Marcias are quite similar in appearance as well. Silius' Marcia, when we first meet her, looks equally decrepit:

*"Ecce trahens geminum natorum Marcia pignus,
Infelix nimia magni virtute mariti,
squalentem crinem et tristis lacerabat amictus.*

And behold, there was Marcia, leading the pledges of love of her two sons, made unlucky by the excessive virtue of her great husband, she was tearing her filthy hair and sad clothing (*Pun.* 6.403-5).

In the *Pharsalia*, Lucan's Marcia has just returned from the funeral for her husband Hortensius:

*...Sed postquam condidit urna
Supremos cineres, miseranda concita vultu,
Effusas laniata comas contusaque pectus
Verberibus crebris cineresque ingesta sepulchri,*

⁶² Graver 2011: 227.

But after she [Marcia] placed his final ashes in the urn, she hastened forth with a wretched expression, with torn and disheveled hair, and her chest bruised with repeated blows, and heaped upon with ashes (Luc. 2.333-6).

Scholars such as Antony Augoustakis and Frederick Ahl have observed the similarities between the two Marcias, arguing that Silius' Marcia is an intertext which interacts with Lucan's Marcia.⁶³ Augoustakis observes other similarities between the two women, including the fact that both are mothers, and try "to defend their chastity as a means for securing their husbands' approval of their requests".⁶⁴ However, although both Marcias are mothers, I argue that the contrast in their maternal roles and ethos highlights some of the inherent tensions associated with genetic transmission and exemplarity, namely the difference between ideals and realities of being a Roman *matrona*.⁶⁵ Suzanne Dixon observes that "the salient role of the women portrayed admiringly in Latin literature was as disciplinarians, custodians of Roman culture and traditional morality".⁶⁶ This is quite unlike today's stereotypes, which portray the father as omnipotent and authoritarian, while the mother is softer and more nurturing.⁶⁷ *Exempla* such as Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and Aurelia, the mother of Caesar, were praised for their *severitas* and *gravitas*.⁶⁸ Dixon argues that "the bias of Roman literary historical sources leads to an emphasis on the role

⁶³ Augoustakis 2006 and 2010: 170; Ahl 1976: 251.

⁶⁴ Augoustakis 2010: 170-1.

⁶⁵ Augoustakis 2010: 165 argues that by counseling her son Serranus to avoid imitating the *exempla* of his father, Silius' Marcia "invalidates her position as conveyor of traditional 'Roman' values, as a Roman mother would do".

⁶⁶ Dixon 2013: xiv. It's also worth noting that this description applies to elite and aristocratic Roman women. We are less certain, and often have only funerary epitaphs for lower-class women.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Cf. Tac. *Dial.* 28, Cic. *Brut.* 211, and Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.6 for more detail.

played by such mothers in forming the character of famous sons of the political élite or imperial family”.⁶⁹

I begin with Lucan’s Marcia, even though quite interestingly, she lived after Silius’ Marcia.⁷⁰ Our first description of her, even before her physical appearance, pertains to her status both as a wife and as a mother:

*Quondam virgo toris melioris iuncta mariti,
Mox ubi conubii pretium mercesque soluta est
Tertia iam suboles, alios fecunda penates
Inpletura datur geminas et sanguine matris
Permixture domos...*

When she was a young maid, she had been married to a husband of superior standing, but soon after, when her third child, as a reward, loosened the price of marriage, she was given away so as to fill another house with her fertility, and also to mix the two houses with her blood (Luc. 2.329-33).

Here, Marcia is objectified as a vessel whose only purpose, and indeed value, is to produce the next generation of children. Anachronistically, she has met the requirements of Augustus’ *Ius Trium Liberorum*. As soon as she has borne her third child, she is married off to Hortensius, so that she can produce even more children.

Her address to Cato is key, and reveals many of the ideal traits of the *matrona*:

*“Dum sanguis inerat, dum vis materna, peregi
Iussa, Cato, et geminos excepi feta maritos;
Visceribus lassis partuque exhausta revertor
Iam nulli tradenda viro. Da foedera prisci
Inlibata tori, da tantum nomen inane*

⁶⁹ *OCD* s.v. “Motherhood,” [Dixon].

⁷⁰ Augoustakis 2006: 147: “Marcia becomes the literary ‘descendant’ of Lucan’s Marcia, Cato’s wife, and also her potential historical ‘ancestress’. In this manner, Silius manufactures for the reader the perception of a historical continuity of his characters”. Cf. McGuire 2005 which explores the significance of Silius’ anachronistically chosen names for his characters: “he introduces dozens of names that have absolutely no known connection with the Second Punic War, but have definite associations with figures involved in later eras of Roman civil strife and turmoil” (110-11).

*Conubii; liceat tumulo scripsisse: 'Catonis
Marcia'; nec dubium longo quaeratur in aevo,
Mutarim primas expulsa, an tradita, taedas,
Non me laetorum sociam rebusque secundis
Accipis: in curas venio partemque laborum.
Da mihi castra sequi. Cur tuta in pace relinquer,
Et sit civili propior Cornelia bello?'*

While there was blood within me, while I still possessed that maternal strength, I fulfilled your commands, Cato. I took two husbands, and bore them children; but now I return, exhausted from inside-out from childbearing, and I must not now be handed over to another husband. Grant me the unviolated alliance of my old marriage, grant me only the useless name of wife. Let men be allowed to have written: "Marcia, wife of Cato" on my tomb; let no doubt be sought in this long age, whether having been driven out or handed over, that I exchanged my first wedding torch. You need not accept me as a companion in future happy affairs; I come as a participant in anxieties and toil. Permit me to follow the camp. Why should I be left behind, safe and sound, in peace, while Cornelia can be closer to the civil war? (Luc. 2.338-48).

In her commentary, Elaine Fantham observes that "Marcia's speech combines obedience, pride in duty fulfilled, and a proper claim to be restored to her status as his wife".⁷¹ Despite her cool and pragmatic demeanour, it would be wrong to view Marcia as non-maternal. Rather, her attitude when she addresses Cato is that of exhaustion and retirement. She states quite clearly that she has already fulfilled her duty as a mother, and is now ready to move on to the next stage of her life. Furthermore, the fact that she betrays no emotion regarding her children reflects the steely discipline and *severitas* Dixon observes as being characteristic of aristocratic *matronae*.

Graver also addresses Marcia's cool and calculating nature, stating that "In her address to Cato Marcia pursues a complex train of thought, with a cool eye to her own interests. She cannot marry again, for being past childbearing she no longer possesses the primary asset a woman offers to a marriage partner".⁷² Graver's stance is reasonable – from a

⁷¹ Fantham 1992: 142.

⁷² Graver 2011: 232.

utilitarian perspective, it is of course beneficial for Marcia to remarry, since she needs someone to look after her, especially in the midst of the chaos and turbulence of civil war. However, I argue that Marcia's desire to remarry Cato is also indicative of her traditional *virtutes*.⁷³ In his *Roman Questions*, Plutarch informs the reader that remarriage generally tended to be more subdued than a first marriage:

Ἡ μᾶλλον ὅτι ταῖς μὲν παρθένοις καλὸν μὴ ὀλίγων ταῖς δὲ χήραις
αἰσχρὸν πολλῶν παρόντων γαμεῖσθαι; ζηλωτὸς γὰρ ὁ πρῶτος
γάμος ὁ δὲ δεύτερος ἀπευκταῖος· αἰσχύνονται γάρ, ἂν ζώντων τῶν
προτέρων ἐτέρους λαμβάνωσιν, ὀδύρονται δέ, ἂν ἀποθανόντων.
ὅθεν ἡσυχία χαίρουσι μᾶλλον ἢ θορύβοις καὶ προπομπαῖς.

Or rather is it fitting that for maidens getting married not a few are present, but on the other hand, is it shameful for widows that many are present when they get married? For on the one hand, the first marriage is worthy of being envied, but on the other hand, the second is deplorable; for they feel shame if they take another husband with their first one still alive, and they mourn when he is dead. For which reason they take pleasure in a quiet wedding, rather than in hustle and bustle and processions (*Quaest. Rom.* 289b).

Although the circumstances for remarriage might be more somber, Karen K. Hersch rightly points out that marriage is a critical part of adult life for both men and women.⁷⁴ This passage from Plutarch may add another layer of meaning to Cato and Marcia's spartan wedding ceremony, which Graver describes as lacking "every social, ritual, and sexual dimension of a Roman marriage".⁷⁵ Of course, the most likely reason, cited by numerous scholars, is that Marcia and Cato have similar temperaments. Graver makes the case that Marcia too is a Stoic, who refuses to succumb to her emotions.⁷⁶

⁷³ In this instance, Marcia's identity is her marriage with Cato: "Let men be allowed to have written: "Marcia, wife of Cato" on my tomb;" (Luc. 2.343-44). Marcia's marriage is not just a case of pragmatism – by being married to an exemplary man, Marcia is also exemplary by association.

⁷⁴ Hersch 2010: 4; 48.

⁷⁵ Graver 2011: 234.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

Although Lucan's Marcia meets all of the requirements for an "ideal" aristocratic *matrona*, her calmness and rationality are jarring, especially since she has just buried her husband. Her cold and austere demeanour is reflected in the speech Lucan gives her. Her language is abrupt and clipped, and is filled with imperatives directed towards Cato – she says *da*, "grant" or "give" on 3 separate occasions, signaling that she is very much in control of her feelings and emotions, and knows exactly what she wants.⁷⁷ She uses an emotional appeal only once, when explaining that she is simply exhausted from fulfilling her obligations, having children, and needs to settle down: *Visceribus lassis partuque exhausta revertor*, "But now I return, exhausted from inside-out from childbearing".⁷⁸ In essence, Silius makes his Marcia sympathetic, whereas Lucan's Marcia represents an unsympathetic extreme and parodic over-exaggeration of the "unfeeling mother".

Lucan's Marcia, I propose, highlights the ethical dilemma reflected in Silius Italicus regarding exemplarity. In her speech, provided again here, Silius' depiction of Marcia aims to induce feelings of sympathy:

*...turbata repente
 agnoscensque Marum 'Fidei comes inclite magna,
 hunc certe mihi reddis,' ait. 'leve uulnus? an alte
 usque ad nostra ferus penetrauit uiscera mucro?
 quicquid id est, dum non uinctum Carthago catenis
 abripiat poenaeque instauret monstra paternae,
 gratum est, o superi. quotiens heu, nate, petebam,
 ne patrias iras animosque in proelia ferres
 neu te belligeri stimulet in arma parentis
 triste decus. nimium uiuacis dura senectae
 supplicia expendi. quaeso, iam parcite, si qua
 numina pugnastis nobis.'*

⁷⁷ Luc. 2.341; 342; 347.

⁷⁸ Luc. 2.340.

Distressed, and suddenly recognizing Marus, she said “Illustrious comrade of great faith, you are certainly returning this young man back to me. That wound isn’t too serious, is it? Or did the fierce point of the sword penetrate deeply all the way to my innards? Whatever it is, so long as Carthage does not snatch him away, bound by chains, and does not repeat the atrocities of his father’s punishment, I am grateful, Gods above. Alas my son, how many times did I beg you not to bear your father’s anger and spirits in war, and that the sad glory of your warlike father not rouse you to battle. For I have paid the penalty, excessively hardened by a long old life. I now ask you to spare me, o Gods, if any of you have fought against us (*Pun.* 6.578-89).

Dixon notes that displays of emotion, particularly when worrying about or grieving for a child were not unusual.⁷⁹ In fact, although both parents were considered to be equally affectionate towards their children, the lamenting and grieving was a trait specific to women.⁸⁰ This is apparent in Marcia’s speech. Characteristic of a panicked parent whose child has been out of their sight for more than a few seconds, Marcia bombards Serranus with a series of questions without giving him an opportunity to speak. She even worries about how deep Serranus’ wound is. Unlike Lucan’s Marcia who has no interest in having more children or even discussing those already born, Silius’ Marcia’s only concern is that her son has come home safely. Furthermore, succumbing to her emotions, and prioritizing her son over the well-being of the State detracts from Silius’ Marcia’s image as the “ideal” *matrona*.⁸¹

It appears that although displays of maternal emotion and affection were accepted, and even expected, the Stoic and detached *persona* of Lucan’s Marcia was considered more worthy of praise. The staunchly Stoic Seneca the Younger in his *De Consolatione ad*

⁷⁹ Dixon 1988: xiv.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 4.

⁸¹ Cf. Augoustakis 2010: 166. Kubler 2017: 251 adopts the opposite stance, arguing that Silius’ Marcia is a *bona matrona*: “Silius Italicus, who was writing his epic poem under the Flavian emperors, thus used the female figure of Marcia to project back into a past regarded as exemplary the ideals he thought a Roman matron should embody”.

Marciam uses Octavia and Livia as two such *exempla*. After comparing and contrasting the grief of the two women after the deaths of their sons, Seneca reveals his preference:

Elige itaque, utrum exemplum putes probabilius. Si illud prius sequi vis, eximes te numero vivorum: aversaberis et alienos liberos et tuos ipsumque quem desideras; triste matribus omen occures; voluptates honestas, permissas, tamquam parum decoras fortunae tuae reicies; invisae haerebis in luce et aetati tuae, quod non praecipitet te quam primum et finiat, infestissima eris; quod turpissimum alienissimumque est animo tuo in meliorem noto partem, ostendes te vivere nolle, mori non posse. Si ad hoc maximae feminae te exemplum applicueris moderatius, mitius, non eris in aerumnis nec te tormentis macerabis; quae enim, malum, amentia est poenas a se infelicitatis exigere et mala sua novo augere! Quam in omni vita servasti morum probitatem et verecundiam, in hac quoque re praestabis; est enim quaedam et dolendi modestia.

Do you choose, therefore, which of these two examples you think the more laudable. If you prefer to follow the former, you will remove yourself from the number of the living; you will turn away your eyes both from other people's children and from your own, even from him whom you mourn; mothers will regard you as an unhappy omen; honourable and permissible pleasures you will renounce as ill-becoming to your plight; hating the light of day, you will linger in it, and your deepest offence will be your age, because the years do not hurry you on and make an end of you as soon as possible; you will show that you are unwilling to live and unable to die—a condition that is most disgraceful and foreign, too, to your character, which is conspicuous for its leaning toward the better course. If, on the other hand, you appropriate the example of the other most exalted lady, showing thus a more restrained and more gentle spirit, you will not dwell in sorrow, nor rack yourself with anguish. For what madness it is—how monstrous!—to punish one's self for misfortune and add new ill to present ills! That correctness of character and self-restraint which you have maintained all your life, you will exhibit in this matter also; for there is such a thing as moderation even in grieving (3.3-4).⁸²

Silius' Marcia would match the former example in this passage had Serranus not returned home safely. Seneca is using these *exempla* in a philosophical consolation to his mother. Like Lucan's Marcia, it appears admirable in theory to be able to cope with and restrain one's emotions. However, I argue that Lucan is satirizing these conservative Roman traditions and ethics through the character of Marcia.⁸³ She is so calm and collected that

⁸² Translation from *Loeb*.

⁸³ Johnson 1987: 37 observes that "what is troublesome about Lucan's Cato (who perhaps

she appears to be a parody or caricature of the *mos maiorum*. Silius' Marcia calls into question the benefit of being the ideal Roman *matrona*; is having the moral high ground ultimately worth such sacrifice? As someone who has already suffered through being widowed and raising children as a single mother in squalor and poverty, Marcia would likely derive little comfort from knowing that her son died for the sake of the Roman State.

Silius follows (with a difference) the literary *exemplum* of Lucan, but Lucan's character follows (with a difference) the historical *exemplum* described by the later poet. Typically, Roman exemplarity is examined from a linear perspective – it follows a timeline which involves looking back to the authoritative past. This explains why the modes of genetic and educational transmission persisted as such important institutions in the preservation and propagation of Roman morality and ethics. Although Lucan's Marcia is the chronologically younger character who sets the *exemplum* for her older successor, Silius' Marcia does not follow in the footsteps of her literary ancestor. Furthermore, Silius' language suggests that ultimately, this is not overly concerning – he does not depict Marcia in a pessimistic light. Likewise, Lucan's language does not do anything to enhance our opinion of Marcia, even though she is morally right. In a similar fashion to the complex and subversive nature of his Marcia, my next case-study looks at how Silius uses some of his characters to undermine the expectations anticipated by the Roman idea of shared traits between family members.

resembles his imitators in Lucan's day) is his puritanical extravagance, his unfailing inhumanity". This characterization can be applied to Marcia too – she is almost *too* detached and distant.

The Crixus Episode

The story of Regulus and his son Serranus leaves room for the possibility that mimicking your ancestor is not always beneficial. While Serranus was ultimately able to avoid his father's fate, our next *exemplum* is not as fortunate. The reader first meets Crixus in the early portion of Book Four. He proudly claims descent from Brennus, the chieftain of the Gallic Senones, whose name is forever entwined with the sack of Rome in ca. 390 BCE, and is synonymous with Roman shame and disgrace.⁸⁴ After Rome suffered a crushing defeat in the Battle of Allia, the Senones entered the city, slaughtered the dignified patricians in their homes, and then attempted to seize the Capitoline Hill. The ordeal was a source of immense humiliation for the Roman people, further compounded by eventually having to pay a ransom to the Senones. Marcus Furius Camillus, one of Rome's most heroic statesmen, declared the ransom null and void, and Rome eventually quashed the irrepressible Gauls in battle. Nevertheless, the Roman ego never fully recovered from Brennus' pillaging, and its rewriting in the Crixus episode of the *Punica* rings with triumph and exultation.⁸⁵ Scholarship by Helen Lovatt, Leo Landrey, and Daniel Conner, have all focused predominantly on the Homeric, Lucanian, Statian, and Vergilian intertextualities present in the Crixus episode.⁸⁶ However, a closer reading of this narrative establishes a link between the cultural institutions of *virtus* and kinship. Crixus' degeneracy from Brennus' already ambivalent example illustrates the danger of empty pride in one's lineage,

⁸⁴ This is the date provided by Livy. Polybius dates the Sack of Rome to 387/6 BCE.

⁸⁵ Sil. *Pun.* 4.148-294.

⁸⁶ Lovatt 2013, Landrey 2014, and Daniel Conner 2018.

without achievements. Although a non-Roman, Silius uses Crixus to illustrate aspects of Roman exemplary thinking.

The salient presence of Crixus throughout Book Four undermines the expectations anticipated by the Roman idea of genetic transmission. The reader is led by the text to assume that he will be a type of replica of Brennus, who despite epitomizing one of Rome's most stinging humiliations, still possessed some heroic *virtutes*. However, it gradually transpires that Crixus is far worse, paralleling the degeneration displayed by Pyrrhus in Vergil's *Aeneid*. Crixus is fully aware of this genealogical link with Brennus, which entirely informs his identity and serves as the driving force behind his behaviour. Crixus' story, then, is actually a counterexample: Silius illustrates an absence of heroic Republican virtue.

There are many sources detailing the sack of Rome.⁸⁷ Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*, perhaps the most detailed, appears to have been the primary source for Italicus.⁸⁸ Livy provides a specific anecdote concerning Brennus which seems to have directly influenced the *Punica*. When recounting the ransom which the Romans reluctantly pay to the Senones (a whopping 1000 pounds of gold), Livy describes the weights brought by the Gauls to

⁸⁷ Diodorus Siculus describes the Celtic invasion, although he does not specifically name Brennus or mention a ransom between Rome and the Senones (14.113-117). Polybius too does not identify Brennus, but does mention that a treaty was struck with Rome after the invasion (2.18). Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives an account of Brennus tossing the sword on the scales, but does not name him either (*Ant. Rom.* 13.9). The only other account, which is as specific as Livy and actually names Brennus, is Plutarch (*Cam.* 17). Plutarch and Silius Italicus were essentially contemporaries, and both of these texts are thought to have been written around the same time. Therefore, it is unlikely that the *Punica* was influenced by the *Life of Camillus*.

⁸⁸ Liv. 5.38-49. Cf. Conner 2018 and Marks 2005 for a more detailed discussion on Livy's influence.

weigh the gold as *iniqua*, “uneven”.⁸⁹ Unsurprisingly, the tribune Quintus Sulpicius, who had brokered the truce, objected. Brennus’ role as the villain in the story is cemented by his decision to callously add his sword to the weight, with the riposte *Vae victis*, “Woe to the conquered”.⁹⁰ Eventually Camillus arrives and halts the payment of the gold, rendering the deal null and void because an inferior magistrate had made the agreement without the authorization of the Dictator himself. He offers a battle instead, and the Romans successfully obliterate Brennus and his Senones.

Livy describes Brennus as a shrewd leader:

Nam Brennus regulus Gallorum in paucitate hostium artem maxime timens, ratus ad id captum superiorem locum ut ubi Galli cum acie legionum recta fronte concucurrissent subsidia in auersos transuersosque impetum darent, ad subsidiarios signa conuertit, si eos loco depulisset haud dubius facilem in aequo campi tantum superanti multitudini uictoriam fore. Adeo non fortuna modo sed ratio etiam cum barbaris stabat.

For Brennus, the chieftain of the Gauls, greatly fearing an ambush, considering the small number of the enemy at hand, reckoned that a higher ground had been taken, so that whenever the Gauls engaged in combat with the front with the battleline of the legions up front, the troops in reserve would attack the men in front and in the rear. He therefore re-focused his attack on the reserves, thinking that if he drove them out from that place, it would, without a doubt, be an easy victory on the plain of the field for his great number of men. Therefore, not only luck, but also reason, accompanied the barbarians (Liv. 5.38.3-4).

The Sack of Rome was a bruise to the city’s ego which was never forgotten. It is perhaps unsurprising then that Brennus makes a return of sorts in the *Punica*, a poem dedicated to extolling Rome’s military supremacy in one of its most famous wars. Through Brennus’

⁸⁹ Ibid. 5.48.9.

⁹⁰ Liv. 5.48.9.

descendant Crixus, Silius Italicus grants Rome its long-awaited retribution and vengeance.⁹¹

Silius anticipates the Crixus episode with a brief mention of Brennus in Book One. The Saguntines, besieged by Hannibal, have traveled to Rome to ask for help. When they land on the shores of the Tiber, the first description of Rome in the poem opens with the senators in the Senate-House, and establishes a stark dichotomy between idealized virtue and vice:

*Concilium uocat augustum castaque beatos
paupertate patres ac nomina parta triumphis
consul et aequantem superos uirtute senatum.
facta animosa uiros et recti sacra cupido
attollunt; hirtaeque comae neglectaque mensa
dexteraque a curuis capulo non segnis aratris.
exiguo faciles et opum non indiga corda,
ad paruos curru remeabant saepe penates.*

The Consul summoned the venerable assembly, namely the Fathers who were blessed in their untainted poverty and their names acquired from victories, indeed a senate which equals the gods above in virtue. Courageous deeds and a sacred desire for uprightness elevated these men; they had shaggy hair and meals which were not fancy, and also hands from the curved plough handle which were not unprepared for the sword-hilt; satisfied with little, and possessing hearts which were undesirous of wealth, they often returned to their small houses in their triumphal-cars (*Pun.* 1.609-16).

The Senators are depicted as ideal Roman statesmen — like Regulus, they have shaggy hair, live in humble homes, and are motivated by the traditional Roman *virtutes* of courage

⁹¹ No trace of this descendant named Crixus has been found anywhere in the historical record. I suggest that Silius Italicus created this character in order to provide redemption for the Roman people. If Brennus' sack of Rome was one of the city's most humiliating defeats, then the Second Punic War was one of its proudest victories. By defeating Crixus once and for all, Rome can finally move on. Crixus' name is also not insignificant. Cf. Conner 2018 for information about the Battle of Mt. Garganus, which takes place during the Spartacan War. In this battle, one of Spartacus' commanders, a certain Crixus, is killed by the Roman consuls.

and uprightness.⁹² In a nod to the legendary Cincinnatus, Silius shows how their hands, when not on a plough-handle, are always prepared to grab their swords and go to battle. In the following passage, Silius briefly refers to the story of Brennus, and sets the allusive reference to his sword within an explicit context of Roman *exempla*. After the hallowed senators, Silius lists mementoes of their military exploits, along with those of their ancestors. Amongst the spoils are the helmets of the Senones, as well as Brennus' *improbus ensis*, which, Silius is quick to point out, was paraded through the streets of Rome in Camillus' triumph:

*In foribus sacris primoque in limine templi
 captivi currus, belli decus, armaque rapta
 pignantum ducibus saevaeque in Marte secures,
 perfossi clipei et seruantia tela cruorem
 claustraque portarum pendent. hic Punica bella,
 Aegates, cernas fusaque per aequora classe
 exactam ponto Libyen testantia rostra.
 hic galeae Senonum pensatique improbus auri
 arbiter ensis inest Gallisque ex arce fugatis
 arma reuertentis pompa gestata Camilli,*

At the sacred doors, and on the first threshold of the temple hung captured chariots, the valiant glory of war, armour plundered from generals from opposing sides and axes hostile in war, pierced shields and weapons which still preserved the blood, and the bolts of city-gates. Here, you might see the Punic wars, and the isles of the Aegates, and ships' prows, which bore witness to Carthage having been driven out from sea after her fleet was routed on the waters. Herein are the helmets of the Senones and the shameless sword which served as arbiter of the weighed-out gold, as well as the armour which was carried in the triumph of Camillus when he returned, after the Gauls had fled from the citadel...(Pun. 1.617-626).

Although Brennus and the Senones were ultimately defeated, Silius' description of the sword as *improbus* points to the lingering shame and resentment regarding the Sack of

⁹² First impressions are always important, and Silius' decision to depict Rome as the traditional Republic is striking. This is always the image of Rome presented in reminiscences of the good old days: a thriving democratic state where the Senators and Roman people (rather than an emperor) wield all the power.

Rome. Brennus, a complex figure who is at least cunning in Livy, is reduced to merely a treacherous character in Silius, and is contrasted with the exhibition of traditional Roman virtues in the Cincinnatus-like senators. The invocation of these stark polarities, then, hints to the readers that Silius is manipulating history to give us a lesson in Roman exemplary ethics.

After reminiscing about his ancestor, the reader meets Crixus at last: he is the main aggressor in the Battle of Ticinus, which takes place directly after Hannibal's crossing of the Alps.⁹³ Silius tells us that he is the leader of the Boii, and significantly, describes him as ...*tumens atavis Brenni se stirpe ferebat / Crixus et in titulos Capitolia capta trahebat*, "Bloated with the pride of his ancestors, Crixus himself was claiming that he was the offshoot of Brennus, who as a point of pride, laid claim to the Capitoline when it was seized".⁹⁴

Silius' grotesque image of swelling and bloating implies that Crixus' ancestral pride is not a positive attribute. The time-honored Roman tradition of revering one's *maiores* has become distended and disfigured. If the purpose of Silius' poetic project is to infuse Romans with pride and admiration for their ancestors, his portrayal of Crixus complicates that expectation. As an insufferable and conceited braggart, it becomes apparent that Crixus' only attribute is an inflated sense of self-worth, derived only from the fame of his infamous ancestor Brennus. Crixus, then, serves as a cautionary example: a true hero must have more to offer and contribute than his ancestral legacy. Silius here hints at a

⁹³ Sil. *Pun.* 4.148-294.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 150-51. The phrase *tumens atavis* is interesting, and will be picked up by Juvenal in *Satire Eight* when addressing the equally arrogant and unsavoury Rubellius Blandus: "Whom have I been warning with these concerns? This is a conversation between me and you, Rubellius Blandus. You who are all swollen with the lofty family-tree of the Drusi" (Juv. 8.40).

complication in the exemplary process that will later become explicit in my discussion of Juvenal in Chapter Four.

The notion that Crixus is all show, and no substance is seen in the minute description of his shield: *Tarpeioque iugo demens et uertice sacro / pensantes aurum Celtas umbone gerebat*, “He was out of his mind, the imbecile – the boss of his shield bore the image of the Gauls weighing out the gold on the sacred peak of the Tarpeian ridge”.⁹⁵ By possessing a shield, a trope associated with epic heroes, Crixus’ description mimics those of Achilles and Aeneas. However, Crixus exemplifies the worst aspects of their heroic personalities, such as excessive rage and arrogance. By inserting the adjective *demens*, Silius transitions into the narrative which will give Brennus and his descendants their just-deserts. Unlike Achilles and Aeneas, Crixus is *demens*, raving-mad and foolish.⁹⁶ Silius’ use of *demens* throughout the *Punica* establishes a sense of Roman ethnocentric alterity. It occurs in the poem 10 times⁹⁷ (including the description of Crixus), and is used most frequently to refer to non-Roman characters.⁹⁸

When *demens* is used to describe Roman characters,⁹⁹ it always features in the direct speech of another character. In the case of the heroic Cilnius and Decius, Hannibal

⁹⁵ Sil. *Pun.* 4.152-53.

⁹⁶ Although Conner 2018: 81 does suggest that Crixus is an Achilles-like figure “when he kills Tarius and his corpse is dragged across the battlefield by his horse.” Cf. Sil. *Pun.* 4.252-8. Similarly, there are several instances in the *Aeneid* where Aeneas loses control and rages in the battlefield, such as when Turnus kills Pallas.

⁹⁷ Sil. *Pun.* 1.149; 2.180; 2.309; 4.152; 7.70; 8.334; 9.288; 10.62; 11.96; 11.236.

⁹⁸ These characters include Hasdrubal, Hannibal’s brother (Sil. *Pun.* 1.149), and Eurydamas, a descendant of the Odyssean Eurydamas, one of Penelope’s obnoxious suitors (Sil. *Pun.* 2.180). It is also used to describe the perfidious Capuans, who switched their allegiance to Carthage after the Battle of Cannae (Sil. *Pun.* 11.96). Finally, the word is used in conjunction with the rather unpleasant goddess Discordia (Sil. *Pun.* 9.288).

⁹⁹ Eg. Cilnius (Sil. *Pun.* 7.70), Varro (Sil. *Pun.* 8.334), Metellus (Sil. *Pun.* 10.62), and Decius

is the speaker, absolving Silius the narrator of the crime of insulting fellow Roman citizens. Although the consul Lucius Aemilius Paulus describes both Varro and Metellus as *demens*, Silius skillfully presents both instances as justified. Varro and Metellus are unsympathetic characters, whose actions pose a threat to the exalted Republican statesman Paulus. These actions can be viewed as going against the interests of the Roman State, which surely would have been perceived as madness by the Roman people.

Of particular interest is Hanno's use of *demens* to characterize Hannibal's determination to avenge his father Hamilcar's death by warring with Rome yet again.¹⁰⁰ Neil Bernstein explores "a variety of perspectives on the balance between...personal obligations to family members, both living and deceased, and...public responsibilities to subjects and followers".¹⁰¹ Hannibal is one such case-study in which Bernstein emphasizes the crippling implications his filial *pietas* to Hamilcar has on both Carthage and Hannibal himself.¹⁰² Citing *Pun.* 1.81-139, when Hamilcar imbues his young son with a lifelong hatred for Rome, Bernstein explains that "Hannibal's paternal legacy in the *Punica* determines the course of his career".¹⁰³ *Demens*, then, is clearly a marker of truly un-Roman behaviour.

Returning to the image of the Gauls weighing gold on Crixus' shield, Crixus, like Hannibal, is defined by his inherited ancestral legacy. Since Brennus successfully held Rome in his thrall, Crixus' shield displays the obligation he feels to live up to the reputation

(*Sil. Pun.* 11.236).

¹⁰⁰ *Sil. Pun.* 2.309.

¹⁰¹ Bernstein 2008b: 132.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 135-39.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 135.

of his ancestor. The overwhelming need to match, and indeed surpass, the deeds of one's ancestors is something to which all Romans would have related: when an actor donned an *imago*, he essentially brought that individual back to life. This is not dissimilar to Crixus' relationship with his ancestor Brennus. When comparing Crixus' shield with Aeneas', Helen Lovatt observes that "It is as if Crixus were an ekphrasis brought to life, presumably mirroring in his dress the ancestors portrayed on his own shield".¹⁰⁴ This, she observes, can be seen in the description of the very same Gauls in Book Eight of the *Aeneid*:

*aurea caesaries ollis atque aurea vestis,
virgatis lucent sagulis, tum lactea colla
auro innectuntur, duo quisque Alpina coruscant
gaesa manu, scutis protecti corpora longis.*

They have golden locks and also golden clothing; they shine in their striped cloaks, and their milky-white necks are entangled with gold; each one brandishes two Alpine javelins in their hand, and their bodies are protected by their long shields (*Aen.* 8.659-662).

When describing Crixus, Silius uses almost identical language:

*colla uiri fuluo radiabant lactea torque,
auro uirgatae uestes, manicaeque rigeabant
ex auro, et simili uibrabat crista metallo.*

His milky-white neck was shining with a golden collar, and his clothing was striped with gold too; the sleeves of his tunic were stiff from the gold, and the plume of his helmet gleamed with a similar metal (*Pun.* 4.154-56).

In both passages, the Gauls are described as having "milky-white necks," *colla lactea*, as well as donning astonishingly bright golden clothing: *aurea vestis* in Vergil, and *auro uirgatae uestes* in Silius.

¹⁰⁴ Lovatt 2013: 68.

Crixus is almost indistinguishable from his ancestors as they are described by Vergil. Like the individuals criticized in Juvenal's *Satire* Eight, he is a mirror of his ancestry. Emulating his ancestors is not only his primary focus, but also the sole component of his identity – he even looks like Brennus. However, there are some marked differences between Brennus and Crixus. As we saw earlier on, Livy describes Brennus as shrewd and strategic. Although he is non-Roman, and a sworn enemy of the city, Livy's depiction of Brennus is more well-rounded than Silius'; there is some grudging respect because Brennus is a good general, a trait which the Roman people would have prized. However, as the passage in Book One suggests, Brennus' character in the *Punica* is far more negative. The placement of Brennus' "shameful," *improbis* sword amongst other mementoes of Rome's victories in the Senate-House is a striking image, and cements Brennus' reputation as the impertinent Gaul who dared to invade Rome. Where Livy concedes that Brennus was a worthy opponent, we see no traces of such heroic virtue in his descendant Crixus. Characterized as *demens*, Crixus is a soldier who relies on brute force and bloodlust, rather than strategy:

*quantus Phlegraeis Telluris alumnus in aruis
mouit signa Mimas caelumque exterruit armis.
tantus semifero Crixus sub pectore murmur
torquet et horrissonis ululatibus erigit iras:*

Just like Mimas, the son of Earth, marched into battle on the Phlegraeian plains, and terrified Heaven with his armour, so did Crixus whirl out a growling under his half-savage chest, and he aroused his anger with dreadful sounding shrieking (*Pun.* 4.275-78).

Accordingly, Crixus falls short of the *virtus* he should have inherited from Brennus, because he has some critical differences in personality and the decisions which he makes. Even the sarcastic and obnoxious tone in which Brennus says *Vae uictis*, differs so radically

from Crixus' "dreadful sounding shrieking." Silius' close juxtaposition of Crixus' particularly unpleasant and egotistical personality (even more so than Brennus) with his death (which also completes Rome's vengeance) is striking. The expectation of genetic transmission, then, is dashed, not only by Crixus' differences in character, but also by a failure to back up his ancestry with deeds of his own.¹⁰⁵

This disconnect between ancestry and reality is best exemplified by Crixus' death at the hands of Publius Cornelius Scipio (father of Scipio Africanus). Crixus is facing death, just like Brennus and his Gauls in 390 BCE. However, even though Brennus and his men ultimately died, they did so knowing that they had utterly humiliated the Romans. The fact that Crixus has emblazoned on his shield with Brennus' ransom demands attests to the Gauls' smug sense of pride. Yet, the tables have now turned. Silius makes a point of allowing Scipio to pay the ultimate insult to Crixus by telling him that he did not even match the achievements of his ancestor, never mind surpassing them:

*cui consul: 'ferre haec umbris proaquoque memento,
quam procul occumbas Tarpeia sede, tibi que
haud licitum sacri Capitolia cernere montis.'*

¹⁰⁵ Although Hannibal achieves great deeds, just like Crixus, genetic transmission ultimately proves to be his downfall. Hamilcar, of course, is descended from Belus, a distant Carthaginian ancestor. Bernstein 2008b: 136 quite rightly observes that "These claims, based on generative memory, associate Hamilcar and his descendants through shared descent with the ancient enemies of the proto-Romans, Turnus and the Greek conquerors of Troy. Hannibal's war with the Romans, therefore, is an attempt to fulfil simultaneously his individual desire, his father's wishes, and his destiny as a descendant of Belus...Cognizance of Hannibal's descent from Belus causes the weight of history and descent to encumber each of his actions to a far greater degree than those of Scipio, who refers only to the preceding generation when describing his ancestral legacy." Bernstein's "generative memory" is synonymous with what I term "genetic transmission". Cf. Spentzou 2008: 138 and 141, which also hints at the process of genetic transmission regarding Hannibal's behaviour

To him [Crixus], the Consul said: “Remember to relay this to the shades below, and also your ancestor [Brennus]: how far away from the Tarpeian rock you died, and how it was by no means permitted for you to look upon the Capitoline of the sacred hill” (*Pun.* 4.286-88).

Scipio getting the last word in and killing Crixus symbolizes Rome’s final vengeance on the Gauls who so thoroughly humiliated them.

While Rome’s long-awaited redemption is striking, the real significance of the Crixus episode is its shattering of the expectations set by genetic transmission. Before his death, Crixus tells Scipio:

*‘nemone incensae captaeque superfuit urbi,
ut tibi, quas Brenni populus ferremus in arma,
narraret, dextras? disce en nunc, ’...*

“Did no one remain in the city, burned and captured, to tell you about the right hands, which we the people of Brennus bore in battle? Look, and learn it now,”... (*Pun.* 4.279-81).

Here, Silius sets up a clear expectation of genetic transmission of character: since Crixus is a relative of Brennus, the Romans should not underestimate his might and strength. Yet Scipio’s riposte after Crixus misses hitting him with his spear, both completes Rome’s vengeance, and forever separates Crixus from Brennus.¹⁰⁶

Silius uses Crixus as a counter-*exemplum* of Roman heroic virtues. His thoroughly unpleasant nature contrasts with the unexpected Roman hero Quirinius, whom Silius introduces in the middle of the Crixus episode. As Crixus and his fellow Gauls slaughter many Romans, it seems that history will once again repeat itself. This episode reaches its

¹⁰⁶ Conner 2018: 84 compares the death of Crixus to the death of Mezentius in Verg. *Aen.* 10.783-786. This allows Scipio (Scipio Africanus’ father) to emerge as a super-hybrid of Aeneas and Achilles: “Scipio’s father finishes what Aeneas cannot, just as he will outdo Achilles in his upcoming *mache parapotamios*.”

climax when Silius provides an extremely graphic description of the death of Quirinius.¹⁰⁷ The name of this youth cannot be a coincidence. Conner argues that through the description, and subsequent death of Quirinius, Silius allows his readers to relive the pillage and plunder of Rome by Brennus and his Gauls all over again.¹⁰⁸ Like the stoic and dignified patricians in Livy, the hand on Quirinius' severed left-arm remains true to its core nature (ie. status and background) until the very end: *dumque micans tremulo conatu lora retemptat, / flectentem assuetos imitatur nescia frenos*, "And the hand, while quivering, tried again to find the reins with trembling effort, unknowingly imitated the one directing the familiar reins".¹⁰⁹ Quirinius is described as courageous beyond measure:

*hic inter trepidos immane Quirinius audens,
cui fugere ignotum atque inuicta mente placebat
rebus in aduersis exceptum pectore letum,*

[And for Quirinius,] greatly daring amongst those who were afraid, fleeing was not a thing of habit; and with his unsubdued mind, death was accepted by his heart with wounds in the front,...(*Pun.* 4.192-94).

Although it is clear that Quirinius possesses ideal statesmanlike virtues (just like the patricians during Brennus' sack of Rome), such as being brave, fearless, and unafraid of death, Conner points out the ambiguity of his personality, suggesting that Quirinius also

¹⁰⁷ Sil. *Pun.* 4.206-215.

¹⁰⁸ Conner 2018: 79-80. In fact, Quirinius' death by beheading takes on even more symbolism, when taking into consideration Silius' "consistent use of decapitation as a political metaphor." Conner argues that Quirinius symbolizes the *populi Romani*, "operating without a head, as it will until Scipio Africanus takes the helm, but never without *the* head, as long as the sacred seat of power, the *Capitolium*, remains unscathed."

¹⁰⁹ Sil. *Pun.* 4.211-12. It was expected of Roman soldiers to die with grace and dignity, rather than screaming with pain or trying to run away.

“represents the flawed Roman over-eagerness for battle and the subsequent empty glory of death and defeat....”¹¹⁰

Conclusion

The *exemplum* of Regulus bequeathed to Serranus presents a problem with Roman exemplarity. Langlands observes that *exempla* can be ambiguous, and contain numerous and, at times, conflicting moral lessons.¹¹¹ The stories of Regulus which Marus eagerly shares with Serranus recall the typical structure of the *exempla* of famous Roman statesman. The emphasis is on their heroic ethos, such as engaging in warfare with no hesitation, and willingly sacrificing the lives of their families and themselves for the well-being of the Roman state. However, there is little to no focus on the ramifications of such behaviour, an angle which Silius addresses in his discussion of Regulus’ widow Marcia. The reality of Regulus’ *exemplum* in the *Punica* is not just his legacy as a celebrated hero and statesman. Not only do Regulus’ actions result in his torture and death, but his widow is also left to live in grinding poverty as a single mother. Therefore, Serranus’ wholehearted embrace of the memory and traits of his father is a source of concern for Marcia, who recalls begging him not to adopt the spirit of his father when in war. The story of Serranus, then, illustrates a problematic aspect of genetic transmission: that not all traits inherited are positive, and worth emulating.

¹¹⁰ Conner 2018: 76. Cf. Liv. 5.41.

¹¹¹ Langlands 2018: 4.

Silius' Crixus episode highlights yet another inherent tension of genetic transmission: one can inherit the positive *virtutes* from their ancestors, which can bring about accomplishment and wonderful achievements. Yet, if one becomes *tumens atavis*, or lacks *virtus*, the individual in question will suffer a downfall. The description of Crixus as decked in gold and with a shield emblazoned with the image of his ancestral triumph attests to this. While he does have a tremendous legacy to live up to, that, unfortunately, is all he has. Crixus assumes the *imago* of his ancestor Brennus, and believes himself to be Brennus' carbon-copy.¹¹² However, Crixus' "mimicking" of Brennus is incomplete. The very crux of Crixus' downfall lies precisely in this failed "cloning" of ancestral traits. Where Brennus possessed qualities which were conducive to success, such as military strategy, Crixus coasts on the reputation of his ancestors. This coasting alone cannot lead to success; on the contrary, it causes Crixus to become complacent and distracted. He is focused solely on goading the Romans, rather than protecting himself in battle. Crixus' death highlights the idea that one cannot rely solely on ancestral legacies; although they provide an advantage, they are not a substitute for *labor*, *pietas*, *virtus*, and other traditional Roman values. There is always a danger of slipping into excessive, or indeed tumescent, pride in one's ancestors if you do not have the deeds to back up your genealogical claims.

The processes of learning from *exempla* outlined by Langlands and Roller respectively as either admiration, comparison, rivalry, modeling, cognition, and discernment, or action, evaluation, commemoration, and norm setting, seem deceptively simple.¹¹³ However, as

¹¹² Cf. Polyb. 6.53.6. for a detailed description of *imagines*.

¹¹³ Langlands 2018: 4 and Roller 2018: 10.

Silius' accounts of Serranus and Crixus demonstrate, blindly following the *exempla* of relatives is not a guarantee of success, and in fact requires one to be discerning and self-motivated.

CHAPTER TWO: THE *INGENIUM* OF QUINTILIAN'S *VIR BONUS*

Introduction

Silius Italicus' *Punica* encourages its readers to consider Imperial perspectives on hereditary virtue and exemplarity, encapsulated in the mode of genetic transmission. Yet, as the stories of Serranus and Crixus demonstrate, such a process is neither straightforward nor without its faults. This chapter engages with Silius' contemporary, the famed rhetorician Quintilian. Although his highly technical *Institutio Oratoria* (*IO*) could not be more different from the epic *Punica* in both genre and subject matter, a shared interest in Republican exemplars and the ensuing complexity in imitating such *exempla* stitches a common thread between the two texts. This chapter also marks a transition in attitudes towards both the value and sustainability of the modes of genetic and educational transmission: where Silius Italicus calls in to question the efficacy of both modes of transmission, Quintilian, Pliny the Younger (Chapter Three), and especially Juvenal (Chapter Four), are all more explicit about their skepticism, and even proffer guidance and potential solutions.

In this chapter, I examine Quintilian's guidance on how to inculcate future statesmen with exemplary and aristocratic traits. Recent research by scholars Arthur Walzer, Jorge López, and Curtis Dozier has examined the Stoic and technical aspects of Quintilian, and even the idea that his treatise is itself a rhetorical exercise.¹ Because Quintilian is instructing his readers on how to educate the next generation of aristocratic

¹ Walzer 2003, López 2007, and Dozier 2014.

statesmen in Imperial Rome, one might assume that adherence to the *IO* should result in the successful replication of aristocrats. Yet, as my dissertation argues, there are always inherent tensions within these processes. I argue that Quintilian subtly questions the efficacy of the institution of exemplarity, and reimagines both the modes of genetic and educational transmission, as well as the ways in which they interact with each other. Doing so reveals Quintilian's spotlighting of the individual aristocrat and his *ingenium*, his natural and innate capability and talent, rather than the inherited legacy of a prominent aristocratic family. This in turn uncovers one of the dominant themes in the *IO*: *inventio* and the future. While Quintilian advocates for preserving the traditions of the past – his interest in *imitatio* and exemplarity attests to that – he is unwilling to do so to the detriment of the future.

The first section analyzes Quintilian's use of Cato the Elder as a way to challenge the undiscerning nature of exemplarity; as Quintilian insists, the exemplary process is predicated on adaptation and evolution instead of blind imitation.² Even the most exemplary of *exempla*, Cato, should be imitated judiciously. Mimicry and imitation with no critical thought or engagement result in odd and anachronistic expressions of *exempla*, presenting the Republic as distant and obsolete.³

² This attitude is not unique to Quintilian: in her discussion of the “archetypal exemplum”, Rebecca Langlands argues that this is a hallmark of the exemplary process: “To emulate the deed of an exemplary figure, it is necessary to do much more than blindly copy exactly *what they do* – behaviour that Matthew Roller has labelled ‘structural imitation’ and Ruby Blondell has labelled ‘slavish imitation’” (2018: 45). Cf. Roller 2004: 23-24 and Blondell 2002: 102. Notably, Quintilian is particularly explicit about the need for selectivity.

³ Langlands 2018: 226-57 firmly argues against the perception of exemplarity as “an aristocratic Republican practice that declines in the imperial era” (226). Although some ancient authors, including Quintilian, present exemplarity as an institution “that has been irrevocably altered by the new political structures of the Roman principate”, Langlands advises scholars to take such expressions with a grain of salt, and “not to overstate the extent to which the exemplary framework went into decline and lost its cultural relevance in the period” (253). I focus on

Next, I examine Quintilian's description of the famous Republican *matronae* Cornelia, Hortensia, and Laelia, who serve as the only instance of the "traditional" form of genetic transmission, the biological and hereditary method in which exemplary traits are passed down from generation to generation, in the *IO*. I argue that by focusing solely on women biologically inheriting traits from relatives, Quintilian genders the mode of genetic transmission. It appears that unlike their male counterparts, women are unable to produce *ingenium*, or exemplary traits in their own right. Per the modes of genetic and educational transmission, both men and women either inherit *exempla* from a family member, or are taught. While Quintilian limits women to the above methods, he offers a unique and nuanced perspective on genetic transmission with his male students: their *ingenium*. By pointedly avoiding crediting parents with the transmission of biological character traits, Quintilian implies that his students produce their own innate qualities. Yet by categorizing the "traditional" form of genetic transmission as specifically feminine, Quintilian further problematizes the modes of exemplary transmission: the *inventio* and creativity which he so strongly emphasizes in his male students remains unattainable for women.

I conclude with a broader overview of Quintilian's opinions on morality and exemplarity. When Quintilian references these earlier authors as a way to educate his students on Roman morality, he is not only treating his literary ancestors as *exempla*, but is in turn demonstrating throughout his own text the proper use of literary *exempla*, as well

Quintilian's conceptualization of exemplary and moral discourse, which at times presents the institution of "traditional Republican" exemplarity as less culturally significant. However, guided by Langlands, I do not suggest that this is an "accurate" representation of the exemplary framework.

as implicitly recommending himself as an *exemplum*. Throughout the *IO*, heroic figures from the Republican past appear as guides of style rather than ethics, but the process of adapting their *exempla* for contemporary life is still fraught with the usual dilemmas of ethical exemplarity. While genetics and education are presented in the *IO* as a complementary pair which hold the key to success for young aristocrats, Quintilian's focus on *inventio* forces a refashioning of both modes of transmission. Rather than attribute these exemplary genetic qualities to ancestry and heredity, Quintilian prioritizes *ingenium*, one's natural and innate capability or talent. I identify a similar dynamic at play in Chapter One. The story of Serranus and his father, the hero Marcus Atilius Regulus, demonstrates the interlocking nature of the modes of genetic and educational transmission: Marus used the exemplary stories of Regulus as way to rouse and reinforce the heroic (and presumably hereditary) traits within Serranus. In both case-studies, the modes of genetic and education transmission are presented as codependent – one cannot function without the other.

Quintilian's Cato

This chapter begins with Cato the Elder because he is closely intertwined with Quintilian's vision of a Republican statesman. In the proem for Book One, he tells us that his primary objective is to educate the ideal Roman orator:

Oratorem autem instituimus illum perfectum, qui esse nisi vir bonus non potest, ideoque non dicendi modo eximiam in eo facultatem sed omnis animi virtutes exigimus.

Neque enim hoc concesserim, rationem rectae honestaeque vitae, ut quidam putaverunt, ad philosophos relegendam, cum vir ille vere civilis et publicarum privatarumque rerum administrationi accommodatus, qui regere consiliis urbes, fundare legibus, emendare iudiciis possit, non alius sit profecto quam orator.

But moreover, we have trained up *that* man as the perfect orator, who is unable to exist unless he is a “good man”, and therefore we demand not only an extraordinary capability when it comes to speaking, but also that all the virtues of intellect be present within him.

For I would not assent to this fact, namely that the mode of an upright and honest life, as certain people have posited, ought to be attributed to philosophers, seeing as that truly civic-minded man, suited for the administration of both public and private affairs, is the sort who can guide cities with his counsels, lay their foundations with his laws, and correct their faults with his judgements, he is assuredly none other than my orator (*Inst. 1. Pr. 9-11*).

Significantly, Quintilian fuses the concepts of the ideal orator, and what seems like the ideal statesman. A “good man”, *vir bonus*, is a buzzword for Roman morality. It refers to an individual who embodies traditional Roman values, and is often used to describe esteemed heroes and prominent statesmen. This phrase evokes the memory of Cato the Elder, who uses identical wording in the preface of his *De Agricultura*:

Et virum bonum quom laudabant, ita laudabant: bonum agricolam bonumque colonum. Amplissime laudari existimabatur qui ita laudabatur.

And when they used to commend a man for being good, they did so like this: that he was a good farmer and a good cultivator. He who is praised in such a manner is thought to have received the highest of commendations” (*Agr. Praef. 2*).

The preface of the *De Agricultura* suggests that it too is a guide for young aristocrats, by implying that a good Roman must always be occupied and working hard, whether he is protecting the state, participating in politics, or simply at home; there is no place for laziness and idleness.⁴ Many accounts of heroic statesmen associate farming and hard work with virtue and uprightness. This connection will be revisited in more detail later.

⁴ Cf. Habinek 1998: 49: “In other words, both the content of the evaluation and the context can be taken to reinforce the link between Cato’s advice and traditional aristocratic wisdom, in contrast to the social commitments implied in a privileging of wealth”.

A brief overview of Catonian morality and ideology is required for a clearer understanding of his vision of the *vir bonus*. In his landmark 2005 article “Agriculture, Writing, and Cato’s Self-Fashioning”, Brendon Reay explores how Cato, despite being a *novus homo*, was able to be the “exemplary representative” of the Roman aristocracy.⁵ The above excerpt from the *De Agricultura* outlines part of what constitutes Catonian ethics and morality: agriculture. Surviving fragments from his speeches provide us with even more detail.⁶ Based on these fragments, Cato the Elder prized uprightness and honesty (Frs. 17; 177), *labor* (Frs. 17; 18; 128, 131), respect for tradition and ancestors (Frs. 18; 22; 93), military prowess (Frs. 18; 28), patriotism (Frs. 21; 129; 132; 133), austerity and parsimony (Frs. 128; 133; 177), and fear of change (Frs. 22; 93).

Quintilian makes clear his interest in Cato the Elder, by quoting him on two separate occasions. In fact, he chooses to use Cato’s words to introduce the first chapter of the final book of the *IO*:

Sit ergo nobis orator quem constituimus is qui a M. Catone finitur vir bonus dicendi peritus, verum, id quod et ille posuit prius et ipsa natura potius ac maius est, utique vir bonus: id non eo tantum quod, si vis illa dicendi malitiam instruxerit, nihil sit publicis privatisque rebus perniciosius eloquentia, nosque ipsi, qui pro virili parte conferre aliquid d facultatem dicendi conati sumus, pessime mereamur de rebus humanis si latroni comparamus haec arma, non militi.

Therefore let our orator, whom we are creating, be the one who is defined by M. Cato as “a good man well versed in speaking”; but, and he stated this earlier, and by its very nature it is more important, and of greater weight, this man should be “good” in all ways; it is not only because, if the force of speaking should furnish one with malevolence, there would be nothing more destructive than eloquence for public and private affairs; and I myself, who, for my part, have tried to contribute

⁵ Reay 2005: 334.

⁶ The following fragments are from “*Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta*” ed. H. Malcovati, Turin: Paravia, 1955: 21-22; 28; 93; 128; 131-33; 177 which clearly explicate Cato’s views on morality and ethics.

something to the skill of speaking, would be serving humanity in the worst possible manner, if I provide these weapons for a bandit, not a soldier (*Inst.* 12.1.1).

While scholars have focused on Quintilian's quotation of Cato the Elder, they have not previously noticed that key aspects of the entire passage from Quintilian are modeled on the preface to Cato's *De Agricultura*. Quintilian's concern that he might "serve humanity in the worst possible manner, if [he] provides these weapons for a bandit, not a soldier" is striking. In the preface of the *De Agricultura*, Cato makes references both to soldiers and brigands:

Est interdum praestare mercaturis rem quaerere, nisi tam periculosum sit, et item fenerari, si tam honestum sit. Maiores nostri sic habuerunt et ita in legibus posiverunt, furem dupli condemnari, feneratorum quadrupli. Quanto peiorem civem existimarint feneratorum quam furem, hinc licet existimare. Et virum bonum quom laudabant, ita laudabant, bonum agricolam bonumque colonum. Amplissime laudari existimabatur qui ita laudabatur. Mercatorem autem strenuum studiosumque rei quaerendae existimo, verum, ut supra dixi, periculosum et calamitosum. At ex agricolis et viri fortissimi et milites strenuissimi gignuntur, maximeque pius quaestus, stabilissimusque consequitur minimeque invidiosus, minimeque male cogitantes sunt qui in eo studio occupati sunt. Nunc, ad rem redeam, quod promisi institutum principium hoc erit.

It is the case that obtaining wealth and property through commerce can sometimes be beneficial, if it weren't so risky; so too is usury, if it were as respectable. Our respected forefathers thought this way, and thus laid it out in their laws: that a thief be punished twice, a usurer four times. From here, one can conclude how much worse a citizen they considered a usurer to be than a thief. And when they used to commend a man for being good, they did so like this: that he was a good farmer and a good cultivator; he who is praised in such a manner is thought to have received the highest of commendations. Moreover, I think that a trader can be hardworking and eager in the pursuit of obtaining wealth and property, but, as I said above, the pursuit is risky and has the potential for disaster. On the other hand, the bravest men and the hardest working soldiers are born from farmers: their resulting profit is by far the most honourable, the most steadfast, and is the least envied; those who are busy in that pursuit are the ones whose minds have the least negative inclinations. Now, back to my subject; this will serve as the introduction for the task which I have put forth (*Agr. Pr.* 1-4).

Despite trade and commerce having their merits, as Cato observes, such enterprises can prove risky, leading to disastrous consequences. Commerce is linked with usury, better known as moneylending, which Cato dismisses as a disreputable occupation, even more so than thievery. In contrast, the bravest and hardest working soldiers (and therefore the ideal sorts of Roman citizens) are born from farmers. Although the vocabulary is not identical to Cato (he uses *latroni* instead of the Catonian *furem*), Quintilian's concerns about helping brigands rather than soldiers in a passage with a distinctly Catonian flavour is not coincidental. Another Catonian echo occurs later in Book One, where Quintilian explains that "Therefore, this work has not been written for one who lacks *ingenium* any more than texts on agriculture for infertile lands".⁷ Again, given his interest in Cato the Elder, the mention of the *scripta...de agrorum cultu* is surely a nod to the famous *De Agricultura*.

The phrase *vir bonus* is clearly used both by Cato and Quintilian to denote aristocratic morality. In Quintilian's case, his oratory student transforms into an "ideal" aristocrat. Generally speaking, morality and speech are closely intertwined in Roman culture. Seneca the Younger dedicates an entire letter to the topic. In his characteristically pithy and acerbic tone, he posits that:

Argumentum est luxuriae publicae orationis lascivia, si modo non in uno aut in altero fuit, sed adprobata est et recepta. Non potest alius esse ingenio, alius animo color. Si ille sanus est, si compositus, gravis, temperans, ingenium quoque siccum ac sobrium est; illo vitiatum hoc quoque adflatur.

The licentiousness of speech is evidence of public luxury, if it were not present on just one or two occasions, but has been approved of and well received. It is not possible that there is one type of appearance for one's *ingenium*, and one for their soul. If the soul is sound, if it is orderly, serious,

⁷ Quint. *Inst.* 1.26.

and temperate, then the *ingenium* is also solid and sober; when one has been tainted, then the other is also affected (*Ep.* 114.3).

Quintilian echoes this sentiment that a man's soul (ie. mind) and capability are inextricably linked, by stipulating that his perfect orator simply cannot exist if he is not a *vir bonus*.⁸ This again evokes the memory of Cato the Elder, who embodies Quintilian's teachings. Referring specifically to Cato the Elder, Alan Astin notes that he was undoubtedly aware of the importance of the role of oratory, as well as "the purposes to which it was put within the context of that concern for integrity" – a recurrent theme throughout his life and career.⁹ Regarding Quintilian's specific quotation of Cato the Elder, he was not the only author to use it as a means of discussing morality as a key component of oratory. Seneca the Elder praises Cato and his stalwart nature extensively in his *Controversiae*:

Erratis, optimi iuvenes, nisi illam vocem non M. Catonis sed oraculi creditis. Quid enim est oraculum? nempe voluntas divina hominis ore enuntiata; et quem tandem antistitem sanctiorem sibi invenire divinitas potuit quam M. Catonem per quem humano generi non praeciperet sed convicium faceret? Ille ergo vir quid ait? "Orator est, Marce fili, vir bonus dicendi peritus." Ite nunc et in istis vulsis atque expolitis et nusquam nisi in libidine viris quaerite oratores. Merito talia habent exempla qualia ingenia.

You are wrong, most excellent young men, if you do not believe that that maxim of M. Cato is also an oracle. Because really, what is an oracle? Surely it is divine will expressed in human speech; and what high priest could the gods have found who was more sacred than M. Cato, by which he does not teach mankind, but rather tell them off? And so what did that man say? "An orator, my son Marcus, is a good man well versed in speaking." Go now and seek orators amongst those men who have been plucked and made smooth, and are never not in the throes of lust. Quite rightly, they have the sorts of *exempla* which correspond to their *ingenia* (*Controv.* 1. *Pr.* 9).

Here, Seneca uses the traditional Cato as a way to comment on the decline of contemporary oratory. Cato is lauded as an oracle whose teachings are invaluable. This is in contrast to

⁸ Quint. *Inst.* 1.*Pr.*9.

⁹ Astin 1978: 154.

the “plucked and smoothed [orators] of today”, whom Seneca notes with disgust, are “never not in the throes of lust”.

Although the primary focus has been on examining deliberate intertexts with Catonian literature, especially his *De Agricultura*, I use these references and allusions as a means for unpacking the reception of his image. Catonian reception in Quintilian continues to be a source of scholarly interest: Michael Winterbottom argues that Quintilian mentions the *vir bonus dicendi peritus* in order to emphasize the Ciceronian tradition, which he felt was being overshadowed by the influence of the Flavian-era *delatores* (informers).¹⁰ Alan Brinton and Pablo Garcia Castillo analyze the Platonic influences behind Quintilian’s *vir bonus*,¹¹ while Antonio Ramón Pont looks at Vergil’s *Aeneid* as a possible source of inspiration.¹² More recently, Mary Rosalie Stoner’s dissertation argues the following:

Scholars sometimes assume that, because Quintilian adopts Cato’s definition of the orator, Cato and Quintilian shared an ideal of the orator as well. However, the fragmentary transmission of the quote, let alone the vast cultural and political changes that Rome underwent in the intervening centuries between Cato and Quintilian, should make us hesitant to accept a static identity for the definition.¹³

I aim to place Quintilian’s references to Cato the Elder within the context of a broader idealization of Republican statesmen throughout the *Institutio*. Certainly, as Stoner observes, this is not to suggest that the definition of the *vir bonus*, as well as the notion of Roman morality, remained static during the interval between Cato and Quintilian. However, it is worth exploring why Quintilian evokes the memory of Cato, specifically

¹⁰ Winterbottom 1964.

¹¹ Brinton 1983 and Garcia Castillo 1998.

¹² Ramón Pont 1998.

¹³ Stoner 2021: 16.

through the concept of the *vir bonus*, and how it contributes to our understanding of Quintilian's target audience.

To be clear, the above characteristics do not invoke the memory of Cato alone. I use the term *Catonitas* to refer to a nexus of ideas and images associated with Cato, rather than a literal reference to a specific "text". Cato is perhaps the most famous and best-preserved *exemplum* of traditional Roman morality; his personality is a self-fashioned and concentrated fusion of the traits of Rome's most esteemed statesmen. Most importantly, we have his own writings, which reflect these characteristics, as well as numerous accounts of him and his descendants, written by both Republican and Imperial authors, such as Cicero, Livy, and Plutarch. Cato's self-fashioned persona is also of particular interest since it is his greatest legacy. His writing is a conscious self-presentation and a construction of rhetoric, which is not designed to document reality, but rather to display cultural power. It is significant that this is the cultural lexicon with which Cato chooses to create himself, and it is this image which was later received, responded to, and reconfigured by Roman writers, including Quintilian.

The essence of *Catonitas*, then, is a combination, or amalgam, of the *exempla* of earlier heroic statesmen, such as Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus and Manius Curius Dentatus. While the linking of farming and hard work with virtue and uprightness is often associated with Cato, there are shades of this virtue in Cincinnatus and Dentatus as well. Cincinnatus was appointed dictator twice, and in both instances, was found working on his farm when he received the summons.¹⁴ The vivid image of Cincinnatus either digging or

¹⁴ Liv. 3.26.7-10.

ploughing fields, and wiping the sweat and dirt off of his brow while being summoned to serve the state of Rome was a legendary *exemplum* for all. Dentatus, like Cato, was a *novus homo*, who eschewed *luxuria* for a sober life of *pauperies*. In Cicero's *De Senectute*, Cato admits that he cannot admire Dentatus enough, and that their villas neighbour one another.¹⁵ Similarly, Valerius Maximus declares that Dentatus is the epitome of Roman frugality, and describes him sitting by the fire, and eating simple food out of a wooden bowl when the Samnite envoys came to meet him.¹⁶ Therefore, this *Catonitas* was fashioned from the *exempla* of earlier statesmen like Cincinnatus and Dentatus. Indeed, he is emblematic of a very specific set of values with which writers like Quintilian are engaging.

Why then Quintilian is so focused on this *Catonitas*, and how it can better contribute to our understanding of the *IO*? Quintilian's objective is to teach his readers how to educate an aristocratic statesman in Imperial Rome, a curriculum which naturally includes Republican *exempla*. However, Quintilian intersperses the *IO* with complications that encourage the reader to reconsider these traditional Republican aspects of Roman exemplarity; his advocacy of adaptation rather than pure imitation is indicative of the Imperial mindset. I argue that Quintilian uses perhaps the most archetypically Republican *exemplum*, Cato the Elder, to point out some of these inherent tensions.

¹⁵ Cic. *Sen.* 56.

¹⁶ Val. Max. 4.3.5a.

Despite receiving a lot of praise, even Cato is not exempt from Quintilian's critiques. In Book Two, Cato is used as a caveat when readers are cautioned about the perils of blindly following tradition:

*unum, ne quis eos antiquitatis nimius admirator in Gracchorum
Catonisque et aliorum similium lectione durescere velit...[elocutio],
quae tum sine dubio erat optima, sed nostris temporibus aliena est,
contenti, quod est pessimum, similes sibi magnis viris videbuntur.*

First, let no excessive admirer of antiquity wish that those boys grow hard with their reading of the Gracchi and Cato, and other similar authors... [as regards the style of the Gracchi and Cato], which was then undoubtedly the best, but is now alien in our times, feeling content [with this older style], which is the worst outcome, [today's men] will view themselves as similar to those great men (*Inst.* 2.5.21).

The idea presented is that any student of oratory should demonstrate complete understanding of the *exempla* they are following. Neither the ancient nor current reader should underestimate how far-removed and antiquated the speeches of the Gracchi and Cato would have felt in Quintilian's time. Since Cato represents an era which has long ended, is it ideal or even desirable to attempt to replicate this *Catonitas* in current times? As the middle Republic, the age of Cato's *floruit*, transitioned into the Empire, that era started to be viewed as a golden age of sorts. Because the focus had been on the collective state, rather than the ruling individual, these prized traditional *virtutes* and *mores* abounded, and the great Roman statesman flourished in the middle Republic, serving as an *exemplum* for many generations to follow. These *exempla* were of particular importance to the aristocracy, who, as Matthew Roller argues, viewed them as "a storehouse of practices, orientations, and values – sometimes referred to the *mos maiorum*, 'the custom of the forebears' – that were embodied in celebrated actors and deeds, and through them were

made manifest and accessible to later ages”.¹⁷

In light of this reverence in the Imperial period for the middle Republic, scholars such as Michael Winterbottom argue that Quintilian makes reference to Cato, and other Republican orators such as Cicero, as a response to the visible decline and decay of oratory and rhetoric: “He found himself disgusted by the way rhetoric was being misapplied: and we should not forget that this was a matter of *emotion* to the academic Quintilian”.¹⁸ Although this argument has its merits, it oversimplifies Quintilian’s engagement with Cato. It is acknowledged both by current scholars and the Romans themselves that the Romans routinely looked back to the good old-fashioned days of simplicity, humility, and austerity with wistful sentimentality, feelings which intensified as Rome transformed into an imperial superpower. The staunchly traditional Cato is indicative of this mindset – he represents an era that is long gone.

Of course, this era was long gone by Cato’s time too. It was no longer possible to be a wealthy and aristocratic gentleman who also partook in hard and hands-on labour. The days of Manius Curius Dentatus, or the legendary Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus were over, and farmers were now estate owners.¹⁹ Enrica Sciarrino notes, “the most widely recognized quality attributed to aristocrats is their adherence to archetypes situated in a not readily accessible location associated with the past”.²⁰ Roman aristocracy, and therefore its morality and ethics, are predicated on repetition and emulation. Therefore, any change or

¹⁷ Roller 2009: 214.

¹⁸ Winterbottom 1964: 96.

¹⁹ Reay 2005 which argues that Republican aristocrats like Cato the Elder self-fashioned themselves as farmers, but in reality, were wealthy landed-estate owners.

²⁰ Sciarrino 2011: 118.

deviation presents an immediate threat to the meticulously maintained elite stronghold on Roman culture and society. As the chapter on Silius Italicus argued, these processes of repeating and emulating *exempla* are misleadingly simple.²¹ It is simply impossible for things to stay the same; Cato, as a *novus homo*, would have been all too familiar with this need to adapt: his traditional and austere persona was a deliberate reinvention, designed to help him become part of the aristocracy.

Quintilian overtly advocates for change and evolution throughout the *IO*, by presenting Imperial oratory as markedly different from its Republican predecessor – success is predicated on the ability to evolve, adapt, and even improve.²² This need for change, then, conflicts with the notion of exemplarity, which demands the infinite repetition of respective patterns of behaviour over and over again. By critiquing Cato and enjoining his readers to be wary of blindly following *exempla*, Quintilian uses Cato to emphasize the idea that not only is it impossible for things to remain the same, but that in fact, such a reality is neither ideal nor even possible. Quintilian’s use of Cato, the most exemplary of *exempla*, to promote change and evolution is paradoxical, and rhetorically very striking. Furthermore, it offers an important nuance regarding exemplarity: contrary to appearances, *exempla* are not meant to be perfectly replicated. Rather, like Cato the Elder, they serve as a baseline upon which you can build.

By choosing both the aspects of *Catonitas* as well as the occasions for deployment throughout the *IO*, Quintilian is producing his own “version” of the Republican statesman

²¹ Cf. Langlands 2018: 4, and Roller 2018: 10.

²² Cf. *Inst.* 1.6 and 2.5.21 for a couple of examples of Quintilian championing change and innovation.

— his student will not be a duplicate, but instead an entirely new model only partially comprised of judiciously chosen traditional Republican elements. Similarly, Cato is only one manifestation of Roman morality and ethics — there are so many *exempla* to choose from.²³ Thus, Quintilian’s invocation of *Catonitas* is a rhetorical exercise in and of itself; his student must possess the *ingenium* to recognize the complexities of the exemplary process. References to Cato, and indeed other exemplary Republicans are not arbitrary — they have been carefully selected and cultivated for specific purposes.

Curiously, Quintilian is far more interested in Cato the Elder than his great-grandson Cato the Younger (= Uticensis). The Imperial authors Pliny the Younger, Plutarch, and Aulus Gellius all attempted to address how the two were related, and the general consensus is that Cato Uticensis was the grandson of Cato the Elder’s second son, Marcus Porcius Cato Salonianus. Late Republican and Imperial literature such as Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*, Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, and Plutarch’s *Life of Cato the Younger* underline his traits of severity, austerity, and staunch devotion to traditional Republican *mores*, just like his great-grandfather. The memories of these two men appear fused together, resulting in the possibility that ancient biographies and discussions of Cato the Elder are based on what authors knew about Cato Uticensis, or vice-versa.²⁴ If anything, Cato Uticensis, as his *cognomen* implies, was unflappably traditional. In contrast, Cato the Elder is more

²³ And Quintilian does - Cicero is another favourite! Cf. Gowing 2013: 233, who observes that Quintilian is the one “on whom Cicero exerted a deeper and more readily discernible influence than on any other imperial author,...Cicero is omnipresent in Quintilian in ways large and small, the *sine quo non* of his masterwork, the standard by which he defines the arts and practitioners of oratory and eloquence”.

²⁴ Connolly 2022: 19-22 discusses the “Cato-type” in reference to the compilation of maxims known as the *Distichs of Cato*.

representative of innovation: he was a *novus homo* who had to self-fashion his own identity in order to join the ranks of the elite.

The *Eloquentia* and Education of Cornelia, Laelia, and Hortensia

There is a distinct absence of the “traditional” mode of genetic transmission throughout the *IO*. Indeed, Quintilian shows no interest in identifying the origins of his students’ *ingenium* as hereditary; his primary concern is its possession.²⁵ The sole occurrence of genetic transmission occurs in his discussion of three prominent Republican *matronae*: Cornelia, Hortensia, and Laelia, and even then, the reference is extraordinarily vague:

In parentibus vero quam plurimum esse eruditionis optaverim. Nec de patribus tantum loquor: nam Gracchorum eloquentiae multum contulisse accepimus Corneliam matrem, cuius doctissimus sermo in posteros quoque est epistulis traditus, et Laelia C. filia reddidisse in loquendo paternam elegantiam dicitur, et Hortensiae Q. filiae oratio apud triumviros habita legitur non tantum in sexus honorem.

But concerning the parents, I would prefer that they are as well educated as possible. I am not just speaking about the fathers; for we have all heard that Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, and whose most learned speech has been handed down to the next generations in her letters, taught them many of their skills in eloquence; and there is also Laelia, the daughter of C. Laelius, who is said to have rendered her father in terms of elegance when speaking; and the speech of Hortensia, daughter of Q. Hortensius, which was presented before the *triumviri* continues to be read, and not only out of respect to her sex (*Inst.* 1.1.6-7).

How did these women obtain such *virtutes*? Quintilian's description of Laelia suggests that she inherited it from her father Gaius Laelius. By focusing solely on women biologically inheriting traits from relatives, Quintilian pointedly genders the mode of genetic

²⁵ A more obvious explanation for the absence of genetic transmission in the *IO* is its genre – a treatise devoted to instruction, *institutio*.

transmission: unlike their male counterparts, women are unable to possess *ingenium*, or exemplary traits in their own right. Rather, they are limited to the traditional modes of transmission: inheriting *exempla* from a family member, or being taught. By categorizing this form of exemplarity as specifically feminine, Quintilian further problematizes the modes of exemplary transmission: the *inventio* and creativity which he so strongly emphasizes in his students is restricted to men – women, it seems, are incapable of generating their own *ingenia*. Instead, their acquisition of moral *virtutes* is directly related to their male relatives and teachers. Producing their own *ingenia* suggests that women might be equal to men, consequently implying that women are deserving of an unimaginable freedom and independence which can only end in disaster. Cornelia's daughter Sempronia, whom we shall encounter shortly, is one such example.

Before exploring the educational background of Cornelia, Laelia, and Hortensia, a brief overview of the education of Roman women is needed. Emily A. Hemelrijk's 2015 chapter "The Education of Women in Ancient Rome" in *A Companion in Ancient Education* provides a good introductory survey.²⁶ Because there were no specific goals when it came to teaching girls, it is quite difficult to gauge how they were educated.²⁷ We do know that in comparison to their male counterparts, literary education was viewed as detrimental to female morality and ethics.²⁸ It is thought that some schools taught both boys and girls, and for those with the financial resources, private tutors were employed to teach

²⁶ Hemelrijk 2015: 292-304.

²⁷ Ibid. 293.

²⁸ Hemelrijk 2015: 293. The initial stage of Roman schooling entails boys and girls being taught together by a *litterator* (cf. Mart. 8.3.16 and 9.68.2). For the next stage, a *grammaticus* might be hired to teach girls at home. It was highly unusual for a *rhetor* to be hired to teach young women.

both sons and daughters.²⁹ As such, it is very likely then that these tutors used the same books and curricula for all of the children.³⁰ Scholars have argued that literacy was far more common than previously thought, and that there was likely a variety in the levels of literacy throughout the ancient Roman world.³¹

Ultimately, it is, as Hemelrijk notes, "impossible to estimate how many women had at least a rudimentary knowledge of letters and numbers".³² However, based on our extant sources, extensive knowledge of Greco-Roman literature was mostly the domain of the Roman upper-class.³³ Factors impacting a girl's education included, but were not limited to, the age they were married, whether a private tutor had been hired, access to books, and if their family even deemed it worthwhile for their daughters to study.³⁴ Based on these conditions, it appears that the majority of Roman elite girls were homeschooled, especially in the advanced stages of schooling, and additional education was predicated on "their individual capacities and the wishes of their parents tutors".³⁵ Their curriculum would likely have been comprised of literature, particularly Greco-Roman poetry, philosophy, geometry, and occasionally prose composition.³⁶ Such subjects were usually the domain of a *rhetor*.³⁷

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Morgan 1998: 48.

³¹ Humphrey 1991, and Johnson and Parker 2009.

³² Hemelrijk 2015: 295.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid: 296.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Cf. Suet. *Gramm.* 16 and 19, which describe how some elite girls brought their teachers to their new households when married. Suetonius tells us that other girls hired learned Greeks as tutors.

Although basic literacy and numeracy was almost certainly quintessential for *matronae*³⁸ - they had to run their households, maintain the estates, manage the finances and political aspirations of their husbands, as well as entertain and host guests and relatives - female education was also unsurprisingly met with suspicion and criticism.³⁹ Sallust's rather unflattering description of Sempronia, the daughter of Cornelia and sister of the Gracchi, voices concern that an "overly" educated woman might forget the traditional *virtutes* of the *matrona*:

Sed in eis erat Sempronia, quae multa saepe virilis audaciae facinora commiserat. Haec mulier genere atque forma, praeterea viro [atque] liberis satis fortunata fuit; litteris Graecis et Latinis docta, psallere [et] saltare elegantius, quam necesse est probae, multa alia, quae instrumenta luxuriae sunt. Sed ei cariora semper omnia quam decus atque pudicitia fuit; pecuniae an famae minus parceret, haud facile discerneres; libido sic adcesa, ut saepius peteret viros quam peteretur. Sed ea saepe antehac fidem prodiderat, creditum abiuraverat, caedis conscia fuerat, luxuria atque inopia praeceps abierat. Verum ingenium eius haud absurdum; posse versus facere, iocum movere, sermone uti vel modesto vel molli vel procaci; prorsus multae facetiae multusque lepos inerat.

But among these women was Sempronia, who had often committed many outrages of masculine boldness. This woman was sufficiently blessed in birth, appearance, and moreover her husband and children; she was well educated in Greek and Latin literature; she was able to play the lyre, and to dance more elegantly than is necessary for an honourable woman, as well as many other accomplishments which are the instruments of luxury. But everything was dearer to her than dignity and modesty; you could by no means easily discern whether she was less sparing when it came to money or reputation whether she was less sparing of her money or her reputation; her lust was so inflamed that she sought out men more frequently than she was sought out. But before this time, she had often betrayed trust, had denied that she owed a debt, had been privy to murder, and had rushed headlong to ruin due to luxury and indigence. But her *ingenium* was by no means laughable; it is said that she could compose verses, make a joke, employ either modest or gentle or insolent language; in a word, she had much wit and appeal (*Cat.* 25).

³⁸ *Matrona* is a loaded term. While it can mean "wife" or "married woman", it refers specifically to a woman's sense of morality, as well as her social dignity and/or rank. As such, it quickly became associated with the aristocracy. Any married woman could be an *uxor*, but she had to be moral and virtuous to be referred to as a *matrona*.

³⁹ Hemelrijk 2015: 297.

Sallust, of course, was a wealthy and conservative senatorial aristocrat, precisely the sort of individual who would have scorned Sempronia's independence. Interestingly, all the accusations levied against her stem chiefly from the fact that she is too masculine, independent, and well-educated. Unlike her mother Cornelia, Sempronia used her education for hedonistic purposes rather than passing on her knowledge to the next generation of the aristocracy. She was unable to balance her wits and charms with the pressures of assuming her role as a traditional and submissive *matrona*.

Thus, the education of Roman women was viewed as a double-edged sword. While it was essential for running the household and participating in elite society, female education needed to be tempered and subdued by the expectations placed on *matronae*. In his description of Pompey's fifth wife Cornelia, Plutarch provides us with a prototype of the ideal *matrona*:

Πομπήϊος δὲ παρελθὼν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἔγημε Κορνηλίαν θυγατέρα Μετέλλου Σκηπίωνος, οὐ παρθένον, ἀλλὰ χήραν ἀπολελειμμένην νεωστὶ Ποπλίου τοῦ Κράσσου παιδός, ᾧ συνώκησεν ἐκ παρθενίας, ἐν Πάρθοις τεθνηκότος. ἐνῆν δὲ τῇ κόρῃ πολλὰ φίλτρα δίχα τῶν ἀφ' ὥρας. καὶ γὰρ περὶ γράμματα καλῶς ἤσκητο καὶ περὶ λύραν καὶ γεωμετρίαν, καὶ λόγων φιλοσόφων εἴθιστο χρησίμως ἀκούειν. καὶ προσῆν τούτοις ἦθος ἀηδίας καὶ περιεργίας καθαρὸν, ἃ δὴ νέαις προστρίβεται γυναιξὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα· πατὴρ δὲ καὶ γένους ἔνεκα καὶ δόξης ἄμεμπτος.

Pompey now entered the city, and married Cornelia, a daughter of Metellus Scipio. She was not a virgin, but had lately been left a widow by Publius, the son of Crassus, whose virgin bride she had been before his death in Parthia. The young woman had many charms apart from her youthful beauty. She was well versed in literature, in playing the lyre, and in geometry, and had been accustomed to listen to philosophical discourses with profit. In addition to this, she had a nature which was free from that unpleasant officiousness which such accomplishments are apt to impart to young women; and her father's lineage and reputation were above reproach (*Pomp.* 55).⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Translation from *Loeb*.

Like Sempronia, this Cornelia is exceptionally well-educated. However, she does not succumb to "that unpleasant officiousness" which afflicts Sempronia. As Hemelrijk observes:

Though valued as a mark of wealth and high status - and therefore increasingly found in elite families and among those who aspired to elite status - female education was considered to be acceptable only in so far as it could be presented as contributing to their conventional role as wives and mothers.⁴¹

Who then, is Quintilian's ideal *matrona*? Returning to his discussion of Cornelia, Laelia, and Hortensia, it is clear that they differ significantly from their male counterparts:

In parentibus vero quam plurimum esse eruditionis optaverim. Nec de patribus tantum loquor: nam Gracchorum eloquentiae multum contulisse accepimus Corneliam matrem, cuius doctissimus sermo in posteros quoque est epistulis traditus, et Laelia C. filia reddidisse in loquendo paternam elegantiam dicitur, et Hortensiae Q. filiae oratio apud triumviros habita legitur non tantum in sexus honorem.

But concerning the parents, I would prefer that they are as well educated as possible. I am not just speaking about the fathers; for we have all heard that Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, and whose most learned speech has been handed down to the next generations in her letters, taught them many of their skills in eloquence; and there is also Laelia, the daughter of C. Laelius, who is said to have rendered her father in terms of elegance when speaking; and the speech of Hortensia, daughter of Q. Hortensius, which was presented before the *triumviri* continues to be read, and not only out of respect to her sex (*Inst.* 1.1.6-7).

Quintilian is curiously vague about the educational backgrounds of Cornelia, Laelia, and Hortensia, even though he places equal emphasis on mothers and fathers as their children's first teachers.⁴² Unfortunately, while very little is known about the lives and education of these three women, we can at least surmise that they were very well educated. Cornelia almost certainly had a Greek *didaskalos*, since she was known to be fluent in Greek, and

⁴¹ Hemelrijk 1999: 299.

⁴² Cf. Dixon 1988: 111 on both parents as educators.

even hosted Greek scholars and other educated men at her villa in Misenum.⁴³ As Quintilian attests, she was also extremely well-versed in Latin rhetoric. Although there is some debate about surviving fragments of her letters in Cornelius Nepos, Cicero describes reading them, proclaiming that *apparet filios non tam in gremio educatos quam in sermone matris*, "they make it plain that her sons were nursed not less by their mother's speech than at her breast".⁴⁴ She was very likely amongst the first upper-class Roman women to attain a more advanced level of education.⁴⁵ Since Latin rhetoric schools did not yet exist, access to rhetorical education was likely easier for Cornelia and her generation.⁴⁶

Descriptions of Cornelia, such as the above by Cicero, tend to present her as the *origo* of her sons' exemplary traits – she is the source of transmission, both educationally and genetically. Plutarch's description in the *Life of Tiberius Gracchus* is more flattering still: διαγενομένους οὕτω φιλοτίμως ἐξέθρεψεν ὥστε πάντων εὐφυεστάτους Ῥωμαίων ὁμολογουμένως γεγονότας πεπαιδεῦσθαι δοκεῖν βέλτιον ἢ πεφυκέναι πρὸς ἀρετὴν, "[Cornelia] raised these sons so lovingly, that it was agreed upon that having been born with the best natural disposition of all Romans, as regards their virtues, they seemed to have been better educated than born."⁴⁷

However, it cannot be a coincidence that in Quintilian's discussion of all three women, the two following descriptions of Laelia and Hortensia hint at virtue inherited from their fathers. This would have been twofold for Cornelia. She came from a prominent

⁴³ Hemelrijk 1999: 21.

⁴⁴ Cic. *Brut.* 211. Translation from *Loeb*.

⁴⁵ Hemelrijk 1999: 21.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Plut. *Ti. Gracch.* 1.1.

family: her father, Scipio Africanus, one of the most famous and beloved statesmen in Roman history, had delivered some rousing and inspiring speeches in his time.⁴⁸ Cornelia was also the niece of Aemilius Paullus, which would have allowed her unparalleled access to Greek literature – Paullus was renowned for shipping an extensive library as plunder following the Macedonian Wars.⁴⁹ If we were to treat Quintilian’s description of Cornelia as a fragment and place it alongside Cicero and Plutarch’s descriptions without context, the instinct would be to solely attribute credit to Cornelia for her sons’ exemplary traits. However, given the ensuing descriptions of Laelia and Hortensia, I submit another interpretation: Quintilian is depicting Cornelia as an intermediary between Scipio Africanus and his grandsons; she is just a conduit. Although Cornelia was clearly the primary educational force in Tiberius and Gaius’ lives, in the same vein as Laelia and Hortensia, these traits were likely not innately hers, ie. a form of *ingenium*. Rather, she inherited them from her exemplary and heroic father, Scipio Africanus. This is especially significant, given that Quintilian rejects the mode of genetic transmission throughout the *IO*, instead preferring to focus on the *ingenium*, or innate nature, of the individual. Women are ineligible for such distinction – these refashioned modes of transmission do not apply to them.

There is also very little known about Hortensia, the daughter of the famed orator Quintus Hortensius Hortalus. Valerius Maximus offers the most detailed description:

⁴⁸ Ie. in Polyb. 15.10.

⁴⁹ Hemelrijk 1999: 23; 61. Given Cornelia’s privileged upbringing, it is unsurprising that she spoke fluent Greek, employed Greek tutors for her sons, and even patronized Greek scholars at her villa. Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 100; 104 for descriptions of Cornelia choosing Greek tutors.

Hortensia vero, Q. Hortensii filia, cum ordo matronarum gravi tributo a triumviris esset oneratus <nec> quisquam virorum patrocinium iis accommodare auderet, causam feminarum apud triumviros et constanter et feliciter egit: repraesentata enim patris facundia impetravit ut maior pars imperatae pecuniae iis remitteretur. revixit tum muliebri stirpe Q. Hortensius verbisque filiae aspiravit; cuius si virilis sexus posteris vi<a>m sequi voluissent, Hortensianae eloquentiae tanta hereditas una feminae actione abscissa non esset.

But Hortensia, the daughter of Q. Hortensius, when the order of the *matronae* had been burdened with a weighty tax by the *triumviri* and none of the men dared to offer them any help, she both resolutely and successfully pled the case of the women before the *triumviri*: for with her father's fluency having been manifested, she achieved the result that a greater part of the owed money be repaid to the women. At that time, Q. Hortensius lived again through his female offspring, and breathed inspiration into the words of his daughter; if the following male generations had wanted to follow her path, such a great inheritance would not have been cut short with one single speech of a woman (Val. Max. 8.3.3).

Much like Quintilian's description of Laelia, extant sources on Hortensia suggest that she inherited her *eloquentia* from her father. In the tradition of the *imagines*, whereby donning the mask the individual brought *maiores* back to life, Valerius Maximus' Hortensia brings her father back to life in front of the triumvirs, a subtle hint at of genetic transmission. Unfortunately, Quintilian omits these nuances in his discussion of Hortensia: "and the speech delivered before the triumvirs by Hortensia, the daughter of Quintus Hortensius, is still read—and not just because it is by a woman".⁵⁰ Quintilian prefaces his little aside that Hortensia's oratory is still read in spite of her gender with a brief reference to her lineage. As a woman, Hortensia is incapable of producing the requisite *ingenium* for such high-quality speeches. Therefore, we must conclude that her enduring *fama* and legacy are a result of traits inherited from her illustrious father.

⁵⁰ Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.7.

Quintilian's description of Laelia, declaring that she owes her *eloquentia* to her father Gaius Laelius, is the most detailed. Although the context of the passage, namely Quintilian's prescription that "As to the parents, I should wish them to be as highly educated as possible" suggests that all traits and skills mentioned here were acquired through education, Quintilian's use of *reddidisse* serves as a key to his argument. Although it can mean "to give back, restore (something taken away, borrowed, etc.),"⁵¹ it can also be defined as "To throw back (an image), reflect; to echo (a sound).; to reproduce in speech, repeat", particularly in reference to hereditary and biological relationships.⁵² For example, in Book Six of the *Aeneid* when Aeneas is learning about the future of his progeny, namely the Alban Kings, he is told: *et Capys et Numitor et qui te nomine reddet / Silvius Aeneas, pariter pietate vel armis / egregius, si umquam regnandam acceperit Albam*, "Both Capys and Numitor, and he who will render you in name, Silvius Aeneas, equally extraordinary in *pietas* or arms, if ever he should receive the opportunity to rule Alba".⁵³ Silvius Aeneas is just like his distant ancestor Aeneas, who of course was famed (at least in the *Aeneid*) for his piety and martial prowess. Here, the presence of genetic transmission is unmistakable: not only does Silvius Aeneas resemble his ancestor with his name, but he also possesses the same remarkable traits and characteristics

Considering Quintilian's refusal to commit to one mode of transmission as superior, his use of *reddidisse* in a similar fashion suggests that Laelia was not just well taught by

⁵¹ *OLD*, s.v. "reddo (v.), sense 1,".

⁵² *OLD*, s.v. "reddo (v.), sense 5a and b,".

⁵³ Verg. *Aen.* 6.768-70.

her father; she likely also possessed some natural ability which she inherited from him.⁵⁴

Crassus' description of Laelia, his mother-in-law, in Cicero's *De Oratore* is illuminating:

Equidem cum audio socrum meam Laeliam—facilius enim mulieres incorruptam antiquitatem conservant, quod multorum sermonis expertes ea tenent semper quae prima didicerunt—sed eam sic audio ut Plautum mihi aut Naevium videam audire: sono ipso vocis ita recto et simplici est ut nihil ostentationis aut imitationis afferre videatur; ex quo sic locutum esse eius patrem iudico, sic maiores, non aspere, ut ille quem dixi, non vaste, non rustice, non hiulce, sed presse et aequabiliter et leniter.

And indeed, when I hear about my mother-in-law Laelia, for women more easily kept the old pronunciation unadulterated because they are unfamiliar with the speech of numerous people, and so always keep the accents which they learned first, but when I hear about her in this way, it seems to me as if I am hearing Plautus or Naevius: the very sound of her voice is so direct and sincere, that it she seems to convey nothing at all of ostentatiousness or self-conscious imitation; therefore I imagine that her father spoke in this manner, and her ancestors too: not roughly, like that man whom I previously mentioned, not crudely, not rustically, not disjointedly, but concisely and uniformly and smoothly (*De or.* 3.45).

Quintilian was almost certainly aware of this reference to Laelia, since he frequently cites the *De Oratore*, as well as other texts from the Ciceronian corpus, throughout the *IO*. However, his description of Laelia as well as his thoughts on oratory as a discipline differ from the sentiments expressed by Cicero. Unlike Quintilian's Laelia, Cicero's appears to naturally inherit her *eloquentia* from her father and ancestors, rather than being trained by them. Hemelrijk quite rightly argues that “The Roman habit of complimenting a woman for resembling her father in mind or character is also based on the appreciation of 'male' intellectual qualities in women”, citing Laelia, Hortensia, Cicero's daughter Tullia, and

⁵⁴ Cf. Hemelrijk 1999: "Her proficiency in rhetoric seems due to an inherited talent, and to the influence and example of her father, rather than indicating a trend for girls to receive rhetorical education" (22).

Fundanus' Minicia Marcella as examples.⁵⁵ As such, the use of *maiores* in this passage is particularly striking, given that they are inextricably intertwined with the concept of genetic transmission.

The actual biological bond between relatives also allowed families to ensure the preservation and duplication of prized qualities. Suzanne Dixon explains that one of the functions fulfilled by Roman children was “continuity”, referring to the ensuing generations of families.⁵⁶ The sharing of physical and behavioural traits is a powerful means of guaranteeing that ancestors stay alive, despite having been dead for years.

Therefore, Crassus' belief that when he heard his mother-in-law speak, he also heard the powerful legacy of her prominent forefathers, indicates that *eloquentia* is a familial trait or characteristic. To highlight these genetic connections, Crassus also uses adverb *leniter*, “smoothly”, referring to the way in which Laelia speaks. This is quite pointed, which Cicero emphasizes by making sure it is the absolute final word said regarding Laelia. A few chapters earlier when listing the different styles and *naturae* of various famous orators, Laelius, Laelia's father, is said to have possessed smoothness:

Gravitationem Africanus, lenitatem Laelius, asperitatem Galba, profluens quiddam habuit Carbo et canorum: quis horum non princeps temporibus illis fuit? et suo tamen quisque in genere princeps.

Africanus had weight, Laelius smoothness, Galba harshness, and Carbo a certain fluidity; and of these old men, which of these men was not foremost in their era? And yet each one certainly was foremost in their type of oratory (*De or.* 3.28).

The importance of genetic transmission in this passage is further compounded by Crassus' reference to *imitatio* as a less than desirable quality. He praises Laelia's style as "so direct

⁵⁵ Hemelrijk 1999: 87.

⁵⁶ Dixon 1992: 102.

and sincere, that it she seems to convey nothing at all of ostentatiousness or self-conscious imitation". The implication is that if she imitated her *maiores*, her speech would appear to be overly affected and disingenuous. Instead, Laelia's *eloquentia* is praiseworthy precisely because of her concision and candour. Such qualities, Crassus implies, cannot be taught, or adopted through *imitatio*.

Quintilian's depiction of the "traditional" mode of genetic transmission is restrictive. Sallust's anecdote about Fabius Maximus and Scipio Africanus viewing their families' *imagines*, featured in the introduction, displays the immense pressure and stress endured by successors to prominent ancestral legacies. Yet in Quintilian's world, the constraints are depicted as twofold for women in these aristocratic *gentes*. Not only do they face the same pressures as their male equivalents to prepare future generations; worse still, any exemplary traits or talents which they happen to possess are not their own. Their virtues are limited and defined by their male relatives; they will not be able to share in the optimistic future of innovation and *inventio* painted by Quintilian.

Quintilian's Literary Exemplarity

This final section explores the ways in which Quintilian challenges the seemingly rigid boundaries of institutions such as exemplarity, education, and biological bonds with family members. We began with how his discussion of *Catonitas* highlighted his suggestion that the traditional and thus unchangeable institution of exemplarity relies on adaptation and innovation. We then saw that the contrasting modes of genetic and educational transmission had to work in tandem to create the ideal orator, and were complicated by genre. I conclude this chapter by zooming out with a broader overview of

Quintilian's thoughts on exemplarity and morality. When discussing his use of literary history throughout the *IO*, Thomas Baier explains that the purpose of literary history is continuity, namely the focus on tradition and origins of the author, and that "literary works were no longer seen as the product of an ingenious individual author".⁵⁷ Quintilian chooses to refer to authors based on their relevance to the education of an orator.⁵⁸ However, whenever the conversation of using the past to educate future generations arises, the topics of exemplarity and morality inevitably follow. Quintilian's stylistic discussion is a subtle way to continue the ethical discussion under a different heading. In what I term "literary exemplarity",⁵⁹ I argue that Quintilian uses literary history as a way illuminate his perspectives on Roman morality and traditions. However, as I have illustrated throughout this dissertation, such views are rarely as straightforward as they initially appear. When educating his students on rhetoric, and consequently exemplarity, I argue that Quintilian emphasizes the following complications: the need to be discerning regarding *exempla*, relying excessively on past times, and finally that education and innate ability are inextricably linked.

The concept of "literary exemplarity" refers to Quintilian's frequent citations of earlier Roman authors throughout the *IO*. Curtis Dozier's 2014 article "Quintilian's *Ratio Discendi* (*Institutio* 12.8) and the Rhetorical Dimension of the *Institutio Oratoria*"

⁵⁷ Baier 2017: 47.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 49.

⁵⁹ This differs from Pasco-Pranger 2015: 298, who defines "literary exemplarity" as texts which contains accounts of exemplarity: "When Cato, in a speech delivered early in his censorship, promises to continue in the mores that brought him to this office, he is effectively acknowledging and following his own exemplum. The fact that he commits that exemplarity to text and makes it available to a larger and more enduring audience deserves attention".

observes that “Quintilian employs the same persuasive techniques that he teaches”.⁶⁰ Citing *Inst.* 12.8, in which Quintilian explains to his reader his hopes that his trained orators can assess persuasive material, Dozier argues that “He [Quintilian] intends...for his reader to then apply his advice to the *Institutio Oratoria* itself”.⁶¹ By adopting Dozier’s stance that the *IO* is itself a rhetorical exercise, I argue that when Quintilian uses his references to these earlier authors to educate his students on Roman morality, he is not only treating his literary ancestors as *exempla*, but is in turn demonstrating throughout his own text the proper use of literary *exempla*, as well as implicitly recommending himself as an *exemplum*. Throughout the *IO*, heroic figures from the Republican past appear as guides of style rather than ethics, but the process of adapting their *exempla* for contemporary life is still fraught with the usual dilemmas of ethical exemplarity.

Let us begin with Quintilian’s observation that one needs to be discerning and judicious when imitating an *exemplum*. Quintilian first hints at this in Book One when discussing *auctoritas*:

Similis circa auctoritatem ratio. Nam etiamsi potest videri nihil peccare qui utitur iis verbis quae summi auctores tradiderunt, multum tamen refert non solum quid dixerint, sed etiam quid persuaserint. Neque enim ‘turchinabundum’ et ‘lurchinabundum’ iam in nobis quisquam ferat, licet Cato sit auctor, nec ‘hos lodices’, quamquam id Pollioni placet, nec ‘gladiola’, atqui Messala dixit, nec ‘parricidatum’, quod in Caelio vix tolerabile videtur, nec ‘collos’ mihi Calvus persuaserit: quae nec ipsi iam dicerent.

There is a similar rationale concerning the notion of “Authority”. For even if anyone who uses these words, which the best authors have passed down, cannot possibly appear to go wrong, nevertheless not only what they said, but also what they establish as acceptable, carries a lot of weight. For

⁶⁰ Dozier 2014: 71.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 73.

neither would anyone amongst us today tolerate *tuburchinabundus* and *lurchinabundus* (greedy, guzzling), even if Cato is its originator, nor *hos lodices* (these blankets), although it pleases Pollio, nor *gladiola* (small swords), even if Messala said it, nor *parricidatus* (parricide), which is scarcely acceptable in Caelius, not will Calvus be able to persuade me to say *collos* (neck); these are the sorts of words which they themselves would not say today (*Inst.* 1.6.42).

Prior to this section, Quintilian discussed the merits of using words from earlier texts, as well as the appeal of rebranding something old as new. However, he is quick to warn his audience that the art of oratory is predicated on clarity, and so when using these obscure words, one must take care that they make sense within their current context.⁶² In the above passage, Quintilian comes to the crux of his argument: while using the words of old (and therefore best) authors is never bad, you should know why you are following your literary ancestors. That is to say, one should be aware of contemporary contexts, in case your work sounds archaic and anachronistic. In light of Quintilian's frequent citations of Republican authors throughout the *IO*, I argue that this concern with now unfashionable archaicisms serves as a metaphor for his anxiety about attempts to incorporate traditional Republican values and ideals into the Empire. Much like their works, the likes of Cato, Pollio, Messala, Caelius, and Calvus are synonymous with the *auctoritas* with which Quintilian opens this segment. However, as Quintilian reminds his reader, not everything from the past will fit and make sense. As such, one must be judicious when selecting *exempla*, be it a quotation of Cato the Elder, or a character trait of a famous statesman.

Continuing with Dozier's train of thought that the *IO* is itself a rhetorical exercise, I suggest that Quintilian reminds his audience that he too is an *auctor* to be studied and emulated, particularly with his brief critique of Cato. Certainly, the words

⁶² Quint. *Inst.* 1.6.39-41.

tuburchinabundus and *lurchinabundus* sound comical, and would be out of place in the sort of oratory Quintilian is teaching his students. However, Quintilian's admiration for Cato the Elder is unmistakable – he frequently alludes to him, and pays him the greatest compliment by directly quoting him twice. Yet here, Quintilian tells us that blindly following even Cato, the paragon of *auctoritas* and *virtus*, is not a guarantee of success. With this critique, which shows that no one is infallible,⁶³ we readers can then conclude that Quintilian is following his own advice: every reference and quotation of Cato, and indeed every other *exemplum*, is deliberate and calculated.

In this next passage, Quintilian shows the reader the consequences of not being adequately discerning:

unde enim tantum boni ut pluribus quae recta sunt placeant? Igitur ut velli et comam in gradus frangere et in balneis perpotare, quamlibet haec invaserint civitatem, non erit consuetudo, quia nihil horum caret reprehensione (at lavamur et tondemur et convivimus ex consuetudine), sic in loquendo non si quid vitiose multis insederit pro regula sermonis accipiendum erit. Nam ut transeam quem ad modum vulgo imperiti loquantur, tota saepe theatra et omnem circi turbam exclamasse barbaram scimus. Ergo consuetudinem sermonis vocabo consensum eruditorum, sicut vivendi consensum bonorum.

For from where is there such good that that which is proper is pleasing to the majority of people? Therefore, as regards plucking hairs, and arranging hairstyles in tiers, and getting absolutely drunk in the baths, however much they have assailed our society, it cannot be called “usage”, because you can find fault with all of these things (but we wash and shave and we dine according to “usage”); thus in speaking, anything full of vice which has sat itself upon many people must not be accepted as the rules of speech. So that I can pass over what the uneducated vulgarly say, we know that often the entire theater, and the entire crowd of those at the Circus have screamed out unintelligible things. Therefore, I shall call the usage of speech a consensus of the educated, just like the usage of living is the consensus of the good (*Inst.* 1.6.44-45).

⁶³ Cf. *Inst.* 10.1.24-6, where Quintilian informs the reader that just because earlier authors have *antiquitas* and *auctoritas*, they too are capable of making mistakes and being self-indulgent.

This passage demonstrates that because something is customary or traditional, it does not mean that it is behaviour worth emulating. Furthermore, there are appropriate ways and times to conduct oneself. The *turba*, Quintilian observes, are crude, uneducated, and woefully unaware of appropriate comportment. Their behaviour has quite violently assailed, *invaserint*, Roman society, and even though everyone does it (ie. getting drunk in public), such behaviour is nothing to be proud of. Similarly, the speech of the *turba* is vulgar and the absolute antithesis of exemplary. After this rather stinging condemnation of the common people, Quintilian reveals from whom his students should learn: the good men, *boni*. Once again, this buzzword links morality and exemplarity with the well-educated aristocratic elite of Rome. One must be discriminating and judicious when selecting *exempla* to emulate, since it is possible to learn bad habits.

Closely linked to Quintilian's opinions on discernment and refinement are his thoughts on the obsessive societal preoccupation with antiquity and literature:

Verba a vetustate repetita non solum magnos adsertores habent, sed etiam adferunt orationi maiestatem aliquam non sine delectatione: nam et auctoritatem antiquitatis habent et, quia intermissa sunt, gratiam novitati similem parant. Sed opus est modo, ut neque crebra sint haec nec manifesta, quia nihil est odiosius adfectione, nec utique ab ultimis et iam oblitteratis repetita temporibus, ... oratio vero, cuius summa virtus est perspicuitas, quam sit vitiosa si egeat interprete! Ergo ut novorum optima erunt maxime vetera, ita veterum maxime nova.

Words renewed from an old age not only possess great advocates, but also bring a certain sort of splendour (not without delight) to the art of oratory: for they have both the authority of antiquity and, because they have been left neglected, offer a similar pleasure to that of novelty. But there is a need for moderation, so that these words are neither frequently occurring, nor too obvious, because there is nothing more tedious than affectation, and certainly not repeated from now-forgotten times; ... But truly, how faulty the art of oratory, whose greatest virtue is clarity, would

be if it should need an interpreter! Therefore, seeing as the best of the new words will be so very old, thus those of the oldest will be so very new (*Inst.* 1.6.39-41).⁶⁴

Not only does this passage preface Quintilian's views on choosing appropriate *exempla*, it also sheds light on the presumed appeal of wholeheartedly embracing all artefacts of the past, particularly from the Republican era. On the surface, there appears to be an assumption that because these texts came from the past, they must be good, hence Quintilian's assessment of them as "the authority of antiquity". Indeed, because they are old, they possess a certain novelty in current times. However, moderation is crucial. Quintilian warns us that it is entirely possible to overuse antique references and appear silly and affected. The purpose of oratory is to be clear and intelligible – you do not want to deliver a speech which is gnarly and overly complicated. Similarly, you do not want to deliver a speech brimming with pretentious and anachronistic quotes and citations.

This segues nicely into a discussion of Book Ten of the *IO*, which focuses on the pivotal role of *imitatio* in oratory. Quintilian's purpose, Elaine Fantham observes, "is directing his students to the classical authors as models of oratory, and so he emphasizes in particular the genres, the authors, and the aspects of those authors which are suited for imitation".⁶⁵ Of particular interest to this chapter is the emergence of the link between *imitatio* and innovation. Unlike Aristotle's *Poetics*, which discusses *mimesis* (the Greek equivalent of *imitatio*) as "part of human nature", Quintilian views *imitatio* and invention

⁶⁴ Mario Citroni has written a compelling article on the use of the words *vetustas*, *antiquitas*, and all of their cognates (both appear in this passage) in the *IO*. He observes that "neither, per se, indicate a definite age. *Antiquus*, *antiquitas*, and *antiquitus* suggest a greater distance from the present with respect to *vetus* and *vetustas*. *Vetustus* occurs just four times, three in the superlative...and in each case emphasizes a remote antiquity (even if not so remote in 10.1.40)" (2017: 19).

⁶⁵ Fantham 1978: 103.

as “necessary and complementary steps which are thrust upon mankind”.⁶⁶ Quintilian observes that this is somewhat unsurprising, logically pointing out that since things have been invented already, there is little more to do than to continue imitating.⁶⁷ This makes sense considering Roman perspectives on exemplarity. Rebecca Langlands and Matthew Roller both offer thoughts on the processes of learning from *exempla*. Langlands’ cycle is comprised of admiration, comparison, rivalry, modeling, cognition, and discernment. Roller’s is slightly different: action, evaluation, commemoration, and norm setting.⁶⁸ Both processes are cyclic in nature and are thus prone to extensive repetition.

Repetition, however, is a source of concern for Quintilian and introduces a second complication in the *IO*, relying excessively on the past:

Ante omnia igitur imitatio per se ipsa non sufficit, vel quia pigri est ingenii contentum esse iis quae sint ab aliis inventa. Quid enim futurum erat temporibus illis quae sine exemplo fuerunt si homines nihil nisi quod iam cognovissent faciendum sibi aut cogitandum putassent? Nempe nihil fuisset inventum. Cur igitur nefas est reperiri aliquid a nobis quod ante non fuerit?...

Firstly, imitation will not suffice by itself, perhaps because it is the trait of a lazy mind to be made content by those sorts of things which have been invented by others. What would have happened in those times which were devoid of an *exemplum*, and if men had not considered doing and thinking about what they had already known? Certainly, nothing would have been invented. Why, therefore, is such a crime for something, which did not exist before, to be discovered by us now? (*Inst.* 10.2.4-5).

According to Quintilian, the patterns of behaviour outlined by Langlands and Roller have become *piger*, stale and trite. He is not condemning the past, but, as Baier notes, instead presenting “an argument for his generation to combine new inventions with the imitation

⁶⁶ Baier 2017: 52.

⁶⁷ Quint. *Inst.* 10.2.1.

⁶⁸ Langlands 2018: 4 and Roller 2018: 10.

of the approved and time-tested”.⁶⁹ In the following passage, Quintilian rails against individuals who rely solely on the achievements accomplished by their ancestors:

Turpe etiam illud est, contentum esse id consequi quod imiteris. Nam rursus quid erat futurum si nemo plus effecisset eo quem sequebatur? Nihil in poetis supra Livium Andronicum, nihil in historiis supra pontificum annales haberemus;... Ac si omnia percenseas, nulla mansit ars qualis inventa est, nec intra initium stetit : nisi forte nostra potissimum tempora damnamus huius infelicitatis, ut nunc demum nihil crescat : nihil autem crescit sola imitatione. Quod si prioribus adicere fas non est, quo modo sperare possumus illum oratorem perfectum?...

It is a terrible thing to be content with copying what you are already imitating. For again, what would happen if nobody had accomplished more than the man he was following. We would have nothing in poetry beyond Livius Andronicus, nothing in history beyond the annals of the Pontifices; ... And if you should thoroughly consider all of this, no form of art has remained just as it was invented, nor has anything between its beginning: unless perhaps we are going to damn our age to the most capable in this type of bad luck, namely that precisely nothing will flourish. Indeed nothing grows only with imitation. But if it is not allowed to make additions to prior accomplishments, how can we possibly hope for that perfect orator? (*Inst.* 10.2.7-9).

If the *IO* is emblematic of Quintilian’s views on morality and exemplarity, and he is adopting his own teachings, we can conclude that in this passage, he is congratulating himself on being an inventive, yet traditional teacher. Quintilian tells us as much later on in the chapter:

Imitatio autem (nam saepius idem dicam) non sit tantum in verbis. Illuc intendenda mens, quantum fuerit illis viris decoris in rebus atque personis, quod consilium, quae dispositio, quam omnia, etiam quae delectationi videantur data, ad victoriam spectent: ...

But imitation (for I will say this same thing quite often) ought not to be only in words. To that point, the mind must be focused on however much dignity those men had in their affairs and persons, what their plan was, their arrangement, how everything, even those things which seem to concede to delight, looks forward to victory (*Inst.* 10.2.27).

⁶⁹ Baier 2017: 52.

Here, Quintilian advises his students not to focus only on the specific words, *verba*, but rather the entire speech and the individual delivering it. Furthermore, all the devices outlined are ones which Quintilian has discussed in other books. While the above advice can be taken literally, it can also be interpreted as an allegory for both the *IO* itself, as well as Quintilian's teaching ethos – he is guiding his reader to treat his treatise as an *exemplum* which is more than worthy of *imitatio*. As he so vehemently stipulates, it is not just about the words. Dozier quite rightly observes that Quintilian's writing has “a highly rhetorical style that invites us to doubt not only his sincerity but his veracity.... the rhetorical dimension pervades the whole work...even as he teaches us, Quintilian is persuading us”, which I propose is precisely the case here.⁷⁰ For instance, when Quintilian mentions appealing to every sort of emotion, the reader is reminded of the preface of Book Six, which is focused on the thoughts and emotions of an intended audience, as he discusses his deceased wife and son. As Dozier suggests, “we may become suspicious of its reliability as an autobiographical document”,⁷¹ and that Quintilian may instead be treating that anecdote as a rhetorical exercise.

The call for innovation also reflects a harsh reality: times have changed, and traditions have had to be adapted. Certainly, by Quintilian's time, the Republic was long gone, and it seemed futile and impossible to perfectly imitate it. As such, some innovation and ingenuity were necessary to adapt its traditions for the Empire. We have only to remember the fates of Silius Italicus' Crixus and Juvenal's Rubellius Blandus in Chapters

⁷⁰ Dozier 2014: 72.

⁷¹ Dozier 2014: 71

One and Four to see the potential ramifications of lazy and entitled behaviour. This is not to suggest that this was an issue unique to the Imperial era. Romans, it seems, have always had a propensity to romanticize the past and its traditions. Cato the Elder, held up by Quintilian as a prime *exemplum*, described having a traditional agricultural childhood⁷², and in the famous preface of his *De Agricultura*, declares that ideal statesmen are born from traditional farmers (and therefore simultaneously congratulating himself on having fulfilled such requirements).⁷³

Returning to Quintilian's concerns about coasting and becoming stuck in the repetitive cycle of *imitatio*, Quintilian's dismissal of Livius Andronicus and Ennius' *Annales* is a stark reminder that one is only as good as their last accomplishment. Andronicus' *Oduisia* was a literary feat in its day, a true *inventio*: for the first time, an epic poem was published in Rome's native language, subsequently opening the floodgates for adapting other Greek masterpieces for a Latin audience. Unfortunately, Andronicus is remembered by ancient scholars as writing a dull and unrefined translation of the *Odyssey*. Cicero slated it as similar to one of Daedalus' statues, *tamquam opus aliquod Daedali*,⁷⁴ and it was panned by Horace for being written in Saturnians, "a noxious poison", *grave*

⁷² *Oratio de Suis Virtutibus contra Thermum*, Fr. 69: *Ego iam a principio in parsimonia atque in duritia atque industria omnem adulescentiam meam abstinui agro colendo, saxis Sabinis, silicibus repastinandis atque conserendis*, "But I, from the beginning, spent my youth in frugality, rigour, and diligence by tilling the land, Sabine rocks, and by re-digging and sowing the flint-land. From "Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta" ed. H. Malcovati, Turin: Paravia, 1955.

⁷³ *Cat. Agr. Pref.*

⁷⁴ *Cic. Brut.* 71. This is a nod to Socrates' opinion of Daedalus' statues as a representation of true opinion in Plato's *Meno*: they are very beautiful, but they do not last long and as such, are not worth much (31).

virus.⁷⁵ Of course, these readings of Andronicus are more than likely shaped by Ennius' literary polemic against his literary ancestor.⁷⁶

While Quintilian is not as harsh a critic, his message is no less blunt: one must constantly strive to reach better heights and outdo the accomplishments of their predecessors, and innovation is a crucial aspect of that process. Interestingly, as Baier notes, Quintilian's emphasis on *inventio* differs from Cicero as well. In the *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero "implies that the era of invention has passed, because everything has already been created. And with the Romans having improved...and led to perfection...their Greek models the evolution of culture has come to its acme and, therefore, to an end."⁷⁷

How then does one go about surpassing their literary ancestors?

Cedendum vero in hoc, quod et prior fuit et ex magna parte Ciceronem quantus est fecit. Nam mihi videtur M. Tullius, cum se totum ad imitationem Graecorum contulisset, effinxisse vim Demosthenis, copiam Platonis, iucunditatem Isocratis. Nec vero quod in quoque optimum fuit studio consecutus est tantum, sed plurimas vel potius omnes ex se ipso virtutes extulit immortalis ingenii beatissima ubertas. Non enim pluvias, ut ait Pindarus, aquas colligit, sed vivo gurgite exundat, dono quodam providentiae genitus in quo totas vires suas eloquentia experiretur

...

Quare non inmerito ab hominibus aetatis suae regnare in iudiciis dictus est, apud posteros vero id consecutus ut Cicero iam non hominis nomen sed eloquentiae habeatur. Hunc igitur spectemus, hoc propositum nobis sit exemplum, ille se profecisse sciat cui Cicero valde placebit.

We have to admit however that Demosthenes was the earlier and very largely made Cicero the great orator that he is. It seems to me, in fact, that Cicero, having devoted himself entirely to the imitation of the Greeks, succeeded in reproducing the forcefulness of Demosthenes, the abundance of Plato, and the elegance of Isocrates. But he did more than reproduce by study the excellences of each: most, or rather all, of his virtues are the self-generated product of the happy richness of his immortal genius. He does not, as Pindar says, "collect the rainwater," but wells forth with a living flood; for he was born, by the favour of Providence, to be the man in whom eloquence could try out all her powers

⁷⁵ Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.158. While the editor and translator H.R. Fairclough suggests that Horace is referring to Naevius, this could be a nod to Livius Andronicus as well.

⁷⁶ Cf. Hinds 1998: 56-63.

⁷⁷ Baier 2017: 55.

...

It was not without reason that his contemporaries said he was “king” of the courts, and that for posterity Cicero has become not so much the name of a man as a synonym for eloquence itself. Let us fix our eyes on him, let him be the *exemplum* we set before ourselves; if a student comes to love Cicero, let him assure himself that he has made progress (*Inst.* 10.1.108-9; 112).⁷⁸

Here, while comparing Cicero and Demosthenes, Quintilian crowns Cicero as the ideal for every aspiring orator. However, as Quintilian tells us, Cicero did not achieve such success solely on his merit. As Baier observes, “The imitation of these distinctive qualities marks only the first step. In the second step he will have added the mellifluous gifts of his own immortal talent”.⁷⁹ Quintilian names Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Plato as Cicero’s literary ancestors, yet “portrays this as an organic development, Cicero adopting from each of these authors their respective prevailing virtues”.⁸⁰

The use of the word *exemplum* is key – it reaffirms the presence of literary exemplarity throughout the *IO* by reminding the reader that Quintilian himself is an *exemplum* to follow. He provides us with a list of authors he believes we should read, not to mention his countless quotations and references to other Greco-Roman writers all through the *IO*.⁸¹ As Cicero did with Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Plato, Quintilian’s student is encouraged to cherry-pick from all the *exempla* which have been graciously provided.

In this passage, Quintilian introduces another key objection regarding literary exemplarity: innate talent and education as a complementary pair.

Adde quod ea quae in oratore maxima sunt imitabilia non sunt, ingenium, inventio, vis, facilitas et quidquid arte non traditur. Ideoque plerique, cum

⁷⁸ Translation from *Loeb*.

⁷⁹ Baier 2017: 54.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.46-131 for the full list.

verba quaedam ex orationibus excerpserunt aut aliquos compositionis certos pedes, mire a se quae legerunt effingi arbitrantur, cum et verba intercidant inualescantque temporibus, ut quorum certissima sit regula in consuetudine, eaque non sua natura sint bona aut mala (nam per se soni tantum sunt), sed prout oportune proprieque aut secus conlocata sunt, et compositio cum rebus accommodata sit, tum ipsa varietate gratissima.

Tum in suscipiendo onere consulat suas vires. Nam quaedam sunt imitabilia quibus aut infirmitas naturae non sufficiat aut diversitas repugnet: ...

Atque ego illi praeceptori quem institueram in libro secundo credidi non ea sola docenda esse ad quae quemque discipulorum natura compositum videret: nam is et adiuvare debet quae in quoque eorum invenit bona et quantum fieri potest adicere quae desunt et emendare quaedam et mutare. Rector enim est alienorum ingeniorum atque formator; difficilius est naturam suam fingere.

Again, the greatest qualities of an orator are inimitable: his talent, invention, force, fluency, everything in fact that is not taught in the textbooks. Thus many people think that, if they have picked out some words from speeches or some particular rhythmical feet, they have succeeded wonderfully in reproducing what they have read. Yet (a) words lose or gain currency with the times, because the surest rule for them is usage, and they are not good or bad by nature (for in themselves they are merely sounds) but only in virtue of their aptitude or propriety (or the reverse) in their context; and (b) the Composition has been accommodated to the subject, and acquires its most pleasing qualities from its very variety.

Next, in undertaking the burden, he must consider his own strength. There are some objects of imitation for which his natural capacity may be too weak, or with which his very different temperament may be at odds...

I did indeed think that the teacher, whose training I described in Book Two⁸², ought not to restrict himself to teaching what he saw each individual pupil to be best fitted for by nature; it is his duty, after all, both to foster the good qualities he finds in each of them, and, so far as possible, to make good their deficiencies, and correct or change some of their characteristics. He is the guide and moulder of the minds of others; shaping one's own nature is harder (*Inst.* 10.2.13-14; 19; 20-21).

Quintilian's thesis for his treatise is that ingenium, or innate talent (which is different to genetic transmission), and education are the winning combination for an aspiring orator. Because of the very nature of *imitatio*, ie. the act of observing an *exemplum* and then copying it, it should be considered a form of educational transmission. However, despite all the emphasis placed upon *imitatio*, Quintilian reminds the reader that once again,

⁸² Quint. *Inst.* 2.8.13.

imitatio alone is not sufficient to achieve success as an orator, because his greatest qualities cannot be copied. Although Quintilian follows this revelation with more technical jargon regarding the nature of an orator's speech, the comparison works as a metaphor for the trajectory of an aristocratic statesman. Just as words go in and out of fashion, so too can anything else, including *exempla* and character traits. Similarly, the need for the orator to adapt his speech for different contexts and audiences applies to *exempla* and traditions.

The innate traits mentioned are *ingenium* (natural talent), *inventio* (innovation), *vis* (strength), and *facilitas* (fluency of expression). Although Quintilian is quick to emphasize that one cannot learn such values from a textbook, he makes no attempt to address the origin of such characteristics. Where do they come from? In the other chapters, Silius Italicus, Juvenal, and even Quintilian's student Pliny the Younger, all address the roots of their characters' personality: the reader learns that they either inherited their traits from their family, or that they were taught. Quintilian, on the other hand, offers no such insights; he is focused solely on the student and their individual merits and achievements, rather than those of their families. While being a teacher explains his focus on educational transmission, it is hard to understand his disinterest in the genetic aspect, especially considering that he is educating elite aristocrats.

The absence of genetic transmission throughout the *IO* can be connected back to Quintilian's interest in *inventio* and the future. While he wants to preserve the traditions from the past – his interest in *imitatio* and exemplarity attests to that – he is unwilling to do so at any cost. To Quintilian, the first two complications which I have discussed are important, and cannot be ignored. Fantham observes that “Quintilian's argument in 10.2.11

assumes the inferiority of the imitation, raising the new issue of originality...As Quintilian expresses it, imitation, like a shadow, or an actor simulating emotion, is always weaker than the original”.⁸³ The cycle of *imitatio* is never perfect, and furthermore, it decays the more it is repeated. This, it seems, is Quintilian’s concern with attempting to perfectly recreate the past. Not all traditions and *exempla* are worth keeping, and nor is it productive to remain trapped in a stale pattern of repetition. Literature, and by extension *exempla*, in the *IO* serve a practical function and must be adapted to suit the context of contemporary needs.⁸⁴ Baier’s conclusion that “In dealing with tradition Quintilian never stares with awe at the great men of old, but he calculates very soberly what is useful (*utile*) and what is not” is overly simplistic.⁸⁵ While Quintilian’s enthusiastic admiration and references to “the great men of old” points to his sentimentality for the past, his *utilitas* and pragmatism temper such emotions because of the realization that a perfect cycle of *imitatio* is not possible. Furthermore, it is difficult to gauge whether Quintilian would have a different reaction had there been any possibility of perfectly replicating the Republic in the midst of the Empire. However, as we shall see in the next chapter on Pliny the Younger’s *Panegyricus*, refashioning comes to be preferred to replication.

⁸³ Fantham 1978: 105.

⁸⁴ Baier 2017: 61.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER THREE: PLINY THE YOUNGER'S *PANEGYRICUS* AND THE REFASHIONING OF GENETIC AND EDUCATIONAL EXEMPLARITY

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the teacher-student relationship between Quintilian and Pliny the Younger through lens of educational transmission. Tracing the twists and turns of a specific occurrence of this exemplary process all the way from its origins (ie. the identification of particular elements of exemplary guidance and ideology which are interspersed throughout Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* [= *IO*]) to the ways in which it is implemented in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, offers not only a rereading of the relationship between Quintilian and Pliny, but also provides an opportunity to see the mode of educational transmission actively at play, along with all the potential pitfalls and needs for revision.

Pliny adopts two principles which frequently resurface throughout Quintilian's *IO*: 1) To be discerning when selecting *exempla* to imitate, and 2) Just as a successful orator adapts his speech for different contexts and audiences, so too should *exempla* and traditions be reimagined and refashioned to suit various occasions and scenarios.¹ In a display of meta-exemplarity, Pliny employs these two principles, which have been passed down to him from Quintilian via the mode of educational transmission, as a way of producing his own reshaped version of both the modes of genetic and educational transmission. I argue that Pliny specifically selects the above two principles as the Quintilianic *exempla* he intends to embody. He then adheres to the second tenet which calls for the adaptation and

¹ Cf. the final section of Chapter Three which identifies and discusses these principles in more detail.

refashioning of *exempla* and traditions by refashioning these two modes of transmission as way to both celebrate the emperor Trajan's reign, and distinguish it from Domitian.

Given that rhetoric and oratory are the focal topics of the *IO*, it makes most sense to focus on Pliny the Younger's *Panegyricus*, an effusive and celebratory *gratiarum actio*² which was delivered sometime between September and October in 100 CE. Its primary purpose, as *gratiarum actio* implies, was to thank the emperor Trajan for Pliny's appointment to the position *consul suffectus*; however more broadly, the *Panegyricus* commemorates the inaugural years of Trajan's reign. The *Panegyricus* has enjoyed a steady increase in scholarship over the past two decades. Particular areas of interest include analyzing the origins of Roman panegyric,³ Ciceronian intertexts and influence, Pliny's rhetorical use of praise,⁴ exemplarity and morality,⁵ intertextuality,⁶ and dynasticism, kinship, and adoption.⁷

In his meticulously detailed *The Arts of Imitation in Latin Prose: Pliny's Epistles/Quintilian in Brief*, Christopher Whitton is right to argue that despite the *Panegyricus*' "highly imitative" nature, there are few explicit intertextual resonances with Quintilian in the speech:

...the *Institutio* finds a small place in its texture. The *loci similes* that have been registered are a feeble bunch, and the handful I can add tend to the slight...

² *Pan.* 4.1. We will return to this later in the section.

³ Cf. Roche 2011, Rees 2011 and 2012.

⁴ Cf. Braund 1998, Rees 2014.

⁵ Cf. Henderson 2011, Roche 2011, Goldberg 2020.

⁶ Cf. Innes 2011 and Manuwald 2011 for Ciceronian intertextuality, and the comprehensive Whitton 2019 for Demosthenes, Cicero, Tacitus, and Quintilian.

⁷ Cf. Hekster 2014 and 2015.

Quintilian *is* in the speech, then, and further panning might produce a few specks; but these are thin picking – and, but for one potentially sharp but firmly hazy encounter – with little sign of the more intricate and arch explorations seen in the *Epistles*.⁸

Whitton’s exhaustive analysis of the intertextual relationship between Pliny and Quintilian in the *Epistulae* adopts a micro perspective by homing in on vocabulary and semantics. Given that there is little else to be gleaned while operating within the confines of this methodology, my approach zooms out and looks at the relationship between the *Institutio Oratoria* and *Panegyricus* from a macro perspective. In so doing, I offer another perspective on the relationship between teacher and student.

Whitton does account for the weight of Quintilian’s influence upon his student:

Did Quintilian *influence* Pliny? So people tend to suppose, and reasonably so, given those broad similarities in outlook and the simple fact that they had been teacher and student. All the more reason to imagine Pliny taking a close interest in the *Institutio* ten or fifteen years later. Yet even those who have asked the question struggle to imagine that Quintilian’s influence extends to the textual: surely Pliny was simply relying on memories of the lectures he heard as a lad. Others have not gone much further: Sherwin-White adduces a few parallels without committing to much, and the intertextual *nouvelle vague* has ventured barely a poke in Quintilian’s direction. Quite what Pliny has learned in halcyon days is something we can only speculate about. That he was an extremely attentive reader of the *Institutio oratoria* is not.

To be sure, Pliny nowhere mentions the *Institutio*...It would be unwise, though, to expect correlation between explicit reference and intertextual engagement (how often does Virgil mention Homer?).⁹

⁸ Whitton 2019: 415; 417.

⁹ Also cf. Whitton 2019: 30-32 which compares and contrasts Quintilian and Pliny’s attitudes to a variety of topics. They agree on “oratorical etiquette, stylistic criticism, and...political and social outlook...both uphold civic service as a high moral duty and celebrate oratory as a pinnacle of that service.” In contrast, they differ in their perspectives on forensic (Quintilian) and epideictic oratory (Pliny) as well as general style: “Quintilian favours amplitude and grandeur and makes some concessions to modern tastes, but preaches moderation above all things and warns firmly against undue ‘historical’ and ‘poetic’ license in prose; Pliny is more forthright in advocating length, audacious ‘figures’ and the inclusion of historical and poetic elements” (31).

Rather than spend this chapter attempting to further draw out Quintilianic allusions and intertextual references in the *Panegyricus*, my goal is to elaborate upon those shared “broad similarities in outlook” by examining Pliny’s adoption of two specific principles from his teacher’s *IO* and the insights they offer regarding both the modes of genetic and educational transmission. These two principles are 1) To be discerning when selecting *exempla* to imitate, and 2) Just as a successful orator adapts his speech for different contexts and audiences, so too should *exempla* and traditions be reimagined and refashioned to suit various occasions and scenarios.

Although these precepts frequently resurface throughout the *IO*, it is not my intention to present them as unique to Quintilian.¹⁰ However, these “Quintilianic principles” feature prominently in the treatise, and clearly exert a strong influence upon Quintilian’s conceptualization of exemplarity and education. Furthermore, because they are later employed by Pliny in his own discourse on exemplarity throughout the *Panegyricus*, it is not unreasonable to assume that Pliny adopted specific views and perspectives from his teacher. I am not the first to observe these shared outlooks between Quintilian and Pliny; there has been increased scholarly interest in the concept of making informed decisions when selecting *exempla* to imitate. Neil W. Bernstein argues that in the

¹⁰ For the discerning of appropriate *exempla* cf. Langlands 2018: 82, 88, 96, and 114, which discuss the need for potential practitioners of exemplarity to demonstrate “situational sensitivity”, or the ability to appropriately discern when and which *exempla* to imitate. Roller 2018: 12 and 16 discuss the “fit” of an exemplum: “Establishing ‘fit’ is pivotal to establishing how likely the future is to resemble the past, and hence to whether the argument is persuasive” (12). For the concept of adapting and refashioning *exempla*, Langlands 2018: 117 observes that “It is clear, then, that successful imitation need not entail replicating the actions of the model, but rather striving toward the same end, and aiming to reproduce in one’s own way the particular virtues of one’s model”. See also van der Blom 2010: 61-2 who observes that Cicero adapts and refashions *exempla* to suit his own purposes.

literature of Cicero, Quintilian, and Tacitus, fathers are directly involved in the selection of their children's educators. In contrast, Pliny's *Epistulae* "evoke [his] reflections on his own earlier career, in which he also shows the possibility of choosing unrelated but influential men as models and, through adherence to their examples of surpassing both his own biological and adoptive fathers".¹¹ More recently, when discussing Quintilian's interest in language and its uses, Mario Citroni discusses Quintilian's awareness that "there coexist usages corresponding to different periods in the evolution of language: innovative uses that are becoming established, and the survival, spontaneous or intentionally sought, of usages that are fading away".¹² Quite rightly, Citroni places this perspective specifically within the context of Quintilian's discussion of language and literary history. However, not only can these insights be used to describe Quintilian's ethos more broadly, but they are also the very ones coopted by Pliny throughout his *Panegyricus*, implying that the incorporation of the aforementioned principles in the *Panegyricus* offers further evidence of Quintilian's influence on Pliny as his student.

The first two sections contain case-studies for ethical transmission: Pliny's depiction of Trajan's adoption in the *Panegyricus*, and Pliny's prayer that Trajan have his own biological offspring. I suggest that both examples encourage the reader to reevaluate expectations associated with genetic transmission. The final section discusses the implications of Pliny's incorporation of elements of the traditional *laudatio funebris* in the *Panegyricus*. I argue that the presence of the *laudatio funebris* imparts a distinctly

¹¹ Bernstein 2008a: 216.

¹² Citroni 2017: 31.

traditional and exemplary Republican flavour to Pliny's speech. However, in the spirit of the Quintilianic ethos, Pliny adapts and reshapes the *laudatio funebris*, using it both to celebrate Trajan's reign, and condemn Domitian's.

Setting Precedents in Pliny's *Epistulae*:

Much like a magpie, Pliny demonstrates a clear predilection for picking and choosing *exempla* to embody and imitate, ie. possessing a discerning nature, throughout his *Epistulae*. Indeed, he is quite vocal about having exemplary relationships with his uncle (and adopted father), friends Vestricius Spurinna, Corellius Rufus, and Verginius Rufus, as well as young men Romatius Firmus, Junius Avitus, Genialis, Fuscus Salinator, and Ummidius Quadratus. Although there has been much scholarship on Pliny's placement of these relationships within an exemplary context, there appears to have been significantly less attention paid to examining his reimagining of the relationship between exemplarity and family in the *Panegyricus*.¹³

Gibson and Morello offer a detailed discussion of the ways in which Pliny's uncle (Pliny the Elder), as well as friends Vestricius Spurinna, Corellius Rufus, and Verginius Rufus, all serve as *exempla*. Pliny the Younger's father died when he was young, and he was adopted by his uncle when he was 18-years old. Gibson and Morello argue that as

¹³ Cf. Carlon 2009: 101, 143-45; Gibson 2020: 18, 171 for some fleeting mentions. Hekster 2015: 68 touches upon the dynamics of adoption and biology, both positing that Pliny prefers the idea of biological children to adoptive heirs, and that the focus on Trajan's biological father may refer to the role he played in his son's adoption. However, there is no discussion of the imposing pressures of exemplarity and continuity, encapsulated in the mode of genetic transmission. Cf. Whitton 2019: 24-25 who convincingly argues that Pliny at times tries to distance himself from Quintilian, which appears to suggest that Pliny picks and choose when to imitate somebody.

Pliny matured and attempted to ascend the ranks of the *cursus honorum*, the focus shifts from imitating his adoptive father to three friends instead.¹⁴ By comparing the daily routines of both Pliny the Elder and Younger, Gibson and Morello demonstrate that Pliny the Younger begins to pick and choose specific *exempla* set by his uncle: “The consular orator of the earlier book has already made clear how his mature life rejects a monomaniacal focus on *studia*, and seeks other models for conducting an active life. Slavish imitation of one’s elders is only for the very young”.¹⁵ This of course bears a striking resemblance to the guidance offered by Pliny’s former teacher, Quintilian, who encourages his readers to be discerning when it comes to following *exempla*, and furthermore, to embrace adaptation, creativity, and innovation, topics which we will of course explore throughout this chapter.

Pliny’s daily routine is a hybrid of Spurinna and Pliny the Elder, which differ slightly.¹⁶ Spurinna is enjoying a leisurely retirement at his villa, while his uncle continues working.¹⁷ Pliny is disenchanted by the lack of *otium* and variety in his uncle’s schedule, while Spurinna’s routine includes both physical and mental stimulation.¹⁸ Pliny has no desire to resemble his uncle in either physical makeup, or daily pursuits.¹⁹ Spurinna may also have been of interest to Pliny because of his successful completion of the *cursus*

¹⁴ Gibson and Morello 2012: 115.

¹⁵ Gibson and Morello 2012: 115.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 118.

¹⁷ Cf. Ker 2004 on the significance of one’s daily routine in the context of exemplary and moral discourse – “In the moralizing tradition of Roman literature...there was a strong tendency to see a person’s use of time as an indicator of his or her moral and social identity.” (216).

¹⁸ Gibson and Morello 2012: 119.

¹⁹ Cf. 6.16.13 which describes Pliny the Elder as overweight and being carried everywhere in a chair.

honorum.²⁰ Spurinna had served as both consul and governor, positions which Pliny aspired to hold in the future.²¹ In contrast, Pliny the Elder is representative of his nephew's youthful days – in *Ep.* 3.5, the reader is treated to a detailed list of Pliny the Elder's entire literary *corpus*, suggesting that this is an *exemplum* of sorts for Pliny the Younger.

Cherry-picking both *exempla*, as well as those who instituted them, then, is key. Pliny's concept of exemplarity, then, is vastly different – family are not the sole sources of *exempla*, and furthermore, contemporaries who are still very much alive can be as influential as the heroic Republican statesmen of Rome's mythical past.²² Vestricius Spurinna, Corellius Rufus, and Verginius Rufus, are indeed *maiores*, but in age only.

Tom Keeline takes Pliny's selectivity one step further, by arguing that throughout the *Epistulae*, but particularly in the triptych *Ep.* 3.5, 6.16, and 6.20, Pliny actually critiques his uncle. Much like Gibson and Morello, Keeline argues that “the mature Pliny retrospectively presents his seventeen-year-old self both imitating his uncle, for which he is implicitly criticized, and breaking free from that imitation, for which he is implicitly praised.”²³ Instead, Pliny forges his own path, and picks and chooses what advice, and which *exempla* will be of most use. The modes of genetic and educational transmission are no longer predicated solely on the repetition of centuries-old traditions. Individual merit and *ingenium* have won out.

²⁰ Gibson and Morello 2012: 123.

²¹ *Ibid.* Pliny the Elder held only equestrian positions, so he would have been unable to guide Pliny the Younger in his political aspirations and undertakings.

²² Cf. Henderson 2011, who examines Pliny's use of historic *exempla* as a way of depicting Trajan as the superlative *exemplum*.

²³ Keeline 2018: 198.

Adoption as a Reimagining of Genetic Transmission

Pliny's methodology of coopting two of these Quintilianic ideals in his *Epistulae* can also be applied to the *Panegyricus*. Although the published versions of the earliest books of the *Epistulae* almost certainly postdate the publication of the *Panegyricus*,²⁴ the scholarship and research conducted both offers valuable insights into Pliny's thoughts and opinions regarding family and exemplarity, and certainly has relevance for the study of the *Panegyricus*.

At its core, the mode of genetic transmission presumes a biological component; it is the normative tradition (ie. *exemplum*) which is repeated over and over again. Romans did not default to adoption upon deciding to have children, preferring instead to view it as a backup if they were unable to produce biological children.²⁵ In this context, Pliny's praise and enthusiasm for Trajan's adoption encourages the reader to reimagine the mode of genetic transmission; in fact the motif of adoption in the *Panegyricus* serves as an example of Quintilian's second precept that one should refashion and adapt *exempla* to suit a variety of different circumstances. Since adoptions in the Republic and early Empire were often intrafamilial,²⁶ Nerva's adoption of Trajan, an individual with no biological relation,

²⁴ Gibson 2020: 252, Gibson and Morello 2012: 268-69, and Durry 1938: 9-15, 76-87 date its publication to between 100 and 101 CE. The *Epistulae* provide valuable insights which can be retroactively applied to the *Panegyricus*, which was published first. Such material might appear more subtly and with less detail in the *Panegyricus*. This is not unreasonable given the nature of the genre (ie. a public speech, not a personal letter), and the fact that it is older; Pliny may have still been refining his rhetoric and sense of style when composing the *Panegyricus*.

²⁵ Cf. the adoptions of Augustus and members of the Julio-Claudian dynasty as examples. Adoption was the only way of securing a successor, given the inability to produce male sons as their heirs.

²⁶ Bernstein 2009: 254 uses the word "intrafamilial" specifically to refer to dynastic succession in the Julio-Claudian family, a term which I will use throughout this chapter to distinguish between the biological and non-biological elements of adoption.

establishes a new precedent both for dynastic succession,²⁷ and the mode of genetic transmission.²⁸ In depicting adoption as a desirable course of action, Pliny employs Quintilian's first principle – be discerning when selecting *exempla* to imitate. By doing so, he encourages the reader to view this as an *exemplum* worthy of selection. The rhetoric of Pliny's description initially presents adoption as really the only option: *nec decet aliter filium adsumi, si adsumatur a principe*, “For it is not fitting that a son be adopted in any other way, if he is being adopted by a *princeps*”.²⁹ Yet, it is nonetheless Pliny's prayer that Trajan have his own biological children, which invites both Trajan and the reader to make a choice or be discerning regarding the *exempla* presented.

Pliny greatly admired Nerva's decision to adopt Trajan. The following passage teems with praise and adulation, and implies that adoption should be viewed as an extremely desirable *exemplum* to embrace, rather than a substitute:

Nulla adoptati cum eo qui adoptabat cognatio, nulla necessitudo, nisi quod uterque optimus erat, dignusque alter eligi alter eligere. Itaque adoptatus es non ut prius alius atque alius in gratiam uxoris. Adsciuit enim te filium non utricus sed princeps, eodemque animo diuus Nerua pater tuus factus est, quo erat omnium. Nec decet aliter filium adsumi, si adsumatur a principe. An senatum populumque Romanum, exercitus prouincias socios transmissurus uni successorem e sinu uxoris accipias, summaeque potestatis heredem tantum intra domum tuam quaeras? Non totam per ciuitatem

²⁷ Cf. Bernstein 2009: 254 and Hekster 2015.

²⁸ Pliny's childlessness comes to the forefront here, especially if we consider Norėna 2011: 31-2, who argues that the *Panegyricus* is self-referential – Pliny is especially interested in presenting himself as having intimate knowledge of the goings-on in the Imperial court: “Recent work on the sociology of knowledge in the early Roman empire has stressed the numerous connections between knowledge and power during this period, as well as the cultural authority that different kinds of technical knowledge could bestow”. Gibson 2020: 18 posits that “Pliny's omission of his father might be less a sign of any childhood trauma or adolescent resentment, and more of an indicator of a desire to align the achievements of his life with the success of Trajan's rule”. Yet fatherhood, either through biology or adoption, appears to be one *exemplum* which he is unable to follow. Cf. Bernstein 2008a and 2009: 250; 256, which discuss Pliny as a surrogate paternal figure.

²⁹ Plin. *Pan.* 7.5.

circumferas oculos et hunc tibi proximum, hunc coniunctissimum existimes, quem optimum quem dis simillimum inueneris? Imperaturus omnibus eligi debet ex omnibus; non enim serualis tuis dominum, ut possis esse contentus quasi necessario herede, sed principem ciuibus daturus et imperatorem, superbum istud et regium, nisi adoptes eum quem constet imperaturum fuisse, etiamsi non adoptasses. Fecit hoc Nerua nihil interesse arbitratus, genueris an elegeris, si perinde sine iudicio adoptentur liberi ac nascuntur; nisi quod tamen aequiore animo ferunt homines, quem princeps parum feliciter genuit, quam quem male elegerit.

There was no blood-relationship or connection for the one who was adopted with the man who adopted him, except that each of the two were *optimus*, and that one was worthy of being chosen, while the other was worthy of the choosing. And so you were adopted, not like others before you for the sake of a wife. For he adopted you as his son, not as a stepfather, but as a *princeps*, the divine Nerva became your father in the same way as he did for all of us. For it is not fitting that a son be adopted in any other way, if he is being adopted by a *princeps*. For as the one about to hand over the senate and the Roman people, as well as the armies, provinces, and allies, to just one man, would you accept a successor from the lap of your wife? Would you look for an heir to the greatest power only inside your house? Wouldn't you cast your eyes throughout the entire State, and value the one whom you have found to be *optimus* and most closely resembling the gods, closest and dearest to you? The one who will rule over all ought to be chosen from everybody; for you're not giving a master to your little slaves, with the result that you could be content with an heir related by blood as it were, but rather are about to give a *princeps* and commander to the Roman citizens. *That* is kingly arrogance – if you wouldn't adopt the one who has proven to be the right one to rule, even if you hadn't adopted him. Nerva did this, having judged that there's no difference, whether you bring a child into being or you choose them, especially if children happen to be adopted or born, with equal lack of judgement, except that, therefore, men more favourably endure a child whom the *princeps* did not particularly fortunately bring into being, rather than one which was a poor choice (*Pan.* 7.4-7).

Briefly, placing adoption within the context of genetic transmission is not particularly intuitive. Adoption played a critical role³⁰ in the institutions of family and kinship, especially as Rome transitioned into the empire.³¹ The adjective “genetic” presupposes a consanguine element to this mode of transmission. That is, genetic transmission is traditionally predicated on the assumption that virtues and other character traits are shared between relatives who are biologically related to one another, and thus circulated

³⁰ Cf. Goody 1976 and Lindsay 2009: 4-28 for discussions on the functions of adoption, as well as some “cross-cultural” perspectives.

³¹ Cf. Lindsay 2009; Osgood 2013; Davenport and Mallan 2014; and Hekster 2014 and 2015.

throughout the family.

Adoption, then, defined by Lindsay as “introducing outsiders into their kinship network”, is seemingly at odds with the mode of genetic transmission.³² Nerva’s adoption of Trajan fits this paradigm – there were no biological connections between the two men. Yet it was also the first of its kind, particularly within the context of imperial dynasticism and succession.³³ Indeed, Pliny is emphatic that this up-and-coming dynasty marks a fresh beginning – a new precedent must be set. After his invocation to Jupiter, he stipulates: *Equidem non consuli modo sed omnibus ciuibus enitendum reor, ne quid de principe nostro ita dicant, ut idem illud de alio dici potuisse uideatur*, “As far as I am concerned, I think that not just the consul, but indeed all citizens, should not say anything about our *Princeps* in such a way that the very same thing seems possible to say about other *Principes*.”³⁴ Prior to Nerva and Trajan, adoptions of this kind were intrafamilial, a particularly important distinction to make, because the traditional definition of “genetic transmission” suffices.³⁵

The most famous examples are the adoption of Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Numantinus, best known as Scipio Aemilianus, and the Julio-Claudian dynasty, commencing with Julius Caesar and concluding with Nero. In both instances, the following generations of successors all hail from the same family. Scipio Aemilianus was the second son of Lucius Aemilius Paullus, and was adopted as a young

³² Lindsay 2009: 4.

³³ Cf. Hekster 2015: 2: “Roman imperial succession was a dynastic matter. From the reign of Augustus onwards, imperial power was transferred to members of the family if these were at hand. When there were no living family members who could succeed, adoption was a viable option to guarantee dynastic continuity”.

³⁴ Plin. *Pan.* 2.1. We will revisit this statement later on in the chapter.

³⁵ Biology is neither a requisite nor sole determining factor for “family”.

child by Publius Cornelius Scipio, the son of famed Punic hero Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus. Therefore, the adoption of Scipio Aemilianus only strengthened the biological bonds between the Scipio and Aemilia *gentes*.

Regarding the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the definition of “family” has been expanded to include stepchildren.³⁶ Tiberius, the biological son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and Augustus’ wife Livia, and Nero, the biological son of Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus and Agrippina the Younger, are the obvious examples. Phoebe Garrett argues that “even in the first century of the principate, Caesars almost always left their empire to an adopted son, not a biological one. The adoptions were often of stepsons”.³⁷ This is true to some extent. Tiberius, for instance, was not biologically related to Augustus. That said, his relationship to Augustus both as stepson and son-in-law through his marriage to Julia does classify this adoption as “intrafamilial” - there are *some* existing familial bonds beyond the one established by adoption.³⁸ Hereditary succession, on the other hand, is an entirely different matter.³⁹ Pliny suggests that the adoptions of both of these emperors by their

³⁶ Cf. Watson 1994 for an excellent discussion of the role of the stepmother in Greco-Roman myth and literature.

³⁷ Garrett 2012: 157.

³⁸ Cf. Tac. Ann. 6.51: *pater ei Nero et utrimque origo gentis Claudiae, quamquam mater in Liviam et mox Iuliam familiam adoptionibus transierit*, “His father is Nero, and both sides of his family have lineage from the gens Claudia, and soon after his adoption, he transitioned into the Julian family”. This sense of intrafamiliarity is even clearer with Nero, whose mother Agrippina the Younger married her biological uncle, Claudius.

³⁹ Cf. Osgood 2013: 32-35, which discusses Augustus’ mindset regarding successors related to him by blood: “Hereditary succession did have benefits, if the Augustan practice of government by a single man with *auctoritas* rather than a fiercely competitive Senatorial class was to continue. For one thing, hereditary succession was also, seemingly anyway, predictable” (33).

stepfathers is a moral failing: “And so you were adopted, not like others before you for the sake of a wife”.⁴⁰

In contrast, Trajan’s adoption clearly eschews the conventions outlined above. Father and son have a familial bond only through adoption – there is no sharing of blood, no sense of intrafamiliality. Even in the first sentence, Pliny reimagines the mode of genetic transmission. By placing *adoptati*, *adoptabat*, and *cognatio* in rapid succession, making sure to use the stem *adopt-* twice, Pliny gives the impression that biological kinship is no longer the only, or indeed most desirable option. Trajan’s succession marks an era of choice and selection – family background will no longer be the sole determinant of one’s future. The significance of *cognatio*, “blood-relationship, consanguinity, kinship”,⁴¹ matches its position in the clause – it now takes second place to adoption, almost as if Pliny is trying to redefine it – consanguinity is not the sole criterion when defining familial bonds. Just as he follows *adoptati* with *adoptabat*, Pliny adds the emphatic *nulla necessitudo* to reiterate the obsolescence of genetic transmission. *Necessitudo*, as its English derivative suggests, references necessity and urgency. However, it has also been used by authors to describe familial relationships.⁴² There is, perhaps, a bit of a double-entendre in this little aside – it is not just that there is no need for *cognatio*; *nulla necessitudo* itself also means “no familial

⁴⁰ Plin. *Pan.* 7.4. Garrett 2021: 157: “This kind of adoption combines the worst of both worlds – not keeping the bloodline, not really choosing for merit – exactly the kind of adoption Pliny criticizes”. I am skeptical about Garrett’s use of “bloodline” here, especially in reference to Nero, who *was* biologically related to his adoptive father Claudius (his mother’s uncle).

⁴¹ *OLD*, s.v. *cognatio* (n.), sense 1a.”

⁴² Eg. Suet. *Tib.* 11.5 and Tac. *Hist.* 3.59. Pliny uses it in the same context in one of his letters to Trajan: *Quibus ex causis necessitudines eius inter meas numero, filium in primis, Nymphidium Lupum, iuvenem probum industrium et egregio patre dignissimum...*(10.87.3). Cf. *OLD*, s.v. “*necessitudo* (n.), sense 4a.”

bond”. The only necessary commonality for both parties, is the ability to be *optimus*, “the best”. Both Nerva and Trajan have now superseded the *vir bonus* of Republican exemplarity,⁴³ because of their ability to choose. Rather than being stifled by the overwhelming burden of the traditions of genetic transmission – ie., being obligated to name a family member successor, Nerva was able to choose his heir: *eligere*.

The word *eligere* is noteworthy, an insertion of the first of Quintilian’s principles: to be discerning. However, in this instance, the object of the verb is not *exempla*, but rather the next *princeps*. Inflections of *eligere* feature frequently in the *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian. My previous chapter examined how Quintilian metaphorically cites earlier Latin authors as a means of illustrating the need to be judicious when selecting *exempla*, be it a quotation, or a character trait of a famous statesman.⁴⁴ Throughout the *IO*, forms of *eligere* are used within an exemplary context. For example:

At si bona ipsius indoles, si non caeca ac sopita parentum socordia est, et praeceptorem eligere sanctissimum quemque (cuius rei praecipua prudentibus cura est) et disciplinam quae maxime severa fuerit licet...

But if the innate nature of this man is good, if there is no blind and senseless negligence of the parents, it is permitted both to choose a most devoted teacher, which is the primary care for concerned parents) and a curriculum which is the strictest possible (*Inst.* 1.2.5.3).

After nursemaids, parents serve as the next port of call in the development of their child’s education. Even if they themselves are uneducated, the schooling of their child should be of the utmost priority.⁴⁵ In the above passage, educational transmission is the concern: the

⁴³ Cf. *Pan.* 13.4-5 which posits that Trajan outshines the legendary Republican heroes Gaius Fabricius, Scipio Africanus, and Camillus. Gowing 2005: 123-5 examines Trajan’s enhancement of Republican ideals.

⁴⁴ Quint. *Inst.* 1.6.42. Although *eligere* does not appear in this passage, the meaning is clear.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 1.1.7.

moral character of the teacher, *praeceptor*, is equally crucial, because of its presumed impact upon the morality of their student. Quintilian's use of *eligere* places the responsibility solely upon the parents — they must not accept the first *praeceptor* they encounter, but rather thoroughly vet and assess a number of candidates — only then can they make that choice.⁴⁶

However, in this passage from the *Panegyricus*, Pliny uses *eligere* not in the context of educational transmission, but genetic instead. Where Quintilian urges his reader to be selective in the ways in which one practices exemplarity, Pliny applies this principle to one's relatedness to another.⁴⁷ Pliny's reader would surely be considering the different outcomes, had Domitian not been Vespasian's son. Who knows how much longer the Flavian dynasty could have lasted, had Vespasian objectively been able to choose the best successor.

There is one *exemplum* of an imperial adoption which closely mirrors that of Nerva and Trajan, approximately 30 years earlier: Galba's adoption of Piso Licinianus. Unfortunately, this led to mutiny, and both Galba and Piso were assassinated. Tacitus' description of Piso's adoption and its resonances in Pliny have received much scholarly attention.⁴⁸ It is not my intent to discuss why Galba's adoption of Piso went awry. Rather, I intend to compare the descriptions of both adoptions, and identify any discrepancies:

⁴⁶ Other examples include *Inst.* 1.1.4; 1.2.16.6; 2.2.15; 2.5.24; 10.1.4; 10.1.131. In each of these passages, Quintilian encourages the reader to be discerning and choose the best of all available options regarding a variety of topics: schools, teachers, examples of ancient and contemporary oratory, words, and even the works of Seneca.

⁴⁷ Cf. Gibson and Morello 2012 and Keeline 2018 on Pliny "choosing" which *exempla* (including family members) he would like to follow.

⁴⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 1.14-16, on which see Gowing 2005, Lindsay 2009, Roche 2011, and Hekster 2014 and 2015.

Pisonem Licinianum accersiri iubet, seu propria electione sive, ut quidam crediderunt, Lacone instante, cui apud Rubellium Plautum exercita cum Pisone amicitia; sed callide ut ignotum fovebat, et prospera de Pisone fama consilio eius fidem addiderat. Piso M. Crasso et Scribonia genitus, nobilis utrimque, vultu habituque moris antiqui et aestimatione recta severus, deterius interpretantibus tristior habebatur: ea pars morum eius quo suspectior sollicitis adoptanti placebat.

He first spoke briefly of his own advanced years, then directed that Licinianus Piso should be called in, either because he was his own choice, or, as some believed, owing to the insistence of Laco, who had formed an intimate friendship with Piso at the house of Rubellius Plautus. But Laco cleverly supported Piso as if he were a stranger, and Piso's good reputation added weight to Laco's advice. Piso was the son of Marcus Crassus and Scribonia, thus being noble on both sides; his look and manner were those of a man of the ancient school, and he had justly been called stern; those who took a harsher view regarded him as morose, but this element in his character, which caused the anxious to suspect him, recommended him to Galba for adoption (*Hist.* 1.14).⁴⁹

Tacitus does not present the idea to adopt Piso as solely Galba's decision: *ut quidam crediderunt, Lacone instante*. Laco, the Praetorian Prefect, is depicted as being slightly duplicitous, with an ability to manipulate and sway Galba: *sed callide ut ignotum fovebat*. *Fovere* is not inherently pejorative – it is the addition of the adverb *callide*, which in this instance means “cunningly, artfully”. If there was not some ulterior motive, why would Laco feel the need to pretend that he had never met Piso? Laco's manipulation is unsurprising, given the influence and authority commanded by the Praetorian Guard in the early Imperial period.

Also of note are the descriptions of Piso's biological family. His moral character and genealogy are used to justify Laco's input:

... et prospera de Pisone fama consilio eius fidem addiderat. Piso M. Crasso et Scribonia genitus, nobilis utrimque, vultu habituque mori antique et aestimatione recta severus, deterius interpretantibus tristior habebatur: ea pars morum eius quo suspectior sollicitis adoptanti placebat.

⁴⁹ Translation from *Loeb*.

...and Piso's good reputation added weight to Laco's advice. Piso was the son of Marcus Crassus and Scribonia, thus being noble on both sides; his look and manner were those of a man of the ancient school, and he had justly been called stern; those who took a harsher view regarded him as morose, but this element in his character, which caused the anxious to suspect him, recommended him to Galba for adoption (*Hist.* 1.14).⁵⁰

Piso Licinianus can lay claim to a lofty heritage, so much so, that Tacitus emphasizes that he is "noble on both sides", *nobilis utrimque*. This Republican aristocratic ancestry seems to be another defining factor when it comes to Piso's candidacy. Even though Piso and Galba are not biologically related, genetic transmission still appears to be an important consideration, but, as in the case of Nerva and Trajan, reimagined; Tacitus treats prominent lineage, morality, and the ability to be a good heir, as interchangeable in this passage.

And yet, how does one go ahead and discern prominent lineage, morality, and the ability to be a good heir? Just as the omens determining whether Romulus or Remus should be king were ambiguous, so too are the above factors. Piso's supporters describe him as *severus*, "Strict in one's personal behaviour and morals, not lax or frivolous, austere".⁵¹ This is a positive attribute, an exemplary trait worth possessing. His detractors, *deterius interpretantibus* on the other hand, characterize Piso as *tristior*, "Depressed, gloomy, unhappy".⁵² Yet, *tristis* can also mean "Stern, solemn, austere",⁵³ either in reference to one's behaviour and personality, or the style of their oratory. When describing a variety of different personalities and characters in the *De Officiis*, Cicero uses *severitas* and *tristis* synonymously as compliments: Marcus Scarus and Drusus the Younger possess *severitas*, *at isdem temporibus in M. Scauro et in M. Druso adulescente singularis severitas*, while

⁵⁰ Translation from *Loeb*.

⁵¹ *OLD*, s.v. "severus (a.), sense 2,".

⁵² *OLD*, s.v. "tristis (a.), sense 1a,".

⁵³ *OLD*, s.v. "tristis (a.), sense 4,".

tristis is used as a descriptor for Scipio Africanus, *in eius familiari Scipione ambitio maior, vita tristior*.⁵⁴ Such ambiguity surely makes the process of decision-making all the more challenging.

The above distinctions are also reflected in the *Panegyricus*. Pliny begins the next sentence: *Itaque adoptatus es non ut prius alius atque alius in gratiam uxoris*. Unlike Galba and Piso, Pliny pointedly leaves no room for argument: this was Nerva's decision, and Nerva's decision alone. There is then a jab at the emperors Augustus and Claudius, who both adopted their stepsons, Tiberius, and Nero, so as to placate their wives, Livia, and Agrippina the Younger, which I discussed earlier. There was no input from any third-party concerning Trajan's adoption. I suggest that this is Pliny's way of distancing Trajan from the Julio-Claudians, as well as Piso's adoption. In both instances, family, specifically in the form of genetic transmission, plays a role in the decision to adopt. Livia and Agrippina are driven by maternal ambition to see their biological sons succeed, while Piso's esteemed lineage is equated with his potential to be the next Roman emperor. Therefore, it is not just the Flavian dynasty who had familial issues when it came to dynastic succession. Pliny, it seems, is determined to prevent Trajan from suffering the same fate as his imperial predecessors – he marks the start of a new dynasty, where there is no place for genetic transmission in its traditional form.

Pliny's distaste for step-fatherly acquiescence continues: *Adsciuit enim te filium non utricus sed princeps, eodemque animo diuus Nerua pater tuus factus est, quo erat omnium. Nec decet aliter filium adsumi, si adsumatur a principe*. "Adsciscere" is an

⁵⁴ Cic. *Off.* 1.108.

interesting word choice on Pliny's part. While it clearly means "to adopt" in this sentence, it possesses some slightly different nuances, as compared with its synonym, *adoptare*, used earlier by Pliny. *Adsciscere* can mean "To take over (a law practice, opinion, etc. from others for use as one's own adopt)",⁵⁵ as well as "To adopt (a policy of action, etc.) in practice, approve of. b) to recognize (something as having a certain characteristic), admit (as being)".⁵⁶ There is a sense of the individual taking on something because it holds some sort of value – ie., you choose it, because it is worth having, including adoption. This differs slightly from *adoptare*, which means "To adopt legally (usu. as a son)",⁵⁷ or "To give one's name to (a thing), name after oneself".⁵⁸ There is a far more personal element at play here – the focus seems more to be on forging relationships and alliances. *Adsciscere*, on the other hand, really conveys a sense that whatever one is taking, it is a commodity of sorts. By using *adsciscere* instead of *adoptare* here, I suggest that Pliny is emphasizing the nature of this adoption, and is making it crystal clear that it bears no resemblance to Augustus and Claudius' adoptions. This is purely transactional; there is no emotion, which tends to occur when family is involved. Duty and awareness of biological bonds surely play on an individual's emotions, preventing them from making a rational and informed decision.

The ensuing string of present subjunctives: *accipias*, *quaeras*, *circumferas*, and *existimes* throughout the remainder of the passage indicate real dreams for the future, ones which Pliny optimistically hopes will come to fruition. Rather, Pliny is drawing upon

⁵⁵ *OLD*, s.v. "ascisco (v.), sense 2a,".

⁵⁶ *OLD*, s.v. "ascisco (v.), sense 3" .

⁵⁷ *OLD*, s.v. "adopto (v.), sense 2a,".

⁵⁸ *OLD*, s.v. "adopto (v.), sense 5" .

memories of the past, when stepsons had in fact been named heir to appease wives, and the scope for potential heirs had been limited to the *familia*. Pliny knows all too well what happens when you put your own family ahead of the interests of the State. These are not the sorts of *exempla* from the past which one should be striving to emulate.

The need to make a rational and informed decision is clear in Pliny's stipulation that "it is not fitting that a son be adopted in any other way, if he is being adopted by a *princeps*", marking a shift in tone. This is not the effusive admiration of both Nerva and Trajan that pervades other parts of the *Panegyricus*. Rather, Pliny wants his reader to acknowledge the worst possible outcomes, should such a choice be made rashly and without careful consideration. Furthermore, we are presented with yet another word for "adoption": *assumere*, which means "To take possession of, lay hands on, make one's own...".⁵⁹ It can also mean "To choose, enlist, take (a person for a purpose) ...",⁶⁰ and "To add (to a class or group). b) to adopt (into one's family);...".⁶¹ The language regarding the adoption is now more possessive – now that Nerva has become Trajan's father, it is *his* son, and one who was chosen for a specific purpose.

Eligere, the freedom to choose, is, it appears, a double-edged sword – one small mistake can generate chaos and catastrophe. On the other hand, the characteristic inevitability of genetic transmission absolves the predecessor of any truly egregious wrongdoing. It turns out that the cliché "You cannot choose your family" is not entirely

⁵⁹ *OLD*, s.v. "assumo (v.), sense 4a,".

⁶⁰ *OLD*, s.v. "assumo (v.), sense 8a,".

⁶¹ *OLD*, s.v. "assumo (v.), sense 9,".

accurate. Indeed, Pliny would have his reader believe that one can, and absolutely should, choose their family, just as they ought to pick and choose the *exempla* they wish to imitate.

Pliny's Preference for Biological Children?

One might conclude that Pliny prizes adoption above all else regarding dynastic succession – he mentions adoption twelve times throughout the *Panegyricus*.⁶² Why then, in the second-to-last section of his speech, does he include the following prayer for Trajan?

Quo maiore fiducia isdem illis uotis, quae ipse pro se nuncupari iubet, oro et obtestor, 'si bene rem publicam, si ex utilitate omnium regit', primum ut illum nepotibus nostris ac pronepotibus serues, deinde ut quandoque successorem ei tribuas, quem genuerit quem formauerit similemque fecerit adoptato, aut si hoc fato negatur, in consilio sis eligenti monstresque aliquem, quem adoptari in Capitolio deceat.

And so with greater confidence, with those very same vows, the ones which he himself bid be offered on his behalf, I pray and I supplicate, “If he rules the State well, if he does it for the benefit of everybody,” first may you preserve him for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, then whenever you can, allow him a successor, one whom he has himself biologically produced, one whom he has fashioned, and one whom he has made similar to the one having been adopted; or if this is refused, may you act as a wise counsel to the one making this decision, and may you reveal someone who is suitable to be adopted in the Capitol (*Pan.* 94.5).

Hekster interprets this passage as indicative of a preference: “Much has been made of these references to the explicit advantages of adoptive emperorship, but Pliny still seems to have preferred biological succession”.⁶³ While Hekster’s observation is not wrong, he offers no solutions to this conundrum either. By examining the prayer through the lenses of these Quintilianic principles, the preference for heredity instead of adoption makes more sense.

⁶² Cf. *Pan.* 5.1, 6.3-4, 7.1, 7.4-7, 8.1-2, 8.5, 16.1, 23.4, 38.1, 47.5, and 89.1-3. Cf. *OLD*, s.v. “assumo (v.), sense 4a.”

⁶³ Hekster 2014: 382.

I argue that Pliny is not advocating for biological succession in a traditional sense. Rather, he adapts and refashions the mode of genetic transmission in a way that would not have left contemporary readers fearing that history would repeat itself, and that another Domitian would succeed Trajan.

Pliny's use of *genuerit* emphasizes the hereditary nature of his wish. Within this context, inflections of the verb *gigno*, "To bring into being, create",⁶⁴ appear four times in the *Panegyricus*.⁶⁵ Of these four instances, two refer directly to Trajan's biological father, Trajan Senior:

*Credentne posteri patricio et consulari et triumphali patre
genitum...*

The following generations might not believe that he who was born from a patrician and consular father, and had won a triumph... (*Pan.* 9.2).

and

*Sed et tu, pater Traiane, (nam tu quoque, si non sidera,
proximam tamen sideribus obtines sedem) quantum
percipis uoluptatem, cum illum tribunum, illum militem
tuum tantum imperatorem, tantum principem cernis,
cumque eo qui adoptauit amicissime contendis, pulchrius
fuerit genuisse talem an elegisse!*

But you as well, father Trajan, (for you too nevertheless hold a seat closest to the stars, even if it's not among the stars), observe such great enjoyment when you see that that tribune, that soldier of yours is such a great commander, such a great *princeps*, and you vie most amicably with the man who adopted your son about whether it was more illustrious to biologically produce man of such a kind, or to choose him! (*Pan.* 89.2).

In both of the above passages, Pliny uses Trajan's relationship with his biological father as a way to further validate Nerva's decision. Trajan Senior was accomplished in his own right, as we can see above: he was of noble birth, held consular rank, and had even won a

⁶⁴ *OLD*, s.v. "gigno (v.), sense 1,".

⁶⁵ *Pan.* 7.7, 9.2, 89.2, and 92.4.

triumph. Furthermore, the *gens Ulpia* was extremely well connected, both through family and geography.⁶⁶ Such a background made Trajan a more appealing candidate still. And yet Trajan's familial background is not Pliny's primary focus. He even has Trajan Senior "most amicably" contend with Nerva about who should receive the ultimate credit: the begetter or the adopter. Pliny's construction of this debate illustrates his own unwillingness to commit to adoption as the uncontested *exemplum* worthy of *aemulatio*.

Why then the sudden interest in Trajan producing a biological heir? The most obvious reason is that it offers an immediate solution to concerns about the future of the dynasty. Pliny presents Trajan's reign as a new era of peace and calm; therefore, having a son ready to follow in his footsteps would surely be a guarantor of stability for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, smooth dynastic transitions would have been of particular concern at this point, especially because Nerva was an infirm and childless old man when he assumed power. And yet there is a stunningly obvious refutation to the above solution: the lingering memory of the exclusively and insistently consanguineous Flavian dynasty. In the final chapter of Suetonius' *Life of Vespasian*, Vespasian was adamant that only his sons would succeed him:

*Convenit inter omnis, tam certum eum de sua suorumque
genitura semper fuisse, ut post assiduas in se coniurationes
ausus sit adfirmare senatui aut filios sibi successuros aut
neminem.*

It is agreed amongst everybody that he was so certain about the validity of his and his family's horoscopes, that despite incessant conspiracies directed against him, he dared stipulate that either his own sons would be his successors, or that nobody would (*Vesp.* 25).

⁶⁶ Grainger 2003: 73-88.

Although Vespasian ultimately received what he had insisted upon, unfortunately it did not have the lasting results he had hoped for. The legacy of Domitian was still very fresh at this point – indeed, it pervades the *Panegyricus*, serving as a counter-*exemplum* for Pliny’s audience, as well as Trajan himself.⁶⁷

The sudden decline with Domitian’s reign is what is perhaps most disarming about the Flavian dynasty. How did it all go so wrong? We can see a discussion of the rapid transition from unknown obscurity to infamy in the introduction to the *Life of Vespasian*:

*obscura illa quidem ac sine ullis maiorum imaginibus, sed
tamen rei p. nequaquam paenitenda, constat licet
Domitianum cupiditatis ac saevitiae merito poenas luisse.*

Indeed, that house was unknown and obscure without any ancestral *imagines*, but nevertheless it should in no way be a source of shame for the State; the general consensus is that when Domitian paid the penalty for his greed and brutality, it was deservedly warranted (*Vesp.* 1).

Here, Suetonius denounces Domitian as the aberration in the *gens Flavia*. *Constat*, “the general consensus is”, absolves Vespasian, Titus, and indeed the *populus Romanus*, of any wrongdoing; it’s not *their* fault that Domitian was greedy and cruel, and furthermore, he quite rightly, *merito*, got exactly what he deserved. In light of the relatively admirable reigns of both his father and brother, Domitian should have been his family’s meal-ticket for continued success; his reign should have accumulated more *gloria* and *maiorum imagines*, all to be passed down to his two sons, the next generation.

In a compelling article which discusses Suetonius’ treatment of vice as hereditary in his *Lives of the Caesars*, Phoebe Garrett argues that Suetonius’ refusal to denounce any

⁶⁷ Braund 1998: 65-66.

vices in the Flavian dynasty as innate is unusual.⁶⁸ Instead, she observes that external factors appear to be the driving force behind at least Vespasian's vice of *cupiditas pecuniae*.⁶⁹ But what about Domitian?

A more normal state of affairs would see Domitian (born with natural virtues and vices) hiding his vices from others until he could safely let them out, as happens with Caligula, Nero, and Tiberius. But it does not appear that Domitian was hiding anything. He changed, and only that can explain the difference between him and his family. His character when he became emperor was not what it later became, but that later development was not something he learnt from a parent or tutor.⁷⁰

While I agree with Garrett that Domitian's vices are neither innate nor learned from a parent or tutor, the appearance of *cupiditas* in both of their *Vitae* suggests that this is a shared vice between father and son.⁷¹ *Cupiditas* is an important descriptor for Domitian – it is the first word used to introduce him in the *Life of Vespasian*, and appears twice more in his own biography.⁷² On those two occasions, they express a marked change in his character, specifically his descent into what would be his enduring legacy: a cruel and harsh ruler. There are no specific details regarding Domitian's *cupiditas* – its abstract broadness is all-defining; Suetonius offers no caveats or explanations for the development of these vices in Domitian. In contrast, as Garrett discusses, the reader receives a mitigating factor with his father Vespasian: *necessitate compulsus*, “compelled by necessity”.⁷³

⁶⁸ Garrett 2021: 147-50; 153-8.

⁶⁹ Cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 16. Garrett 2021: 148 – “In Vespasian's exceptional case, however, the biographer does not want to give the impression that the vice was natural, so he must take pains to rule nature out. Making the distinction between necessity and nature acknowledges that his Caesars can act – if necessary – outside of their innate traits”.

⁷⁰ Garrett 2021: 149.

⁷¹ “Son” being the operative word; it is never used in the *Life of Titus*.

⁷² Suet. *Dom.* 9.1 and 10.1.

⁷³ Garrett 2021: 147.

The repetition of *cupiditas* in both father and son is, I propose, enough to designate it as a dynastic characteristic of sorts. It is clearly not an anomaly with Vespasian. Furthermore, even though Suetonius offers a perfectly logical explanation (he proposes that the compelling force of *necessitas* is a mitigating factor), and there is no evidence indicating that Domitian learned or inherited this vice from his father, the recurrence of *cupiditas* in both *Vitae* is enough to imply that it is a familial pattern of behaviour.⁷⁴ In fact, this is why the story of Domitian is so anxiety inducing. This apparently arbitrary resurfacing of *cupiditas* is unsettling; where is it coming from, and worse still, who is to say that *cupiditas*, and indeed other negative character traits, will not resurface in Domitian's children and grandchildren, subsequently establishing a pattern of genetic transmission?⁷⁵

Considering these immediate memories of a dynasty predicated upon biological succession, and one with a pattern of negative character traits, it seems odd that Pliny would pray for this to be Trajan's future, especially when he works so hard to depict adoption as a viable option. However, what if there were a way to exercise absolute control, and manipulate the character and traits of one's unborn child? I suggest that the answer may be found in Pliny's saccharine descriptions of Trajan's wife Plotina, and sister Ulpia Marciana.⁷⁶ When examining these characterizations, scholars have quite rightly observed that these women are described as superlative *matronae*, who owe their virtuousness to the

⁷⁴ Although as we saw in the opening to *Life of Vespasian*, Suetonius tries very hard to distinguish the *gens Flavia* from Domitian.

⁷⁵ Cf. Chapter Three which discusses Quintilian's disinterest in the origins of character traits in his students.

⁷⁶ *Pan.* 83.2-84. We will look at these passages in more detail shortly.

exemplary traits and behaviour of Trajan.⁷⁷ Yet beyond offering us a glimpse of exemplary imperial *matronae*, what are the implications of such descriptions? Through the lens of the two Quintilianic precepts, I suggest that Plotina and Ulpia's *virtutes* provide the perfect crucible in which to forge the next heir to this new dynasty, one who so closely resembles Trajan, that adoption need no longer be the default course of action.

Let us now return to Pliny's prayer for Trajan:

Quo maiore fiducia isdem illis uotis, quae ipse pro se nuncupari iubet, oro et obtestor, 'si bene rem publicam, si ex utilitate omnium regit', primum ut illum nepotibus nostris ac pronepotibus serues, deinde ut quandoque successorem ei tribuas, quem genuerit quem formauerit similemque fecerit adoptato, aut si hoc fato negatur, in consilio sis eligenti monstresque aliquem, quem adoptari in Capitolio deceat.

And so with greater confidence, with those very same vows, the ones which he himself bid be offered on his behalf, I pray and I supplicate, "If he rules the State well, if he does it for the benefit of everybody," first may you preserve him for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, then whenever you can, allow him a successor, one whom he has himself biologically produced, one whom he has fashioned, and one whom he has made similar to the one having been adopted; or if this is refused, may you act as a wise counsel to the one making this decision, and may you reveal someone who is suitable to be adopted in the Capitol (*Pan.* 94.5).

Here, Pliny presents the modes of genetic and educational transmission working in tandem as the winning combination,⁷⁸ encapsulated in the two parallel relative clauses: *quem genuerit quem formauerit*, "one whom he has himself biologically produced, one whom he

⁷⁷ Cf. Trnka-Amrhein 2023, Wood 2019, Shelton 2012: 12-27, and Carlon 2009: 143-45.

⁷⁸ Cf. Garrett 2021: "If the Flavian period took up education and rearing as the crucial thing, the pendulum swings back in the period of Suetonius, Plutarch, and Tacitus – at least to the point of swinging back to a mixture of both nature and nurture" (154). My chapter on Quintilian makes a similar observation, one which can also be applied to Pliny the Younger.

has fashioned”. Given the ultimately disastrous results of the Flavian dynasty, the concept of fashioning or molding, *formare*, might aid in inhibiting any adverse proclivities.⁷⁹

The combination of educational and genetic transmission is also reflected in the descriptions of Plotina and Ulpia Marciana respectively. Let us begin with Plotina, the ideal *matrona*:

Multis inlustribus dedecori fuit aut inconsultius uxor adsumpta aut retenta patientius; ita foris claros domestica destruebat infamia, et ne maximi ciues haberentur, hoc efficiebatur, quod mariti minores erant. Tibi uxor in decus et gloriam cedit. Quid enim illa sanctius, quid antiquius? Nonne si pontifici maximo eligenda sit coniunx, aut hanc aut similem (ubi est autem similis?) elegerit? Quam illa nihil sibi ex fortuna tua nisi gaudium uindicat! Quam constanter non potentiam tuam, sed ipsum te reueretur! Idem estis inuicem quod fuistis; probatis ex aequo, nihilque uobis felicitas addidit, nisi quod scire coepistis, quam bene uterque uestrum felicitatem ferat. Eadem quam modica cultu, quam parca comitatu, quam ciuilis incessu! Mariti hoc opus, qui ita imbuit ita instituit; nam uxori sufficit obsequi gloria. An, cum uideat quam nullus te terror, nulla comitetur ambitio, non et ipsa cum silentio incedat, ingredientemque pedibus maritum, in quantum patitur sexus, imitetur? Decuerit hoc illam, etiamsi diuersa tu facias; sub hac uero modestia uiri quantam debet uerecundiam uxor marito, femina sibi!

A wife chosen unadvisedly or kept on sufferance has been a source of shame for many distinguished men; and this ignominy at home continued to destroy these renowned men when abroad; and so it continued to happen that these citizens were not considered of the greatest importance, all because they were lesser husbands. Your wife adds to your honour and glory. What is more sacred than her? What is more traditional? Surely if a wife must be chosen by the Pontifex Maximus, he would choose either this woman or somebody similar (but where is somebody similar)? How that woman derives nothing but joy from your fortune! How constantly she reveres not your power, but you yourself! You are the same as you have always been to each other; good fortune has added nothing to you both, who are already equally well pleased, except that which you have begun to understand: how well each of you are able to endure good fortune. How modest this same woman is in her clothing, how frugal she is with her retinue, how courteous she is in her steps! This is the achievement of her husband, who has trained her in this way, who has educated her in this way. For a wife has sufficient glory in obeying her husband. But when she sees how no terror accompanies you, how no ambition accompanies you, does she herself not walk in silence, and to the extent which her sex allows, follow her husband’s *exemplum* of walking by foot? For this would befit her, even if you were to do differently; but truly as regards the modesty of this man, how much reverence this wife owes to her husband, and to herself as a woman! (*Pan.* 83.4-8).

⁷⁹ Not that this always works, as we saw with Domitian: “He changed, and only that can explain the difference between him and his family” (Garrett 2021: 149). Quintilian uses *formare* in this context frequently throughout the *IO*.

There is no doubt that Plotina is emblematic of the perfect wife, comparable to Turia of the eponymous *Laudatio Turiae*.⁸⁰ And yet, as all scholars who have studied this passage conclude, all of the credit for these *virtutes* is given to her husband Trajan. Pliny's use of the mode of educational transmission⁸¹ is clear – all of the language describing Plotina's acquisition of these traits is pedagogical: *imbuit* (“to drench; impart, give [a person, etc.] initial instruction, experience, etc., [in]),⁸² *instituit* (“to institute, originate, establish [a custom, practice, etc.], c) (an example, precedent); to inform the mind or character of, train, instruct”),⁸³ and *imitetur* (“to follow, imitate [actions, conduct, etc.]”).⁸⁴ Furthermore, various inflected forms of all three words feature in Quintilian's *IO*.⁸⁵ Plotina is a willing student — she is almost entirely characterized by verbs of yielding and following: *cedit*, *obsequi*, *imitetur*, and she does not appear even to consider disobedience, or at the very least, disagreement.

Clem Wood argues that *obsequi* and its corresponding noun *obsequium* are closely related to Trajan and the new era being promoted throughout the *Panegyricus*. However, in conjunction with descriptions from Tacitus, “these examples...show that the values that Pliny promotes in the *Panegyricus* can just as easily appear in a more negative light, at

⁸⁰ Carlon 2009: 145.

⁸¹ The exemplary nature of this description is strengthened by the two references to Plotina's walking, one of which involves her following her husband. This imagery also evokes the metaphor “Following in the footsteps of...”. There was an equivalent in Roman culture – cf. Baroin 2010: 19-49, which examines the phrases *instare vestigiis*, *per vestigial vadere*, *vestigii ingredi*, and *vestigial (per/con)sequi* within exemplary contexts.

⁸² Cf. *OLD*, s.v. “imbuo (v.), sense 1; 4”.

⁸³ Cf. *OLD*, s.v. “instituo (v.), sense 4a, 4c, 6a”.

⁸⁴ Cf. *OLD*, s.v. “imitor (v.), sense 1b”.

⁸⁵ After all, *institutere* is right in the title!

least under a bad emperor. This is one of the central challenges that Pliny highlights at the beginning of the work: how to find new language to distinguish Trajan from his predecessors”.⁸⁶ This is similar to Quintilian’s advice about display innovation by adapting and refashioning *exempla* to suit a variety of scenarios; it makes sense, then, that Pliny would work to find new ways of reimagining the same character traits.

It is important to bear in mind that this is a highly stylized and embellished portrait of Plotina, with a specific agenda in mind. A brand-new chapter by Yvona Trnka-Amrhein argues that Plotina was likely the complete opposite of Pliny’s composite. Drawing upon the *Acta Hermaisci*, the Talmud, and Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*, Trnka-Amrhein describes Plotina as a shrewd empress who schemed and plotted, and was likely the driving force behind Hadrian’s accession.⁸⁷

In Pliny, however, it is Trajan who is in charge, and he seems to be a very good teacher: “But truly, as regards the modesty of this man, how much reverence this wife owes to her husband, and to herself as a woman!”. The concluding clause, “and to herself as a woman!”, *sibi femina*, is one of two trace amounts of credit granted to Plotina; even then, it is captured in two words, and tacked at the end like an afterthought. The first example, when Pliny discusses Plotina quite literally following in her husband’s footsteps by walking, is more dismissive still. He detracts from the impressiveness of Plotina’s achievement (and abbreviates his compliment) with an aside about the limits of the female sex: *in quantum patitur sexus*, “and the extent to which her sex allows”.

⁸⁶ Wood 2019: 287. Cf. Bartsch 1994 as well.

⁸⁷ Trnka-Amrhein 2023: 277-96.

Sibi femina is also striking because it points to an innate, or “genetic” aspect to Plotina’s virtuous nature. While the majority of the credit goes to her husband, *sibi femina* is an interesting little aside. Is this a way of hinting that Plotina may naturally have possessed *modestia*, and that her husband’s education helped it flourish? Even so, this is almost certainly not a quality unique to Plotina; *femina* refers back to her sex, and perhaps implies that this is a quality which is innate to *all* women. That said, intimating that Plotina’s *modestia* is part of her *natura* is important, because it then presumes that this is a hereditary trait, and one which she can pass on to any children she may have in the future.

Modestia as an innately feminine trait is a distinct possibility – Trajan’s sister Ulpia Marciana possesses it as well.⁸⁸ In fact, she seems to have many impressive genetic character traits:

Soror autem tua ut se sororem esse meminit! ut in illa tua simplicitas, tua ueritas, tuus candor agnoscitur! ut si quis eam uxori tuae conferat, dubitare cogatur, utrum sit efficacius ad recte uiuendum bene institui an feliciter nasci. Nihil est tam proum ad simultates quam aemulatio, in feminis praesertim: ea porro maxime nascitur ex coniunctione, alitur aequalitate, exardescit inuidia, cuius finis est odium. Quo quidem admirabilis existimandum est, quod mulieribus duabus in una domo parique fortuna nullum certamen nulla contentio est. Suspiciunt inuicem inuicem cedunt, cumque te utraque effusissime diligat, nihil sua putant interesse utram tu magis ames. Idem utriusque propositum, idem tenor uitae, nihilque ex quo sentias duas esse; te enim imitari, te subsequi student. Ideo utraque mores eosdem, quia utraque tuos habet; inde moderatio, inde etiam perpetua securitas. Neque enim umquam periclitabuntur esse priuatae, quae non desierunt.

Moreover your sister remembers that she is your sister! As your frankness, your truthfulness, your integrity, are recognized in her! So that if anyone should compare her to your wife, they would feel compelled to deliberate whether being well educated or born fortuitously is more advantageous to living an upstanding life. For nothing is so prone to animosity as competition, especially between women: furthermore, it is most often born from affinity, sustained by equality in status, envy kindles the fire, the end of which is hatred. By which it must be considered all the more admirable when there is no quarrel, no contention between two women in one house with equal circumstances.

⁸⁸ Although Pliny uses the synonym *moderatio* instead.

They respect each other equally, and they yield to each other equally, and while each of them adores you as profusely as possible, they do not think it makes any difference whether you love either of them more. The same purpose for each of them, the same course of life, because of which you cannot at all discern between the two; for they are eager to imitate you, and to follow after you. Therefore, each woman has the same *mores*, because each of them has yours; from there comes their temperateness, and also from there, their perpetual composure. For they will never be in danger of not being non-members of the Imperial family, such affairs will not come to a close (*Pan.* 84.1-5).

Ulpia receives an even less detailed description of her *virtutes* than her sister-in-law, perhaps because they are identical to those of her brother – one can recognize, *agnoscerere*, the same frankness, truthfulness, and integrity, in Trajan. The difference lies in their acquisition: “Each of [the women] reflects his [Trajan’s] character, Ulpia Marciana by nature and Plotina by the emperor’s careful instruction”.⁸⁹ Thus, a solid foundation for the replication of these esteemed qualities has been established; their hereditary nature is further reinforced by instruction and coaching. In the remainder of the passage, Pliny compares the two sisters-in-law, concluding that out an overwhelming amount of affection and regard for Trajan, they never compete with each other as rivals.

In fact, both women bear an uncanny resemblance to each other (and therefore Trajan too). So much so, that Pliny constructs this little debate: is it better to be well educated (like Plotina) or well born (Ulpia)?⁹⁰ By posing this deliberation and then spending the remainder of the passage discussing how difficult it is to tell the difference between the two women, Pliny appears to value both approaches equally.

What I would now like to do is circle back to Pliny’s curious prayer for children

⁸⁹ Carlon 2009: 145.

⁹⁰ We will see this debate again: the *amicissime* competition between Nerva and Trajan Senior in *Pan.* 89.

born from Trajan. If we examine the prayer through the lenses of the two Quintilianic precepts, 1) To be discerning when selecting *exempla* to imitate, and 2) Just as a successful orator adapts his speech for different contexts and audiences, so too should *exempla* and traditions be reimagined and refashioned to suit various occasions and scenarios, Pliny's unexpected decision to revert back to biological succession in favour of adoption makes more sense.⁹¹

Principle two actually better addresses the question I asked at the beginning of the chapter: What if there were a way to exercise absolute control, and manipulate the character and traits of one's unborn child, and so reimagine the traditions of continuity and childbearing? By presenting both Plotina and Ulpia as women with identical personalities and character traits, the modes of both genetic and educational transmission are accounted for. The Flavian dynasty proves that solely relying upon genetics and biological family relationships is a risky business. Even though Domitian did not inherit his *cupiditas* from his father, it is unsettling that the same trait resurfaces when he becomes emperor. Indeed, while both Trajan and Ulpia have clearly set a precedent for these exemplary traits being hereditary, as we have explored throughout this dissertation, genetics can never be guaranteed. If Trajan is to produce an heir who is capable of living up to his legacy, he cannot depend on inherited traits alone.

⁹¹ Rees 2001 argues that Pliny attributes a number of paradoxical and antithetical traits to Trajan. The purpose is that "Paradoxical antitheses differentiate Trajan from his predecessors, and mark Trajan out as unbelievably – impossibly – gifted" (166). This might be the case with the adoption-genealogical succession paradox too – not only can Trajan be all things to all people, but Pliny's praise remains valid regardless of how Trajan produces his successor.

This is where the mode of educational transmission comes in. Based on Pliny's description, the reader can conclude that Trajan was very successful in inculcating his wife with the above moral values. Plotina's possession of identical traits to Trajan doubles, you might say, the likelihood of their child having the same moral compass. In fact, during the Flavian era, there is an increased literary interest in maternal contributions to hereditary character traits.⁹² That said, if genetics should fail, then Trajan's talent for moral instruction should make up for any deficiencies. Just as he trained his wife, so too can he mold his successor. By presenting Plotina and Ulpia as different sides of the same coin, Pliny offers a way to exert as much control over the personality of one's child as one can.

Using educational transmission to substantiate the mode of genetic transmission has always played a significant role in the dynamics of Roman families. Consider the traditions of aristocratic funerals: the imagines of the *maiores* are worn (genetic transmission), and then the *laudationes funebres* are recited by their descendants (educational transmission). However, Pliny's transparency about his thoughts on the matter, perhaps because of the instability caused by problematic succession within the previous dynasty, is striking. The *exemplum* of continuity and succession has been reimagined. Prospective parents are neither shackled to childbearing or adoption.

Of course, even with an excellent hereditary background and moral education, there is no absolute guarantee that things will turn out well. This is where the first Quintilianic principle (be discerning and choosy regarding *exempla*) can be applied. If you produce an heir who might turn out like Caligula, Nero, or Domitian, then adoption of a candidate

⁹² Cf. Garrett 2021: 154 and Bernstein 2008b: 20; 177.

whom you have evaluated and vetted is still a very attractive and viable option. Both childbearing and adoption are presented in the *Panegyricus* as *exempla* worth embracing, and showing both Trajan and his other readers that they can make their own decisions, makes both options all the more attractive.

Electio et Inventio: The Role of the Laudatio Funebris in the Panegyricus

Much like his teacher Quintilian, Pliny has an interest and appreciation for the past and the ancient traditions of Rome.⁹³ However, especially in the immediate aftermath of Domitian, Pliny acknowledges that things cannot, and indeed, must not stay the same. Like Quintilian, Pliny demonstrates that *inventio* and the ability to be discerning are necessities for this new era; Trajan *must* make the right decisions, and the *Panegyricus* will serve as his guide and source of counsel. In this final section, I explore how Pliny's adoption of these Quintilianic principles offer further insights on the very genre of Roman panegyric. Using the *laudatio funebris* as a specific case-study, this section discusses the implications of Pliny's incorporation of elements from this genre of speech in the *Panegyricus*. Although it appears counterintuitive to compare a speech designed to commemorate the dead with a thanksgiving speech dedicated to someone alive, both are closely united in the Roman mind because of the formal celebration and commemoration of ancestors. The presence of the *laudatio funebris* imparts a distinctly traditional and exemplary Republican flavour to Pliny's speech. However, in the spirit of the Quintilianic guidelines, Pliny adapts

⁹³ Cf. *Pan.* 83.4-5 on Plotina: *Tibi uxor in decus et gloriam cedit. Quid enim illa sanctius, quid antiquius?*, "Your wife adds to your honour and glory. What is more sacred than her? What is more traditional?". Here, Plotina fits the prototype of the traditional Roman *matrona* – she is an amalgam of many generations of *matronae* who came before her.

and reshapes the *laudatio funebris*, using it both to celebrate Trajan's reign, and condemn Domitian's.

What is a *laudatio funebris*, or funeral oration, and how does it fit into the broader genre of Roman panegyric? "...To revere as well as to remember, both to celebrate and to teach virtue, and most importantly to couple praise with admonition".⁹⁴ This would be an apt description for the *Panegyricus*, a festive *gratiarum actio*⁹⁵ commemorating the inaugural years of Trajan's reign. Yet instead, the above quotation refers to the Republican tradition of the *laudatio funebris*, a bipartite funeral oration in which either the son or another relative monumentalized both the accomplishments and esteemed ancestors of the deceased. As has been observed by numerous scholars, such speeches were of particular importance to the aristocracy in their constant pursuit to preserve and replicate virtuous character traits and other *exempla*;⁹⁶ as such, these *laudationes funebres* had much larger societal implications.⁹⁷ Unfortunately, we only have fragments of *laudationes funebres*, the majority of which exist as summaries.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Covino 2011: 69.

⁹⁵ *Pan.* 4.1.

⁹⁶ Flower 1996: 128-58 is essential. Cf. Erker's 2011: 50-51 for a succinct summary of the performance of the *laudatio funebris*. Bodel 1999: 259-281 offers a detailed description of Roman funerals.

⁹⁷ Cf. Dufallo 2007: 25-6.

⁹⁸ I reproduce the summary provided by Flower 1996: 145 n. 72 in full: "The evidence for published *laudationes*, and who read them later, can be summarized as follows: Q. Caecilius Metellus for his father 221 BC (Pliny [the Elder]), M. Claudius Marcellus for his father 208 BC (Coelius Antipater, Livy, Augustus), Q. Fabius Maximus for his son c. 207-203 BC (Cicero, Plutarch, Priscian), Laelius for Scipio Aemilianus 129 BC (Cicero and his scholiast), Caesar for his aunt Julia 69 BC (Suetonius, Plutarch), M. Junius Brutus for Ap. Claudius Pulcher 48 BC (Diomedes), Cicero for Cato 45 BC (Macrobius), Atticus for Caecilia 42 BC (Nepos), Augustus for Marcellus (Servius, Plutarch), Augustus for Agrippa 12 BC (1st-cent. AD papyrus in Greek from the East), Augustus for Drusus 9 BC (Suetonius). The actual date of publication is rarely known". These speeches were delivered on the day of, and then later written down and kept

When defining Latin panegyric as a distinct genre, as well discussing its origins, the *laudatio funebris* is frequently cited as one of its ancestors.⁹⁹ In contrast, Susanna Braund suggests that owing to critical differences regarding the subject of the speech and occasions for delivery, “these [funeral] orations and [tombstone] epitaphs do not constitute or even belong to the genre of Latin panegyric”.¹⁰⁰ By placing the *Panegyricus* within the context of the modes of genetic and educational transmission, I argue that Pliny’s speech involves a conscious refashioning of elements of the *laudatio funebris* to commemorate the beginning of Trajan’s reign.¹⁰¹ Let me explain. As the next chapter on Juvenal explores in further detail, one of the pitfalls associated with the modes of genetic and educational transmission is being ensnared in the never-ending cycle of repetition. When outlining four distinct stages within the exemplary process, Matthew Roller describes them as “both sequential and cyclical: actions are observed, evaluated, and commemorated, creating standards and models that inspire and shape new actions; these are observed and evaluated in their turn, and so on, in an endless loop of social reproduction”.¹⁰² Although this sequence often speaks to preserving forms of *exempla* like character traits and achievements, it can also apply to other Roman traditions, including genres of literature.

within the family. It is, of course, almost impossible to ascertain the differences between the delivered and published versions of the speech. Cf. Humbert 1925, Stroh 1975, and Kierdorf 1980 for more detail.

⁹⁹ Cf. Pepe 2018, Manuwald 2011, and Roche 2011 for some examples. Cf. Rosillo-López 2011, who suggests the *speculum principis* as a precursor to Imperial panegyric. Roche 2011 does a particularly good job of breaking down all the different literary antecedents to the *Panegyricus*. Dominik and Smith 2011: 1-16 is an excellent introduction to Roman panegyric and invective.

¹⁰⁰ Braund 1998: 55.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Roche 2011: 3: “Pliny’s speech is, self-consciously, a radical extension of the generic norms obtaining in the first century CE”.

¹⁰² Roller 2018: 8.

Ancient sources date the tradition of the *laudatio funebris* back to the early days of the Republic.¹⁰³ In Plutarch's *Life of Publicola*, he describes Publicola's *laudatio* in honour of his colleague and co-liberator of Rome, L. Junius Brutus as the *aition* for the genre:¹⁰⁴

ἀπεδέξαντο δὲ τοῦ Οὐαλλερίου καὶ τὰς εἰς τὸν συνάρχοντα τιμὰς, αἷς ἐκκομιζόμενον καὶ θαπτόμενον ἐκόσμησε· καὶ λόγον ἐπ' αὐτῷ διεξῆλθεν ἐπιτάφιον, ὃς οὕτως ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ἠγαπήθη καὶ τοσαύτην ἔσχε χάριν ὥστε πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ μεγάλοις ὑπάρχειν ἐξ ἐκείνου τελευτήσασιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρίστων ἐγκωμιάζεσθαι. λέγεται δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἐπιταφίων ἐκεῖνος γενέσθαι πρεσβύτερος, εἶγε μὴ καὶ τοῦτο Σόλωνός ἐστιν, ὡς Ἀναξιμένης ὁ ῥήτωρ ἰστόρηκεν.

The people were also pleased with the honours which Valerius bestowed upon his colleague at the funeral ceremonies. He even delivered a funeral oration in his honour, which was so admired by the Romans and won such favour that from that time on, when their great and good men died, encomiums were pronounced upon them by the most distinguished citizens. And this funeral oration of his is said to have been earlier than any among the Greeks, unless Anaximenes the orator is right in saying that the custom originated with Solon (*Pub.* 9.7.102).¹⁰⁵

It is not my intention to authenticate the veracity of these anecdotes; of more interest is that the Plutarch steers the reader into viewing this event not only as the birth of an *exemplum*, but also as being inextricably intertwined with the Roman aristocracy: the *gens Valeria* was patrician, and the words ἀγαθοῖς, μεγάλοις, and ἀρίστων, are strikingly similar to the Latin *bonus*, *magnus*, and *optimus*, all of which are often used to describe the nobility.

The best-known description of the components of the *laudatio funebris* can be found in Book Six of Polybius:

πλὴν ὃ γε λέγων ὑπὲρ τοῦ θάπτεσθαι μέλλοντος, ἐπὶ διέληθ' ὅτι τὸν περὶ τούτου λόγον, ἄρχεται τῶν ἄλλων ἀπὸ τοῦ προγενεστάτου τῶν παρόντων, καὶ λέγει τὰς ἐπιτυχίας ἐκάστου καὶ τὰς πράξεις. ἐξ ὧν καινοποιουμένης αἰεὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς ἐπ' ἀρετῇ φήμης ἀθανατίζεται μὲν ἢ τῶν καλόν τι διαπραξαμένων εὐκλεία, γνώριμος δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ παραδόσιμος τοῖς ἐπιγινόμενοις ἢ τῶν

¹⁰³ Cf. Liv. 2.47.11.

¹⁰⁴ Also cf. Dion. Hal. 5.17.3.

¹⁰⁵ Translation from *Loeb*.

εὐεργετησάντων τὴν πατρίδα γίνεται δόξα. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, οἱ νέοι παρορμῶνται πρὸς τὸ πᾶν ὑπομένειν ὑπὲρ τῶν κοινῶν πραγμάτων χάριν τοῦ τυχεῖν τῆς συνακολουθούσης τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τῶν ἀνδρῶν εὐκλείας. πίστιν δ' ἔχει τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκ τούτων.

Besides, he who makes the oration over the man about to be buried, when he has finished speaking of him recounts the successes and exploits of the rest whose images are present, beginning from the most ancient. By this means, by this constant renewal of the good report of brave men, the celebrity of those who performed noble deeds is rendered immortal, while at the same time the fame of those who did good service to their country becomes known to the people and a heritage for future generations. But the most important result is that young men are thus inspired to endure every suffering for the public welfare in the hope of winning the glory that attends on brave men (Polyb. 6.54.1-3).¹⁰⁶

The *laudatio funebris*, as a genre of speech, reinforces the norms and traditions of the Roman aristocracy.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, the focus on the ancestral accomplishments and achievements of the deceased highlights the repetitive nature of both genetic and educational transmission. There is an unstated expectation that being related to an exemplary relative in turn predisposes you, and each of the following generations, to being exemplary. These expectations are compounded by the commemoration of the achievements of the entire family in the *laudatio funebris* – hearing about the exploits and successes of even the oldest of one’s ancestors every time another male family member died, served as unrelenting sources of inspiration for the younger generations.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, given the public nature of these funerals, as Polybius notes, “the fame of those who did good service to their country becomes known to the people and a heritage for future generations”, these *exempla* were not just available to members of individual families, but indeed anyone who attended one of these events.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Translation from *Loeb*.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Flower 1996: 128-58.

¹⁰⁸ Covino 2011: 73 sums it up best: “the very act itself serves to indoctrinate”.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Blösel 2003.

Now for a brief overview of the genre of Latin Panegyric. Much like the *laudatio funebris*, there are fewer extant examples than we would like. The *Panegyrici Latini* is a collection of twelve speeches dedicated to emperors ranging from the reigns of Trajan to Theodosius, the majority of which were written anonymously in the late-third to early-fourth centuries CE. For Pliny's *Panegyricus* to be preserved within the *Panegyrici Latini*, then, is a bit of an anomaly. The panegyric takes its origins from a variety of Greco-Roman genres such as the inaugural consular *contio*, which thanks the *populus Romanus* for their votes and commemorates the new consul's family,¹¹⁰ the *encomium* of Isocrates, as well as the Athenian *epitaphios logos*, and of course, the *laudatio funebris*. Pliny tells us that his *Panegyricus* is a *gratiarum actio*, a speech of thanksgiving decreed by the Senate, and delivered by the consul to the emperor for granting them their office:

Sed parendum est senatus consulto quod ex utilitate publica placuit, ut consulis voce sub titulo gratiarum agendarum boni principes quae facerent recognoscerent, mali quae facere deberent,

But the decree of the Senate, which, for the benefit of the public, has determined that under the pretext of a giving of thanks delivered by the voice of the consul, must be obeyed; good rulers should recognize their deeds and bad ones should learn what theirs ought to be (*Pan.* 4.1).

Many scholars have characterized the *Panegyricus* as a manual or guide for Trajan on how to reach his full potential as *princeps*.¹¹¹ By extolling Trajan's background, virtues, and accomplishments, Pliny is setting him up as an *exemplum* for all to admire and emulate.

Let us now discuss the presence of the *laudatio funebris* in the *Panegyricus*, and the ensuing implications, all through the lens of our two Quintilianic guidelines. The first,

¹¹⁰ Cf. Flower 1996: 154-56.

¹¹¹ Roche 2011: 5; Rees 2012: 15, Radice 1968: 170-72; Noreña: 2011; Dominik and Smith 2011: 10; Braund 1998: 66; Bartsch 1994: 152.

be discerning when selecting *exempla*, is easy enough to address. Pliny's choice of the *laudatio funebris* imparts a distinctly traditional and exemplary Republican flavour to the *Panegyricus*. In doing so, it serves as a source of inspiration for both the audience and Trajan himself. However, the *Panegyricus* differs greatly from our extant examples of *laudationes funebres* in both style and content. An explanation can be offered by bearing the second Quintilianic principle in mind: innovate and adapt *exempla* to suit the current circumstances. The *laudatio funebris* is not just a literary antecedent of the *Panegyricus*; rather, Pliny reimagines this old tradition for current times. In the remainder of this section, I will identify a couple of discrepancies between the *laudatio funebris* and *Panegyricus* as Plinian innovations, which both celebrate Trajan's reign, and condemn Domitian's.

The first inconsistency is the depiction of family. In the *laudatio funebris*, the magistracies and accomplishments of the deceased's *maiores* comprise the last half of the speech. Some of these speeches must have been extremely lengthy, especially in families with a long list of accomplished *maiores*.¹¹² Although none of the extant fragments and summaries include the contents of the last half of the speech, there is little doubt that these family members and relatives would all have been connected to the *gens* of the deceased either through blood, adoption, or marriage. In fact, multiple families, depending on the genealogy of the deceased. This is apparent in the *laudatio* delivered by Julius Caesar for his aunt Julia, Marius' widow, where *imagines* from both the Marcii Reges and Julii would likely have been displayed:

¹¹² Flower 1996: 130.

“Amitae meae Iuliae maternum genus ab regibus ortum, paternum cum diis immortalibus coniunctum est. Nam ab Anco Marcio sunt Marcii Reges, quo nomine fuit mater; a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra. Est ergo in genere et sanctitas regum, qui plurimum inter homines pollent, et caerimonia deorum, quorum ipsi in potestate sunt reges.”

“The family of my aunt Julia is descended by her mother from the kings, and on her father’s side is akin to the immortal Gods; for the Marcii Reges (her mother’s family name) go back to Ancus Marcius, and the Iulii, the family of which ours is a branch, to Venus. Our stock therefore has at once the sanctity of kings, whose power is supreme among mortal men, and the claim to reverence which attaches to the Gods, who hold sway over kings themselves” (Suet. *Jul.* 6.1).¹¹³

Even though the *laudatio funebris* commemorates the dead, while the *Panegyricus* celebrates the very much alive Trajan, both texts share a common goal of seeking to inspire and educate future generations of successors. *Laudationes funebres* trap their audience in the past. The memories and achievements of the deceased determine the future of the ensuing generations: they must constantly live up to, and indeed surpass the *exempla* of their ancestors. How might this tradition be reimagined for the present in the *Panegyricus*, especially because Trajan is alive? As we have seen in the previous two sections, Pliny *does* discuss Trajan’s family in detail. However, there is very little discussion of what Trajan might stand to learn from Trajan Senior, his sister Ulpia Marciana, or even his adoptive father, Nerva.¹¹⁴ There is a clue at the beginning of the speech:

Equidem non consuli modo sed omnibus ciuibus enitendum reor, ne quid de principe nostro ita dicant, ut idem illud de alio dici potuisse uideatur. Quare abeant ac recedant uoces illae quas metus exprimebat. Nihil quale ante dicamus, nihil enim quale ante patimur; ...

Indeed, I think that not only the consuls, but also all citizens ought to strive to say nothing about our *princeps* in such a manner that it appears possible that that very same thing can be said about another [*princeps*]. Therefore let those voices which previously elicited fear recede and go far

¹¹³ Translation from *Loeb*.

¹¹⁴ Nerva is the exception, in that perhaps that Trajan should learn from his adoptive father and make the same wise decisions, should he choose to adopt.

away. We should say nothing about what happened before, nothing about what we endured before... (*Pan.* 2.1-2).

This statement is a clear jab at unpopular emperors like Nero, and especially Domitian; in order for Trajan to construct a new era of peace and stability, he cannot in any way resemble his imperial predecessors. Pliny has reimagined the *miores* of the *laudatio funebris*; the legacy which Trajan inherits is that of the preceding dynasties of emperors. This brings me to the second difference between *laudationes funebres* and the *Panegyricus*. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the memories and achievements of the deceased recounted in funeral orations dictate the future of the ensuing generations: they must not only match the *exempla* discussed, but actually surpass them as well.

Although Pliny's impassioned praise of Trajan throughout *Panegyricus* identifies Trajan as an inspiring *exemplum* to admire and imitate, the speech is also interspersed with a plethora of *exempla* which Trajan himself should avoid. Many of them have to do with the memories of Domitian, who despite being unnamed, looms over the *Panegyricus* like a gloomy ghost:

Sed parendum est senatus consulto quod ex utilitate publica placuit, ut consulis uoce sub titulo gratiarum agendarum boni principes quae facerent recognoscerent, mali quae facere deberent.

But the decree of the Senate, which, for the benefit of the public, has determined that under the pretext of a giving of thanks delivered by the voice of the consul, must be obeyed; good rulers should recognize their deeds and bad ones should learn what theirs ought to be (*Pan.* 4.1).

and

ac sicut maris caelique temperiem turbines tempestatesque commendant, ita ad augendam pacis tuae gratiam illum tumultum praecessisse crediderim.

Just as a period of calm in sky and sea is welcomed by contrast with storm and tempest, similarly, I think, that earlier season of unrest was designed to increase our appreciation of the peace we owe to you (*Pan.* 5.8).

This is why Pliny does not want the same descriptors used of earlier emperors to be applicable to Trajan; if this happens, then Trajan resembles Domitian, Nero, and other “bad” emperors. The purpose of the *laudatio funebris*, then, has been reversed in the *Panegyricus*: these are *exempla* which Trajan should avoid, not imitate. In fact, it is not that bad emperors should about the things which they have done, but rather good emperors like Trajan. He needs to learn from the poor *exempla* set by his predecessors, so that he can provide Rome with “a period of calm in sky and sea” after years of stormy instability. And so, the *laudatio funebris* has been refashioned and reimagined, allowing the *Panegyricus* to remain some Republican elements while still serving as a contemporary *exemplum*. Pliny shows his readers that while some *exempla* are worth following, others must be avoided at all costs.

Conclusion

It is exciting to see that Pliny’s *Panegyricus* is starting to receive the same attention and interest as his *Epistulae*. Although the oration, teeming with ornate and enthusiastic praise and blandishments, can be characterized as glib and overwrought, this chapter shows that such descriptors fail to address the underlying complexities and rhetorical skills. Pliny offers a complete reworking of attitudes to the key social institution of family, be it adoption or childbearing.

By coopting the rather buoyant outlook of his teacher Quintilian, Pliny presents Trajan's reign as a beacon of hope and optimism.¹¹⁵ There is no imminent return to the Republic, a fact which Pliny helps his reader realize does not necessarily warrant despair. The Republic offered many inspiring *exempla* and traditions. Yet, both the previous and following chapters on Quintilian and Juvenal respectively demonstrate that there is no place for *exempla* being transposed as they are in their original form. Changes and adjustments must be made, ideas must be reworked. Furthermore, this framework is applicable to topics ranging from family to literary genres. The future, it seems, is not bleak, especially when armed with sage advice and guidance.

¹¹⁵ Or at least seems to. Cf. Bartsch 1994 on the insincerity of Pliny in the *Panegyricus*..

CHAPTER FOUR: JUVENALIAN FRUSTRATION WITH EXEMPLARITY

Introduction

In his programmatic first *Satire*, Juvenal describes his oeuvre as a *farrago*, or a mishmash of topics: *nostra farrago libelli est*, “our little book is a mishmash”.¹ Barbara K. Gold quite rightly identifies this word as key to understanding Juvenal’s thoughts both on the satiric genre as well as his own poetry.² Although *farrago* denotes disorganization and mess, Juvenal is actually remarkably consistent with some of the *topoi* present in the *Satires*. Gold identifies “*Romanitas*, or what it means to identify as Roman” as the basis of this *farrago*.³ It is worth further elaborating upon Gold’s observation — *Romanitas*, as a broad, multivalent concept, and one which changes drastically throughout the course of Roman history, is a *farrago* in and of itself.⁴ This chapter will focus on the moral and ethical aspects of *Romanitas*, and specifically how it is conceptualized within Juvenal’s use of Republican imagery and *exempla*.

Many scholars have taken note of Juvenal’s interest in morality and ethics, and how they pertain to imperial *Romanitas*, coupling his despair at living in a time marked by moral decline with his famous *indignatio*. However, there is certainly still more to add to this conversation. The general consensus, summarized by Jennifer Ferriss-Hill, is that the Juvenalian *indignatio* is rooted in “anger at everything that appears to the satirist not to be

¹ Juv. 1.86.

² Gold 2021: 98-99.

³ Ibid. 100.

⁴ The word *Romanitas* is itself absent from Latin texts until the 3rd cent. CE. I use it in the same manner as Braund 1997.

consonant with traditional Roman values”.⁵ Frequently in scholarship we see a simplistic binary equating nostalgia with the Republic, and pessimism with the Empire. Edward Courtney suggests that “Thus Juvenal’s outlook is based on the picture which he, and other Romans, had formed of the early days of the state; but his attachment to the past is sentimental and moral,…”.⁶ In a similar vein, Sigmund Fredericks argues that “Rome has lost contact with her own sacred traditions, and this loss of the old virtues and customs has led to degeneracy and perversion. Juvenal’s Rome is simply out of harmony with her own glorious past”.⁷

On the other hand, Martin M. Winkler has argued that Juvenal is more critical of Republican *exempla*:

By Juvenal’s time the old, stern *mores* appear shallow and hollow; they have become meaningless and finally absurd and ridiculous. What significance could the faded picture of an ancestor of hundreds of years ago, of a Brutus, Cato, Scaevola, or anybody else among those mentioned, possibly convey to anyone living in Juvenal’s days? Ancient examples of moral rectitude have degenerated into naïve, unenlightened country bumpkins, utterly straightforward in their attitudes and moral values, and thus utterly boring and trivial.

...

Exposing the figures of the venerable ancestors as empty bags and lifeless clichés, Juvenal not only satirizes them, but moreover shows their unsuitability as moral *exemplaria*, in particular for an age to which old-time simplicity and lack of refinement must have appeared exceedingly boorish and repellent.⁸

There is much to examine in Winkler’s reasoning, but the most salient points are as follows:

1) Memories, imagery, and *exempla* from the Republic have been debunked and have no place in contemporary society, because they are “cliché” and “trivial” — they have been

⁵ Ferriss-Hill 2022: 26.

⁶ Courtney 1980: 28.

⁷ Fredericks 1974: 143.

⁸ Winkler 1983: 47.

unable to maintain their worth and value; 2) As his close readings of *Satires* 6 and 8 demonstrate⁹, Juvenal makes fun of representations of the Republic by depicting them as anachronistically obsolete; and 3) Juvenal's pessimism is directed towards both contemporary society and the "traditional past".

Winkler's characterization of Republican ideals as "trite", "cliché", "meaningless", and "absurd" draws attention to their repetitious nature, which, we must remember, is framed within the context of morality and ethics.¹⁰ I argue that such repetition sheds further understanding of the role of morality and ethics in the Juvenalian corpus, namely because it is a crucial component of the exemplary process. This project has identified and discussed two modes of transmission within the system of exemplarity: genetic and educational. When outlining four distinct stages within the exemplary process, Matthew Roller describes them as "both sequential and cyclical: actions are observed, evaluated, and commemorated, creating standards and models that inspire and shape new actions; these are observed and evaluated in their turn, and so on, in an endless loop of social reproduction".¹¹ The success of the transmission of *exempla*, either through education or genetics, depends on endless repetition.

In this chapter, I examine one of the many problems associated with the modes of genetic and educational transmission in further detail, specifically the preoccupation with exemplarity, and in particular its emphasis on repetition, which unites the Republic and the

⁹ Winkler 1983: 27-36.

¹⁰ Corn 1992: 311-14 shares Winkler's views in his analysis of *Sat.* 14, which forms a later part of this chapter.

¹¹ Roller 2018: 8.

Empire as a common target in Juvenalian satire. However, this then traps the reader in a paradox, precisely because *exempla* derive their value from repetition. Using examples from *Satires* 1, 2, 7, 8, and 14, I demonstrate that in Juvenal's distorted and hyperbolic world, this obsession with continuity has several consequences: 1) Complacency and general stupidity, 2) Hypocrisy and disingenuity, and 3) A failure to meet the impossible standards set by the exemplary process, all of which demonstrate the unsustainable nature of the exemplary cycle.

Stemmata Quid Faciunt? Satires 8 and 14

Even though *Satires* 8 and 14 are chronologically last in the selection of poems discussed in this chapter, it makes sense to begin with them, since they are likely the first to come to mind when thinking of the two modes of transmission: genetic (8) and educational (14). Since both poems have already received much scholarly attention, my aim is to offer some close readings from both poems, and identify the repercussions of exemplary continuity within.

Let us begin with *Satire* 8. My analysis particularly builds upon the work of James Uden,¹² John Henderson,¹³ and Christopher Nappa,¹⁴ who focus on Juvenal's satirizing of the Roman aristocratic fascination with genealogy and pedigree, as well as the idea that "the betrayal of elite norms and values by one person can devalue even those members of the elite who do not do such things".¹⁵ *Satire* 8 opens with the blunt question: *Stemmata*

¹² Uden 2015.

¹³ Henderson 1997.

¹⁴ Nappa 2018.

¹⁵ Nappa 2018: 93-4.

quid faciunt?, “What purposes do pedigrees serve?”¹⁶ With this opening, Juvenal actively calls into question the mode of genetic transmission. *Stemma* particularly highlights the nascent frustration with the repetitive nature of exemplarity present throughout the Juvenalian corpus. Persius, Juvenal’s own literary ancestor,¹⁷ uses the word when describing a student who has woken up late and hung-over. The student’s friend roundly tells him off for being spoiled and entitled:

*hoc satis? an deceat pulmonem rumpere ventis
stemmate quod Tusco ramum millesime ducis
censoremve tuum vel quod trabeate salutas?*

Is this enough for you? Or would it be more fitting for you to burst your lungs with wind because you draw upon the thousandth branch in a Tuscan pedigree, or because you greet your Censor all decked out in a robe of state? (Pers. 3.27-29).

Persius’ use of arboreal imagery, *ramum*, paints a wonderful visual for understanding how the repetitive nature of genetic transmission can be problematic, and one which Juvenal might have had in mind for *Satire 8*: a strong and healthy tree can sustain only so many branches, which in turn can support only so many flowers or fruit, before collapsing under the weight and stress of such a burden. If Rubellius Blandus, and every other descendant clings onto a single branch of their *gens*, it will inevitably snap. One must form another branch, so as to produce yet more fruit.

Juvenal highlights the pointlessness of *stemma* by cramming the opening 20 lines of the poem with the names of prominent Roman aristocratic *gentes*, including the Aemiliani, Curii, Lepidi, Corvini, and Fabii.¹⁸ Although this appears to be an impressive

¹⁶ Juv. 8.1.

¹⁷ Cf. the section on *Satire 7*, where I discuss literary exemplarity in more detail.

¹⁸ Juv. 8.3-5.

line-up – these are all families which claimed descent from consuls from the Republican era – they had become increasingly rare by the beginning of the 2nd century CE.¹⁹ Certainly, very few, if any, of these families would have existed by the time Juvenal wrote this poem.²⁰ The last member of the Corvina *gens* had served under Nero, and the last of the Aemilii Lepidi had died in a conspiracy against Caligula. Similarly, P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus had had no heir, and so that line of the family died out as well.²¹ This then is the first of satirical portraits of old and prominent Roman families.²²

It is against this backdrop that Juvenal addresses Rubellius Blandus:

*his ego quem monui? tecum est mihi sermo, Rubelli
Blande. tumes alto Drusorum stemmate, tamquam
feceris ipse aliquid propter quod nobilis esses,
'uos humiles' inquis 'uolgi pars ultima nostri,
quorum nemo queat patriam monstrare parentis,
ast ego Cecropides.' uiuas et originis huius
gaudia longa feras. tamen ima plebe Quiritem
facundum inuenies, solet hic defendere causas
nobilis indocti; ueniet de plebe togata
qui iuris nodos et legum aenigmata soluat;
hinc petit Euphraten iuuenis domitique Bataui
custodes aquilas armis industrius...*

Whom have I warned you about in regard to these matters? My conversation is with you, Rubellius Blandus. You are swollen with the exalted pedigree of the Drusi, as if you yourself will achieve anything because you are noble. “You’re lowly”, you say, “you’re the lowest common denominator of our people, none of whom can identify the fatherland of your father; as for me, I’m descended from Cecrops.” Well, may you live well, and take much joy in this ancestry of yours. Nevertheless, in the lowest plebeian rank, you will find a true Roman citizen who is eloquent, and this man will grow accustomed to undertaking the defense cases of an uneducated aristocrat; from the plebeian toga will come the sort of man who can loosen legal knots and solve the mysteries of laws. From

¹⁹ Gelzer 1975: 154-61. Hill 1969 and Barnes 1974 correctly observe that imperial *gentes* could still be classified as *nobilis* by becoming consul, or holding the praetorian or urban . However Hill 1969: 246 is right to identify Juvenal’s aristocrats in *Sat.* 8 as being the sort who obtained *nobilitas* in the Republic, or at the very latest, the Augustan principate.

²⁰ Henderson 1997: 18 and 135-36 n. 16.

²¹ Uden 2015: 124.

²² *Ibid.* 125.

here, the eager young soldier makes his way to the Euphrates, as well as the guardian-eagles of the conquered Batavians (Juv. 8.39-52).

Rubellius Blandus' identity has inspired much scholarly debate. Ronald Syme suggests that Blandus was the great-grandson of the emperor Tiberius, while Braund suggests that Blandus might be a character made up by Juvenal.²³ If this is the case, the name Rubellius Blandus is quite amusing.²⁴ The "Rubellius" is perhaps a nod to his red face puffed up with its own self-importance, or even the redness of blood, which is the only thing that seems to matter to him. Both Braund and Henderson offer "sweet-talking" for the *cognomen* Blandus, but given his overbearing personality, I suggest instead that "Blandus" might point to the adulation and flattery he feels entitled to, based on his ancestry.

Either way, this is a character obsessed with heritage and genealogy; Juvenal tells him, *tumes alto Drusorum stemmate*, "you are swollen with the exalted pedigree of the Drusi". Juvenal's repetition of *stemmate*, which we have established as pejorative, imparts a sense of sarcasm and mockery. Blandus is not too different from Persius' student – he is vain and arrogant, with an overly inflated ego. The *tumes* picks up on this excessive inflation, offering a grotesque image of Blandus as swollen and bloated with ancestral

²³ Braund 1988: 232 n. 16. Also cf. Henderson 1997: 131.

²⁴ Juvenal is fond of "speaking-names", which has also generated some scholarly interest. Consider Umbricius, "Mr. Shady", in *Satire* 3, who also has an unhealthy obsession with the shades and ghosts of the past (Motto and Clark 1965: 275). Larmour 2003: 60, calls Umbricius "the shadowy one" because Juvenal links Rome with the Underworld throughout Book One, and Umbricius is traveling to Cumae, thought to be the entrance to the Underworld. Staley 2000: 87 argues for "Mr. Place in the City" because of the noteworthy placement of "Umbricius" and "*Urbe locus*" in 3.21-22.

vanity.²⁵ There is also a medical element with *tumere*,²⁶ which is fitting here: Blandus, all puffed up, is himself reminiscent of a tumour, distended and inflamed. Blandus' genealogy, and in particular his preoccupation with its preservation and continuity, is an ailment which like his Silian counterpart Crixus, shackles him to the past and prevents him from looking forward to the future.

This repetition continues in the next part of the passage, where Blandus is accused of calling people *humiles*, “lowly”, and *uolgi pars ultima nostri*, “the lowest common denominator of our people”.²⁷ Blandus offers no other reason, beyond a lack of *nobilitas*, for their inferiority. *He*, on the other hand, is *Cecropides*, “descended from Cecrops”. While this is clearly metonymic for “indigenous” or “autochthonous”,²⁸ it is an interesting word for Blandus to use. Evidently, the goal is to draw attention to the strength of genetic transmission within his own family, but Blandus does so by likening himself to an ancient Athenian legend, which could not be further from traditional Rome. The notion of *Romanitas* has been compromised, and readers are immediately reminded of the complex and tense relationship between Rome and Ancient Greece, which vacillates between admiration and contempt.

If Blandus encapsulates the current status quo, then the answer to Juvenal's initial question *stemmata quid faciunt*, is easy enough to answer: not very much. His bloodline is

²⁵ Just like Crixus in Sil. *Pun.* 4.150-1! Cf. Braund 1988: “There also appears in the poem a false form of fullness – Rubellius Blandus' swelling with pride (40, 71-2), which is condemned as lacking substance” (105).

²⁶ Ie. to describe tumors and other kinds of swelling. Cf. Celsus *Med.* 3.22.10 and 8.4.19, and Plin. *HN* 20.230 for some medical examples.

²⁷ Juv. 8.44.

²⁸ Courtney 1980: 392-93 and Mayor 2007: 12.

his only accomplishment, and has rendered Blandus a *nobilis indoctus*. In this instance, he has become lazy and complacent (a consequence, I suggest, of the emphasis on repetition in the exemplary cycle²⁹) — all he does is sit around and cast judgment on other people. He offers nothing of value or import to society, and like Crixus in the *Punica*, is more than happy to coast on the reputation of his ancestors. “Well, may you live well, and take much joy in this ancestry of yours”, Juvenal retorts, implying that this may very well be the only joy and point of pride Blandus will have in his lifetime. It certainly does not look like he will be achieving anything else of consequence.³⁰

Juvenal accentuates Blandus’ apathy³¹ by contrasting him with an unnamed “Roman who is eloquent, who will take on defense cases for the uneducated nobleman”, and hails from “the lowest plebeian rank”.³² Acclaimed statesmen and *novi homines* like Cato the Elder and Cicero (whom Juvenal discusses in length later in the poem) come to mind – both ascended the *cursus honorum*, and were known for their legal and oratorical prowess long before their political achievements. These are the men, the poet observes, who will go on to “who can loosen legal knots and solve the mysteries of laws. From here, the eager young soldier makes his way to the Euphrates, as well as the guardian-eagles of the conquered

²⁹ Fredericks 1974: 153-54 hints at complacency as a consequence in *Sat.* 8, but does not link it to the repetitive nature of exemplarity.

³⁰ Braund 1988: 104-5 identifies another instance of Blandus’ uselessness: “...the useless noble Rubellius Blandus is likened to a herm whose phallus is broken off (52-3), which implies that Rubellius lacks virility.”

³¹ Cf. Uden 2015: “He embodies the traditions of the past, but with the corresponding danger of becoming merely an empty shell for paraded tradition” (126).

³² *Juv.* 8.47-9. Cf. Braund 1988: 78.

Batavians”.³³ These men are energetic and dynamic, unlike Blandus, whose only activity appears to be bragging and boasting.

Thus begins the rift between the moldering aristocratic *nobiles*, and the up-and-coming generations from less prominent families. The metaphor of the speedy racehorse cements the contrast.³⁴ Juvenal observes that people only consider animals to be thoroughbred if they are strong as well. It is here that we are presented with the poet’s definition of *nobilis*, a key term when talking about Roman aristocratic genealogy. The *nobilis* horse, Juvenal states, “is the one which, whatever his pasture, speeds clear of the rest and which has the leading dust cloud on the flat”.³⁵ To be *nobilis*, one must excel and surpass all other competition. This is in contrast to the “ones sired by Coryphaeus and Hirpinus, [who] are “livestock for sale”, if it’s but rarely that victory lands on their harness”.³⁶ Essentially, one must back up their ancestry and the accompanying expectations with tangible results. A horse bred from champions is of no use if it cannot even maintain the standards set by its parents.³⁷ “If”, Juvenal stipulates, “I’m to be impressed by you and not your heritage, offer me something personal, something I can inscribe in your record of

³³ Juv. 8.49-52.

³⁴ Ibid. 56-70.

³⁵ Ibid. 60-1. Translation from *Loeb*.

³⁶ Ibid. 62-3. Translation from *Loeb*.

³⁷ Uden 2015: 134-35 suggests that this concept has its origins in Ancient Greece. However, I agree with Braund 1988: 77 that the Romans had similar thoughts on kinship and nobility. Regarding Roman culture, there is always a divide between the ideal and reality. Juvenal’s sentiment that part of societal success is based on surpassing the deeds of one’s ancestors is not rooted in reality; Cf. Chapter One where neither Serranus nor Crixus were able to rival their *maiores*. Because Juvenal is a satirist, his use of such a general and overly simplistic metaphor might be a way of drawing attention to some of the nuances and complexities of Roman genealogy and kinship.

achievement...”.³⁸ This is what the repetitive nature of exemplarity has prevented individuals like Rubellius Blandus from achieving.

Republican and Augustan literature depict ancestry and success as inseparable, and individuals like the above-mentioned soldier were a rarity. For example, when describing Cato the Elder, Livy observes that despite his background, he rose to the top: “But among all the patricians and plebeians of the most illustrious houses, Marcus Porcius Cato stood out most conspicuously. In this man there was such force of mind and character that in whatever station he had been born it seemed that he would have made his fortune for himself”.³⁹

Thus, genealogy and ancestry, which was used as a source of inspiration for the heroes of Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, is now a hindrance when not used productively. In fact, lines 183-210 of *Satire 8* attack aristocrats for performing on stage, and participating in gladiatorial contests. These individuals are worse than even Blandus – while their ancestors fought, both physically and metaphorically, for Rome, they are on stage miming and imitating these deeds. Mime and pantomime were always associated with the lower classes; from the Roman perspective, it was simply not considered classy or elite to participate in such activities - Cicero describes aristocrats who felt ashamed even admitting that they enjoyed attending spectacles.⁴⁰ Juvenal is more upfront, bluntly labeling such behaviour as *dedecus urbis*, “the disgrace of Rome”.⁴¹

³⁸ Juv. 8.68-9. Translation from *Loeb*.

³⁹ Liv. 39.40.

⁴⁰ Cic. *Mur.* 40.

⁴¹ Juv. 8.200.

Other aristocrats worthy of censure are those who act against Rome's interests. Juvenal mentions the chief Catilinarian conspirators, Catiline and Cethegus, asking "What ancestry more exalted than yours, Catiline, or that of Cethegus can be found?"⁴² This is the ultimate insult: being a prominent aristocrat and committing treason. The emphasis on this behaviour reveals yet another intrinsic element of Roman aristocracy: the expectation that one will always do the right thing, and act in the city's best interests. Rome's elite citizen body had the education, resources, and opportunities to serve the *res publica*. To act against it instead, was inconceivable. Thus, Juvenal likens Catiline and Cethegus to the Senones, the Gallic tribe responsible for sacking Rome in ca. 390 BCE. Brennus' sack of Rome was one of the city's greatest sources of shame and humiliation; thus, the comparison of Catiline and Cethegus with the Gauls is serious – they are synonymous with one of the darkest moments in Roman history.

There is simply no comparison between the effectual and energetic Cicero and the bloated and stale Blandus. Juvenal underlines this comparison when discussing another famous native of Arpinum: Marius. He points out that "[Marius] got the centurion's lumpy staff broken on his head if he was lazy in digging the camp's defences with a sluggish pick".⁴³ The emphasis here, is that these are not lazy individuals – they have to work hard. After all, Juvenal concludes, this is the man who famously saves Rome when they are under attack from the Cimbri and Teutones.⁴⁴

⁴² Juv. 8.231-2. Translation from *Loeb*.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 247-8. Translation from *Loeb*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 249.

Of most interest is the ensuing list of Regnal and Republican heroes, as Juvenal takes the time to emphasize their non-aristocratic status.⁴⁵ The first are Publius Decius Mus and his son, who were plebeian in both soul and name. *plebeiae* and *plebeia* frame *Deciorum animae*, as if to encapsulate them in their status — there is no escape. Juvenal keeps the reader in suspense, and it is uncertain whether he means to insult or praise Mus. The enjambed line (255) highlights this anticipation, and the reader has to wait until 257 to learn that they are more than sufficient for the gods and Mother Earth – more so even than “all the legions and all the allies and all the youth of Latium”.⁴⁶ The idea is that they are worth far more than everything which they sacrificed themselves to save.

Thus, Juvenal associates non-aristocratic status with respect and admiration. One need not inherit fame and reputation from family to be successful. On the contrary, it seems that having no powerful family legacy to rely on serves as motivation to work hard and get ahead. We can see this with the Roman king Servius Tullius, who was “born of a slave girl, [yet] won the robes and crown and rods of Quirinus – he was the last of our good kings”.⁴⁷ The contrast is made clear when Juvenal notes that “The traitors who were planning to undo the bolts of the gates to the exiled tyrants were the sons of the consul himself, precisely the people who should have been doing something impressive for shaky liberty, something to be admired by Mucius or Cocles or the girl who swam the Tiber, the empire’s

⁴⁵ Ibid. 254-68.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 255-7. Translation from *Loeb*.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 259-60. Translation from *Loeb*. It is worth noting that the only genealogical “succession” in the Regnal period is with the Tarquinius, and they bring about the demise of the monarchy. Livy’s account utterly vilifies Tarquinius Superbus when he commits the rape of Lucretia.

boundary”.⁴⁸ Just like Catiline and Cethegus, the assumption with these elite aristocrats is that they will be the ones to serve the city and take care of it. The implication is that coasting on one’s name provides a certain amount of latitude, and allows the individual to act more in their own interests than in that of the Roman people. After all, with their influence and power, who would dare question them? In contrast to the *Punica*, where genealogy and kinship inspires heroes, kinship here does not lead to inherited *virtus* and excellence. Rather, it allows individuals to cruise and become self-serving and self-indulgent. Individuals like Blandus, Catiline, and Cethegus attest to this.

Juvenal delivers the final blow in the final lines of the poem: “And after all, although you trace your name far back and unroll it far back, you derive your family from the notorious refuge: the first of your ancestors, whoever he was, was either a herdsman or something I’d rather not mention”.⁴⁹ This of course is a nod to Rome’s origins as a city comprised of social outliers and criminals. Maybe Blandus would not obsessively feel the need to brag about being a blue-blooded aristocrat if he remembered this little detail.

In the same vein as *Satire* 8, I am not the first to show interest in the moral and ethical elements of *Satire* 14, which discusses the evils of parents as poor *exempla* for their children. The primary focus of scholarship on *Satire* 14 has been on how poor parental education transmits a variety of vices, the most egregious of which is greed.⁵⁰ Alan Corn

⁴⁸ Ibid. 261-5. Translation from *Loeb*.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 272-5.

⁵⁰ Cf. Bond 2010: 49-50, Highet 1954, Keane 2007: 32; 35-7. Corn 1992 and Uden 2018 delve into the Plutarchan and Quintilianic elements and intertexts of *Sat.* 14.

touches upon the consequences of children who imitate (and even surpass) the poor examples set by their parents in his analysis of 14.89-106.⁵¹

Next, Juvenal portrays a human parallel (89-95) of his bird story. Not only do children follow the example of their parents, but the sins of the father are increased by the sins of the son. Caetronius' son improves on his father's excesses (86-95). The son in his mad rush (*amens* 94) to outdo his father foreshadows the madness of avarice (136, 284) which Juvenal expounds in the next two major sections. Through the juxtaposition of these two sections (73-85, 86-95) the satirist compares the willingness of a son to ape his father with a bird's natural instinct to follow his parents' example.⁵²

Corn describes exemplarity in full force. However, this iteration of the exemplary cycle has gone horribly wrong. Caetronius' son is following the procedure of *imitatio* to the letter, but for all the wrong reasons: money and property. Corn dismisses the comparison between the animals and their behaviour⁵³ and humans as “certainly ludicrous, for animals function instinctively, repeating their daily patterns, while man through reason may alter his customs and habits”.⁵⁴ Although Corn's assessment of the animals rings true, I am skeptical about his suggestion that humans do not operate in a similar manner; repetition is a central motif of human behaviour in the poem as well.⁵⁵ Corn's description of man appears hypothetical – ideally reason, or *ratio* can inspire one to make different choices and decisions. However, such reasoning discounts the power and influence exerted by the

⁵¹ Corn 1992: 313-15. He shares the views of Winkler 1988, noting that “When Cato the Elder denounced the ills of Roman society around 150 B.C. and offered his conservative view of education, people listened, but when Juvenal's satiric speaker does the same thing in the 2nd century A.D. it is banal. He makes this point about the Roman family and state trite, so that we may turn away from the glorification of the distant past and deal with the Roman present” (314).

⁵² *Ibid.* 315.

⁵³ Juv. 14.70-85.

⁵⁴ Corn 1992: 314-15.

⁵⁵ Especially the aristocracy!

modes of genetic and educational transmission. The consistent need to repeat and surpass the achievements and accomplishments of predecessors is so deeply ingrained in Roman culture that such behaviour is, by this point, instinctual. The modes of genetic and educational tradition alike can also put an extraordinary amount of pressure on an individual, especially a child. If anything, the institution of exemplarity deprives an individual of the ability to employ *ratio* when making decisions.

The lack of *ratio* is reflected in Caetronius' son, who is described as *amens*, "out of his mind, without reason". This is not unlike Silius Italicus' Crixus whom we met in Chapter One: *Tarpeioque iugo demens et uertice sacro / pensantes aurum Celtas umbone gerebat*, "He was out of his mind, the imbecile – the boss of his shield bore the image of the Gauls weighing out the gold on the sacred peak of the Tarpeian ridge".⁵⁶ *Amens* and *demens* both characterize their subjects as unable to control themselves, because they are so deeply in the thrall of their ancestors. Both men represent the possible detrimental consequences of exemplarity – Crixus' bragging and posturing is uncannily similar to that of Rubellius Blandus in *Satire* 8, while Caetronius' son mimics the poor choices made by his father. Juvenal himself makes reference to the sway of repeating parental *exempla* and the lack of control it imparts in the following passage:

*sic natura iubet: uelocius et citius nos
corrumpunt uitiorum exempla domestica, magnis
cum subeant animos auctoribus. unus et alter
forsitan haec spernant iuuenes, quibus arte benigna
et meliore luto finxit praecordia Titan,
sed reliquos fugienda patrum uestigia ducunt
et monstrata diu ueteris trahit orbita culpae.*

⁵⁶ Sil. *Pun.* 4.152-53.

And so nature dictates: the *exempla* of vices at home corrupts us more rapidly and swiftly, since they stealthily creep into our minds with great authority. Perhaps one young man or another might reject such things, if they are the ones whose hearts Prometheus fashioned with good-natured skill and better quality clay. Yet, the rest follow in the footsteps (which ought to be avoided) of their fathers, and the rut of ancient fault, displayed for a long time, drags them along (Juv. 14.31-37).

This passage uncovers the unthinking or irrational side of exemplarity: *natura* is likely referring to the personified Mother Nature, but “instinct” or “inclination” works here as well, highlighting the influence of exemplarity exerted upon children. *Subeant* too indicates a lack of control and autonomy. Children are prone to corruption because the influence of their parents subconsciously infiltrates their minds. The *magnis...auctoribus*, then, must come from the tradition of exemplarity itself, repeated over and over again over the years. The only escape for the *iuvenes* is to bypass the mode of genetic transmission (ie. family) entirely, and be made out of clay by Prometheus the Titan. Otherwise, the exemplary tradition, described here as a rut, drags along these innocent children, forced to follow in their parents’ footsteps.⁵⁷

However, this is not to say that the circumstances regarding good *exempla* which forge *viri boni* are any different – the same *magnis...auctoribus* is at play. In fact, the pressure to match exalted ancestral deeds and accomplishments is heavier still. It determines the very identity and status of their family, as well as their legacy for their children and grandchildren. *Posteritas*, it seems, is doomed. While deviating from these *exempla* would surely guarantee shame and ignominy, so too, it seems, does following in the footsteps of one’s ancestors.

⁵⁷ Cf. Baroin 2010 which explores the phrasing of exemplary behaviour: “The metaphor of footsteps expresses imitation in itself, or else it is associated with a term of the family *imitari*. It is to be found in literary texts at different times and of various types, in prose as well as verse” (32-33).

Stoic Bust-Worshippers and Salian Brides in *Satires* 1 and 2

The primary focus of scholarship on Juvenal's *Satire 2* has been on the narrator's tirade about the sexual transgressions of elite Roman men who display sexual tendencies and passive sexual behaviour,⁵⁸ although scholars have investigated a variety of other topics, such as intertextual connections with Cicero, Vergil, and Lucan,⁵⁹ and persona and identity.⁶⁰ However, there has been little focus on the implications of Juvenal's use of Republican *exempla* and imagery. Throughout *Satire 2*, the reader is bombarded with memories of early and Republican Rome. Yet, many of these references are problematic – nothing is as it initially appears. Rather, they undercut the expectation that 1) the Republic was a paragon of virtue and perfection, and 2) that consequently, Republican memories and *exempla* will continue to maintain their worth and validity in the first and second-centuries CE.⁶¹ In this section, I will use two passages from this poem to demonstrate that Juvenal's famous *indignatio* and pessimism is not necessarily rooted in “anger at everything that appears to the satirist not to be consonant with traditional Roman values”.⁶² This is an overly simplistic outlook; Juvenal's pessimism denotes his frustration with pretenses and attempts to duplicate Republican values in the Empire, because they simply will not work. I argue that these passages reflect a rejection of the repetitive nature of the exemplary cycle.

⁵⁸ Cf. Konstan 1993, Stewart 1994, Braund 1995, Nappa 1998 and 2018, Walters 1998, and Herz 2024.

⁵⁹ Cf. Winkler 1988, Fratantuono 2015, and Celotto 2019

⁶⁰ Cf. Anderson 1982, Uden 2015, Ritter 2019

⁶¹ Winkler 1983: 47-48.

⁶² Ferriss-Hill 2022: 26.

I begin with Juvenal's programmatic first *Satire*, which introduces his skepticism towards Republican exemplarity in current times. Towards the end of the poem, Juvenal decries these repetitive cycles of behaviour which are pivotal to the trajectory of exemplarity:

*nil erit ulterius quod nostris moribus addat
posteritas, eadem facient cupientque minores,
omne in praecipiti uitium stetit. utere uelis,
totos pande sinus. dicas hic forsitan 'unde
ingenium par materiae? unde illa priorum
scribendi quodcumque animo flagrante liberet
simplicitas? "cuius non audeo dicere nomen?"*

There will be nothing further which succeeding generations can add to our traditions; our inferior youngsters will produce and desire the same old things; all vice stands on the precipice – use your sails, spread all the folds. Perhaps you might say “where can you now find innate talent which can be a match for your subject? Where can you find that natural moral frankness of earlier generations in their writing of whatever they wish with a flaming spirit?” Whose name do I dare not speak? (Juv. 1.147-53).

Here, the time-honoured ritual of *imitatio* has gone awry. Juvenal is very frank – the first line of this passage begins with the fatalistic *nil erit ulterius*, “there will be nothing further”.

The emphatic use of the future indicative really accentuates the bleakness of this statement – not only is there nothing to be done about this predicament presently, but it seems that there will be no remedy for it in the future either. However at this point, the reader is still unsure as to the identity of the disappointing individual. *Posteritas*, or “ensuing generations”, is enjambed in the following line, emphasizing Juvenal's pessimism both for the present and the future.⁶³ The beloved tradition of exemplarity has passed its sell-by date – in Juvenal's world, “producing and desiring the same old things”, *eadem facient*

⁶³ Cf. Cic. *Marcell.* 28, *Phil.* 2.33, Quint. *Inst.* 1.10.9, and Val. Max. 5.1.2 and 5.3.1 for some uses of *posteritas* in exemplary discourse.

cupientque is trite. Again, the following generations bear the brunt of Juvenal's despair. He calls them *minores*, which of course refers to their age – they are younger. Yet at its core, *minor* means “lesser”, and is used by Juvenal to point out not just the deficiency in age of the *posteritas*, but also in quality. These generations are not up to par – all they want to do is the same thing over and over again. The repetition of the exemplary cycle, which ensured the continual transmission of traditional Roman values is no longer an asset, but is instead a liability. It is this skepticism which we must bear in mind when examining Juvenal's references and allusions to the Republic in *Satire 2*. There is no mistaking Juvenal's discontent in the above passage: he craves *ingenium*, “innate talent”, and *simplicitas*, “natural moral frankness”. However, the reader is presented with an impasse, since the ideology of exemplarity dictates that the survival of such qualities depends on repetition and replication.

Based on the precedents set by the exemplary cycle, it is intuitive to associate Republican imagery, particularly in Imperial literature, with an idyllic quintessentially “Roman” era. While invoking the Republic in earlier literature aroused feelings of nostalgia and hope for a swift return, the pessimism in Juvenal highlights the realization that such emotions at this point are futile. Although recent history has repeated itself, this has not been the golden age of the Republic. Rather, it has been tyrannical emperors, civil war, and general instability. Therefore, the repetitive cycle of exemplarity is no longer effective – too much has happened, and times are so very different.⁶⁴ Juvenal, by often inverting the

⁶⁴ Cf. Juv. 13.28-30 where the narrator tells us that this era is so far below the ‘Age of Iron’ that they cannot even name their age, seeing as they have run out of metals.

traditional and idyllic elements of his references to famous Republican statesmen, imagery, and *exempla*, challenges his reader to read through them with a keen and critical eye. Do they hold the same moral and ethical value which they used to, and are they even appropriate at this time?

I begin with an example of genetic transmission gone wrong, because it can be found in the opening lines of *Satire 2*:

*Vltra Sauromatas fugere hinc libet et glaciale
Oceanum, quotiens aliquid de moribus audent
qui Curios simulant et Bacchanalia uiuunt.
indocti primum, quamquam plena omnia gypso
Chrysippi inuenias; nam perfectissimus horum,
si quis Aristotelen similem uel Pittacon emit
et iubet archetypos pluteum seruare Cleanthas.
frontis nulla fides; ...*

It would be nice to escape from here, beyond the Sarmatians and the icy ocean as often as when those who imitate the Curii and live a Bacchanalian lifestyle, dare to say or do anything as regards morality. First of all, they are completely ignorant, although you can find everything full with plaster busts of Chrysippus; for anyone who has bought a likeness of Aristotle or Pittacus, and then orders his original Cleanthes' to safeguard his shelf, of these sorts, he is the most perfect. There should be no faith in one's expression (Juv. 2.1-8).

Many scholars are interested in the presence of the Greek (and Stoic) philosophers Chrysippus, Aristotle, Pittacus, and Cleanthes, and the ways in which they are emblematic of false personae and manipulated identities. Uden suggests that the individuals who own these statues seem "very well aligned with a culture in which people self-consciously crafted *personae* for themselves, a process that lends itself to comparison with sculpted human forms".⁶⁵ Fratantuono proposes "that some connection can be drawn between the

⁶⁵ Uden 2015: 66.

opening mention of these essentially fake intellectuals [pseudo-philosophers] and the Juvenalian dismissal later of the underworld...”.⁶⁶

Scholars like Freudenberg tend to view this excerpt as being about “moralists...who made a grand, philosophical show of berating them, only to bugger one another right in front of the philosopher’s busts that peered out at them from the couch’s rear shelf”.⁶⁷ However, a closer look at Juvenal’s syntax and vocabulary evokes an entirely different form of deceptive appearances: until the busts are identified as Greek philosophers, Juvenal could be satirizing the traditional institution of the *imagines*. Harriet I. Flower’s stipulation that “attempts to assimilate them to busts, especially those from the early imperial period, must be dismissed as unsound” only strengthens this alternative reading.⁶⁸ This is a satirical text, and the plaster busts collected by these aristocratic Roman men represent a parodic inversion of the objects which should be in their *atria*: wax *imagines*; they treat these busts like *imagines*, even though they are evidently not.

Juvenal does not explain why the narrator is intent on fleeing Rome until the second line: *aliquid de moribus audent*. The Latin here is elliptical – all the reader learns is that someone is daring to do something (*aliquid...audent*) about traditions/morals (*de moribus*). The subject of the verb is unidentified, and Juvenal does not even provide a complementary infinitive with *audent*. Thus far, the reader is unsure as to what the subject is going to *do* in relation to *moribus*. In the next line, Juvenal provides a subject: the plural masculine relative pronoun *qui*. Even then, there is still no specific identifying information. Because

⁶⁶ Fratantuono 2015: 149.

⁶⁷ Freudenberg 2001: 250.

⁶⁸ Flower 1996: 5.

audent is in the indicative mood, it seems that Juvenal is referring to a specific group of people, rather than those in a relative clause of characteristic.

At last, we learn that these people are ones who “imitate the Curii and live a Bacchanalian lifestyle”, *qui Curios simulant et Bacchanalia uiuunt*. The Curii immediately brings to mind one of the Republic’s most beloved statesmen, Manius Curius Dentatus, and by far the most prominent member of his *gens*. In his *A Prospography to the Poems of Juvenal*, Ferguson writes that Dentatus “became the type of old Roman *uirtus*, largely through the admiration of Cato...”.⁶⁹ Because none of the other Curii are particularly well-known, and the family had all but died out by this point, both Courtney and Ferguson note that *Curii* is a non-specific plural, and that it means something along the lines of “people like Curius”.⁷⁰ In line with the idea that Juvenal is referring to the *imagines*, it is humorous that our subjects are imitating men *like* Curius. While imitating the *exempla* of famous men was encouraged, the tradition of the *imagines* is closely intertwined with one’s specific family.⁷¹ *Simulant*, then, is a noteworthy word-choice. While it means “to imitate”, it also conveys a sense of disingenuity. An individual who *simulat* also “makes, produces, etc., a fraudulent imitation of, counterfeit”.⁷² If this is a reference to the *imagines*, the reader is once again faced with the subversion of expectations regarding exemplarity. In the Republic, paid actors donned the *imagines* of aristocratic *maiores* at funerals and holidays, which in essence allowed them to become their ancestors. But here, the men are pretending.

⁶⁹ Ferguson 1987: 76.

⁷⁰ Courtney 1980: 101 and Ferguson 1987: 76.

⁷¹ Flower 1996: 2.

⁷² *OLD*, s.v. “simulo (v.), sense 5,”.

Ferguson's prosopography reveals that the *gens* Curia would have been near-extinct by Juvenal's time, and so any claims of relation to Dentatus or other prominent *gentes* would more than likely have been false.⁷³ Juvenal uses the same subversive technique in *Satire* 8. Uden notes that "The opening of Juvenal's *Satire* [8], with its own hyperbolic *stemma* of venerable family names, satirizes not merely the degeneracy of the present, but the very tenuousness of its connection with the past, and the fictive nature of contemporary Romans' genealogical claims",⁷⁴ a sentiment which aptly suits our men in *Satire* 2 as well. The final two words of the line: *Bacchanalia uiuunt*, "living a Bacchic lifestyle", add another layer to the sham. In staunchly conservative Rome, the colorful and sexual Bacchic rites stand in stark contrast to Dentatus.⁷⁵ Imitating Curius, therefore, is a façade which conceals far more dark and debauched behaviour, yet another indicator of the distance between the Republic and Juvenal's time.

Juvenal then informs us that *indocti primum, quamquam plena omnia gypso*, "first of all, they are completely ignorant, although you can find everything full with plaster busts ...". It is not that these men are of limited intelligence, ie. *stultus*. Rather, *indocti* indicates that they are untaught and unlearned. As Juvenal's pessimism from the excerpt of *Satire* 1 indicates, the exemplary cycle has become stale. People are repeating things over and over again, and as is implied here with these *indocti* men, without any critical thought or

⁷³ Ferguson 1987: 75-6.

⁷⁴ Uden 2015: 125.

⁷⁵ Cf. Sen. *Cons. Helv.* 10.8, Plin. *N.H.* 19.27.87, and Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 2.1-2 for the legend that the Samnites, bearing wealth and presents, located Dentatus on his farm humbly roasting turnips in the fire. This agricultural rusticity is a key component of traditional Republican exemplarity. Similar legends exist about L. Quinctius Cincinnatus and Cato the Elder.

understanding of what they are doing. Furthermore, recalling that the word *imago* always signals a wax mask strengthens Juvenal's apparent frustration with the same tired cycle of exemplarity — without the requisite context and education, these traditions become meaningless, and also give rise to *indocti* men who botch these sacrosanct rituals. With the enjambed *Chrysippus invenias*, Juvenal reveals that the busts are not of Republican family members, but rather Greek Stoic philosophers. This could not be a less Roman scenario!⁷⁶

The same lens can be used when examining the curious story of the Salian priest Gracchus, marries a *cornicen*, a trumpeter. In the opening lines of *Satire 2*, Juvenal's elliptical vocabulary and dense creates a façade inviting the reader to think of the *imagines*, only to rupture it by abruptly identifying the busts as Greek philosophers. The suspense is less drawn out in this passage — Juvenal almost immediately commences with the debauchery:

*quadringenta dedit Gracchus sestertiam dotem
cornicini, siue hic recto cantauerat aere;
signatae tabulae, dictum 'feliciter,' ingens
cena sedet, gremio iacuit noua nupta mariti.*

Gracchus paid 400,000 sesterces as a dowry for trumpeter, or perhaps he had played on a straight horn; the marriage-papers have been witnessed, “Congratulations” has been said, a large feast awaits, and the newly wed bride lies in the lap of her husband (Juv. 2.117-20).

Gracchus' payment of 400,000 sesterces for a dowry, *dotem*, establishes him as a bride.⁷⁷

The name “Gracchus” of course immediately reminds readers of the famous mid-Republican Gracchi brothers: Tiberius and Gaius Sempronius Gracchus. Despite their

⁷⁶ Cf. Trapp 2007 which examines the tense relationship between Greek philosophers and the mores of Imperial aristocrats.

⁷⁷ Courtney 1980: 119 quite rightly observes that this amount of money is enough to buy Gracchus' new husband equestrian status.

reformatory politics, as grandsons of Scipio Africanus, they were aristocratic statesmen. Juvenal's Gracchus also hails from an elite aristocratic background — *et Capitolinis generosior et Marcellis / et Catuli Paulique minoribus et Fabiis et*, “of a more noble birth than both the Capitolini and Marcelli, and then the descendants of Catulus and Paulus, than the Fabii...”⁷⁸ If the dowry inspired any confusion, then the status of Gracchus' chosen husband, enjambed in the following line, as well as the ensuing description of the wedding, immediately disabuses the reader of the notion that this Gracchus is worthy of being connected with the Gracchi brothers, or of the grand lineage outlined by Juvenal.⁷⁹

When Gracchus pays an enormous dowry to a lowly trumpet-player, enough for the trumpeter to acquire equestrian status, he inverts both gender-roles and class, an affront to conservative Roman sensibilities.⁸⁰ It is jarring, then, when Juvenal whisks his readers back to early Rome, a *locus amoenus* abounding in traditional *mores*, *virtutes*, and Romans:

*segmenta et longos habitus et flammea sumit
 arcano qui sacra ferens nutantia loro
 sudavit clipeis ancilibus. o pater urbis,
 unde nefas tantum Latiis pastoribus? unde
 haec tetigit, Gradiue, tuos urtica nepotes?
 traditur ecce uiro clarus genere atque opibus uir,*

He wears flounces and long dresses and a bridal-veil, the one who, as he carried the sacred objects swaying to and fro from the secret thong, sweated from the weight of the Salian shields. O Father of Rome, where has such an abomination upon these Latin shepherds come from? Where has this nettle come from, Gradivus, which stings your grandsons? Look! A man distinguished in both family and wealth is being handed over to this other man in marriage (Juv. 2.124-29).

⁷⁸ Juv. 2.145-6.

⁷⁹ Although, this hyperbolic comparison is likely another Juvenalian joke. Courtney 1980: 122 notes that just like the list of families in *Satire* 8, most of these families had either died out, or were no longer considered to be patrician. Therefore, one has to wonder whether Gracchus' genealogy is really all that impressive.

⁸⁰ Nappa 2018: 106.

After describing his bridal attire, Juvenal informs the reader that Gracchus is a Salian priest. The contrast between the openness of Gracchus' wedding and the mysterious secrecy (*arcano*) of the Salian rites is striking. There is always a risk of extinction when keeping the rites of a religious ceremony secret, especially when it dates back to Rome's second king, Numa Pompilius — yet despite the odds, this ritual has been preserved for centuries. It must be depressing for the narrator then, to see that the same person who helps maintain one of Rome's oldest traditions is also responsible for its ongoing moral decline. Is there a place for this time-honoured ritual in society when one of its priests engages in such corrupt and hypocritical behaviour? Once again, Juvenal appears to be calling the worth and validity of old Roman traditions in the empire into question.

It is also worth taking a closer look at Juvenal's semantics in this passage. *Nutantia*, “swinging to and fro”, is an interesting word-choice. While primarily referring to the sacred objects hanging from the thong, *loro* (125), *nuto* can also mean “to hesitate, waver, be undecided; to waver in allegiance”.⁸¹ By leaving the *sacra...nutantia* unidentified, I suggest that Juvenal is also drawing attention to Gracchus' wedding clothes. They too would have been considered sacred objects, particularly the *flammeum*, if worn by a woman. However, it is Gracchus who is wearing them, thus making a mockery of both the institutions of marriage *and* the Salian priesthood.

In a similar vein, when Gracchus sweats, *sudavit* (126), it is because of the weight of the Salian shields.⁸² Courtney's dismissal that “here the word is deliberately

⁸¹ *OLD*, s.v. “nuto (v.), sense 6.”

⁸² Cf. Sen. *Ep.* 15.4 for a description of the Salian dances as energetic and physically taxing.

undignified” is overly simplified.⁸³ Because Juvenal uses *sudo*, “to sweat with fatigue, as implying toil or exertion (often hyperb.)”⁸⁴ when describing an archaic Roman custom, the connection with the exemplary and traditional *virtus* of *labor*, “labor, toil, exertion”, is easy to make. Cicero uses *sudo* in a similar manner in the *Pro Sestio*: *Sudandum est iis pro communibus*, “They have to sweat for the common benefit”.⁸⁵ This is the duty of a *vir bonus*, an exemplary Republican aristocrat: to sweat and work hard. As a Salian priest and an aristocrat, Gracchus is subject to these very expectations. However, once again, a much-cherished Republican *virtus* has been knocked askew in the empire – while Gracchus is performing the rites of the Salian priesthood, he is also focusing his energy and *labor* on entering into a morally corrupt marriage.

The remaining four lines firmly situates the reader in the idyllic world of early Rome, a landscape which is certainly far better suited to Gracchus as a traditional Salian priest than as the bride of a *cornicen* (126-29). Juvenal’s language in this portion of the text is deliberately old-fashioned. Romulus is called *pater urbis*, referring to his role as Rome’s founder. His pastoral heritage is reflected in *Latiis pastoribus*, “Latin shepherds”, the phrase for Roman citizens (127). Similarly, Mars is addressed as *Gradivus*, a name used by Augustan authors in specifically archaic contexts (128).⁸⁶ This picturesque scene is interrupted by an abomination, *nefas*, namely moral decline (128). This corruption of traditional values is like a scourge, infecting and blighting the Roman people, much like a

⁸³ Courtney 1998: 120.

⁸⁴ *OLD*, s.v. “*sudo* (v.), sense 2,”.

⁸⁵ Cic. *Sest.* 139.3.

⁸⁶ Cf. Liv. 1.20.4, Verg. *Aen.* 10.542, Ov. *Met.* 6.427 and *Fast.* 2.861.

plague or other disease ravaging a herd of livestock. Gracchus is, it seems, but one victim. In the following line, the *nefas* is likened to a nettle, *urtica*, stinging Gradivus' descendants (128). Nothing in Juvenal is accidental, and so why the nettle? The most famous "stinging" metaphor is Socrates in Plato's *Apology*, where he likens himself to a stinging gadfly, rousing the lethargic Athenian citizenry to action.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, Juvenal's Romans do not receive a similarly positive outcome. A stinging-nettle releases an irritant which, when it comes into contact with skin, causes an unbearably itchy rash.

The *urtica* appears in a variety of Latin literary genres. Celsus, Columella, and Pliny the Elder are primarily interested in its botanical and medicinal uses.⁸⁸ However, some Latin poets attach a moral element to the nettle. In poem 44, Catullus gets a cold after reading Sestius' "frigid" speech, and has to retire to his Sabine, perhaps specifically Tiburtine, farm to recuperate. His plan for recovery involves leisure and steaming nettle-tea: *et me recuravi otioque et urtica*.⁸⁹ In addition to the purely medicinal role of the nettles in this poem, I propose that they also adopt a "traditionally Roman" tone when read in the context of Catullus' Sabine farm. The Sabine countryside in particular has always been synonymous with moral uprightness and austerity. Cato the Elder credits his distinctively moral character traits with growing up in the Sabine countryside: "But I, from the beginning, spent my youth in frugality, rigour, and diligence by tilling the land, Sabine rocks, and by re-digging and sowing the flint-land".⁹⁰ Similarly, Cato the Elder in Cicero's

⁸⁷ Plat. *Ap.* 30e.

⁸⁸ Cf. Cels. *Med.* 2.20.1.5, 3.6.14.5; Columella *Rust.* 6.32.1.5; and Plin. *HN.* 21.92-3, 22.31-38 for some examples.

⁸⁹ Cat. 44.15.

⁹⁰ Cat. *Oratio de Suis Virtutibus contra Thermum*, Fr. 69 (From "Oratorum Romanorum

De Senectute expresses his overwhelming admiration for Manius Curius Dentatus, thought to have hailed from a Sabine family,⁹¹ and whose house was within sight of Cato's: "As I gaze upon his country house (for it is not far from mine), I cannot sufficiently admire the frugality of the man or the spirit of the age in which he lived" (56).

The word *urtica*, then, pulls in multiple directions, including an association with agricultural hardiness. Horace adopts an almost-identical stance in *Epistulae* 1.12, when addressing his friend Iccius' discontent with having too little money:⁹²

*si forte in medio positorum abstemius herbis
vivis et urtica, sic vives protinus, ut te
confestim liquidus Fortunae rivus inauret,
vel quia naturam mutare pecunia nescit,
vel quia cuncta putas una virtute minora.*

If, perhaps, you abstain from what lies open to you, and live on nettles and other plants, you will continue living as you do now, although the flowing river of Fortune may suddenly inundate you with gold: either because money doesn't know how to change your nature, or because you think that all other things are lesser than virtue alone (Hor. *Epist.* 1.12.7-11).

However, if the use of *urtica* in Catullus and Horace evokes traditional aristocratic Republican values, why does Juvenal liken it to a *nefas* in his own poem? The syntax of the final line in this case-study, *traditur ecce viro clarus genere atque opibus vir*, highlights Rome's decline in Republican morals and ethics (129). Juvenal begins with *traditur*, which in this instance, refers to Gracchus being handed over in matrimony to the *cornicen*. However, *trado* can also be a buzzword for exemplarity: "to hand down or transmit to posterity by written communication". Because *traditur* is the first word of the line, the

Fragmenta" ed. H. Malcovati, Turin: Paravia, 1955).

⁹¹ Cic. *Pro Sull.* 7.

⁹² Cf. Putnam 1995 which discusses Iccius in *Carm.* 1.29 and *Epist.* 1.12.

direction of Juvenal's thoughts is initially unclear. What exactly is being handed down? The ambiguity, especially after *nepotes* in the previous line, evokes a sense of continuity and transmission, which is compounded by *clarus genere*, "distinguished in family", signaling the exemplary process.⁹³ However, *opibus*, "wealth", signals the transformation of Roman values. Even though they were rich, this was not the sort of attribute which Republican aristocrats boasted about.

If we use the lens of Juvenalian pessimism and frustration with pretenses and attempts to duplicate Republican values in the Empire, things become clearer. Gracchus' marriage to the *cornicen* is only one part of the *nefas* obliterating the Roman people. The other is the hypocrisy exemplified by the double life that he is leading: although a member of the Salian priesthood, one of the oldest Roman religious institutions, Gracchus is also marrying a lowly trumpeter. He is only superficially fulfilling the expectations of traditional Republican morality. Juvenal's references to the Salian priesthood, as well as the *locus amoenus* of early Rome, highlight that Gracchus has learned nothing from the *exempla* set for him. The mode of educational transmission has failed — each *exemplum* is warped and distended. In the stories of both the bust-worshippers and Gracchus, this excessive and unthinking repetition short-circuits the exemplary process in Juvenal's poetry.

Exemplary Historians in *Satire 7*

Ostensibly, *Satire 7*, my final case-study, is not an obvious choice for discussing

⁹³ Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 1.44, *Div.* 2.8, and *Planc.* 66 for some examples of *clarus* as an exemplary buzzword.

Republican morality and *exempla*. The primary focus of the poem is the institution of patronage (revisited from *Satire* 1) and its often-negative impact upon poets, historians, advocates (*causidici*), and teachers (both *rhetores* and *grammatici*). Payment and rewards are especially scant if the writer does not have the support of the emperor. Primary areas of scholarly interest in *Satire* 7 have included identifying the *Caesar* named in the first line,⁹⁴ comparing the depictions of patronage in *Satires* 1 and 7,⁹⁵ the programmatic nature of *Satire* 7,⁹⁶ unpacking the ambiguity of the Juvenalian *persona*,⁹⁷ and further analyzing his relationships with Suetonius⁹⁸ and Quintilian⁹⁹ respectively. However, little to no attention has been paid to the brief albeit curious passage on historians:

*uester porro labor fecundior, historiarum
scriptores? perit hic plus temporis atque olei plus.
nullo quippe modo millensima pagina surgit
omnibus et crescit multa damnosa papyro;
sic ingens rerum numerus iubet atque operum lex.
quae tamen inde seges? terrae quis fructus apertae?
quis dabit historico quantum daret acta legenti?
'sed genus ignauum, quod lecto gaudet et umbra.'*

Well then, you writers of history, is your work any more productive? This undertaking really does waste more time and more oil. For there is no limit when it comes to that thousandth page springing and cropping up — it's seriously destructive as goes the papyrus; as follows, it's the enormous number of facts and the law of this type of literary labor. Therefore, what crop is yielded from that activity? What is the fruit of this cleared earth? Who will pay the same fee to a historian as they would do to a reader of the gazette? "But they're a lazy sort, because they relax on their couch in the shade" (Juv. 7.98-105).

⁹⁴ I agree with Ferguson 1987: 15, Hardie 1990: 179, Highet 1954: 240 n.16, and Uden 2015: 219 n.1, that the identity of *Caesar* is likely Hadrian. Helmbold and O'Neil 1959 are the main proponents for Domitian.

⁹⁵ Braund 1988 and Geue 2017.

⁹⁶ Braund 1988 and Hardie 1990.

⁹⁷ Braund 1988, Fredericks 1974, and Tennant 1996.

⁹⁸ Braund 1988, Hardie 1990, Townend 1973, and Wallace-Hadrill 1983.

⁹⁹ Helmbold and O'Neil 1959 and Herrmann 1952.

There is no doubt that this is an odd little aside — the ensuing pieces on *causidici* and teachers are double the length and contain far more details. Scholars have surmised that there is a lack of detail, either because history is divergent from Juvenal's interests, or because it serves as poor evidence for his overall argument about these writers being in need of patronage.¹⁰⁰

However, there is much to be gleaned from these eight lines, especially if we situate them within the framework of genetic and educational transmission. In *Satire 2*, I argued that the description of the statues of the Greek philosophers resembled a botched version of the tradition of the *imagines*, while Gracchus was an unapologetic hypocrite. These are consequences of an incorrigible obsession with the repetitive nature of exemplarity, which I propose can also be found in the above passage.

Juvenal begins by asking these historians if their work, *labor*, is any more productive, *fecundior*, which not only immediately situates this passage within exemplary discourse, but also invokes the memory of one of Rome's first historians and most famous statesman: Cato the Elder.¹⁰¹ Although *labor* is perhaps one of the most crucial concepts for exemplary Roman morality, Cato the Elder comes to mind because of his *De*

¹⁰⁰ Helmbold and O'Neil 1959, and Hight 1954: 107 and 270, n. 4. Hardie 1990: 175-76 writes that "The 'historians' section opens with a comparison of the length of historical writing relative to poetry, which appears to be directly indebted to the *DVI* [Suetonius' *De Viris Illustribus*]. Alone of the treatments of the *artes*, this section gives no *exempla*. The effect, which must be intentional, is to direct attention to contemporary historians, rather than to earlier (or 'historical') historians. Juvenal surely alludes to the historian whose work on the *artes* he imitates, Suetonius."

¹⁰¹ This is not just because of the following fragment, but also because of the presence of agricultural vocabulary, which we will return to later on in this section.

Agricultura, which unequivocally links *labor* with morality.¹⁰² In the following Catonian fragment, Cato closely links *labor* with good deeds and accomplishments:

cogitate cum animis vestris: si quid vos per laborem recte feceritis, labor ille a vobis cito recedet, bene factum a vobis, dum vivitis, non abscedet; sed si qua per voluptatem nequiter feceritis, voluptas cito abibit, nequiter factum illud apud vos semper manebit.

Keep this in mind: if you accomplish anything correctly through toil, that toil will quickly slip away from you, while the good deed will not leave you as long as you live; but if you accomplish anything wretchedly through pleasure, the pleasure will quickly depart, while that wretched deed will forever remain with you.¹⁰³

Here, *labor* causes temporary suffering, but is well worth enduring for the positive results it yields. Taking this into consideration within the context of *Satire 7*, where various authors are struggling to make ends meet without the financial security provided by a patron, *labor* therefore must have two meanings: 1) It refers to the act of writing history as a thankless and poorly paid task, creating thousands of pages of work. *Labor*, here, really means “hardship” and “toil”.¹⁰⁴ 2) As illustrated in the Catonian fragment, *labor* is a temporary, albeit necessary, evil which gives rise to the satisfaction of having accomplished something good, *bene factum*. Therefore, writing history should be worth the effort and toil, especially in light of the *exempla* and *virtutes* which can be extracted by one’s readers. Yet here, the narrator appears to be mocking these historians by asking what crop they’ve yielded; this noble art has now been reduced to writers counting their pennies.

¹⁰² Also cf. the section on *Sat. 2* containing Cato the Elder’s fragment which credits working hard on his family farm as child with the development of his exemplary qualities.

¹⁰³ Cat. *Oratio quam dixit Numantiae apud Equites* Fr. 17 (From “*Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta*” ed. H. Malcovati, Turin: Paravia, 1955).

¹⁰⁴ *OLD*, s.v. “labor (n.), sense 6,”.

Roman historians often suggest that they feel duty-bound to preserve Rome's history (and therefore its *exempla*), characterizing their efforts as a form of service to the State. Writing history (and literature in general) is also a distinctly aristocratic pursuit, and one which a statesman might consider doing in retirement.¹⁰⁵ Such sentiments are apparent in *testimonia* about Cato the Elder, and Livy.

Cato the Elder almost certainly wrote the *Origines* in his old age.¹⁰⁶ Cornelius Nepos describes Cato as energetic and dynamic, much like Juvenal's *novi homines* in *Satire* 8:

In omnibus rebus singulari fuit industria; nam et agricola sollers et peritus iuris consultus et magnus imperator et probabilis orator et cupidissimus litterarum fuit. Quarum studium etsi senior adriperat, tamen tantum progressum fecit, ut non facile reperiri possit neque de Graecis neque de Italicis rebus quod ei fuerit incognitum. Ab adulescentia confecit orationes. Senex historias scribere instituit. Earum sunt libri septem.

In all respects, he was uniquely active; for he was an accomplished farmer and experienced in law and a great general and a commendable orator and the most passionate about literature. Even though took up literature as an older man, nevertheless he made so much progress, that it is not easy to find which was anything unknown to him in either Greek or Italic history. He started out crafting speeches in his youth. As an old man, he began to write history. Of his history, we have seven books (Nep. *Cat.* 3.1-3).

Nepos orders the list of Cato's accomplishments chronologically, which allows the reader to see the progression of his career. Bar being a farmer, Cato's entire life has been in service to the Roman state and its people; as Cato got older, it was increasingly taxing to serve in

¹⁰⁵ Habinek 1998: 3 when describing the origins of Latin literature, notes that "The social milieu from which Latin literature emerged and in the interests of which it intervened was that of the elite sector of a traditional aristocratic empire. Many of the characteristics of Latin literature can be attributed to its production by and for an elite that sought to maintain and expand its dominance over other sectors of the population through reference to an authorizing past." Also cf. Goldberg 2005: 7, Gruen 1992: 1, and Sciarrino 2011: 24, who all cement the relationship between literature and aristocratic authority.

¹⁰⁶ Astin 1978: 211-39.

the frontlines of the army or as an active participant in the law courts and senate. However, his zeal and dynamism does not slow down; instead, he starts to write down a history of Rome. Even in retirement, Cato continues contributing to the well-being of Rome, but this time, by educating the next generation of aristocratic statesmen.

The purpose of writing Roman history is not clearly outlined in the above passage from Nepos; for that, we have to consult Livy and Sallust:

Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu, foedum exitu, quod vites. Ceterum aut me amor negotii suscepti fallit, aut nulla umquam res publica nec maior nec sanctor nec bonis exemplis ditior fuit, nec in quam civitatem tam serae avaritia luxuriaque immigraverint, nec ubi tantus ac tam diu paupertati ac parsimoniae honos fuerit.

What chiefly makes the study of history wholesome and profitable is this, that you behold the lessons of every kind of experience set forth as on a conspicuous monument; from these you may choose for yourself and for your own state what to imitate, from these mark for avoidance what is shameful in the conception and shameful in the result. For the rest, either love of the task I have set myself deceives me, or no state was ever greater, none more righteous or richer in good examples, none ever was where avarice and luxury came into the social order so late, or where humble means and thrift were so highly esteemed and so long held in honour (Livy. 1. *Praef.* 10-11).¹⁰⁷

Livy could not be any clearer — the purpose of history is to educate, and provide *exempla* for its readers to feel inspired to imitate, a perfect example of the mode of educational transmission at play. This is one of the reasons why he has undertaken such an enormous task. Sallust is more explicit still:

Pulchrum est bene facere rei publicae, etiam bene dicere haud absurdum est; vel pace vel bello clarum fieri licet. Et qui fecere et qui facta aliorum scripsere, multi laudantur.

It is a beautiful thing to serve the Republic well; even to speak well is by no means pointless; either in peace or war, it is possible to become famous. And as for both those who have served, and those who have written about the deeds of others, many of them are praised (Sall. *Cat.* 3.1-2).

¹⁰⁷ Translation from *Loeb*.

If one cannot be an active citizen, as maybe they were once able, one can at least educate and prepare the next generations, and inspire them with the great history and *exempla* of Rome.

Identifying common denominators in Cato, Sallust, and Livy helps establish the genre of history as a form of educational transmission. This in turn has revealed another exemplary pattern, which I describe as “literary exemplarity”.¹⁰⁸ That is to say, there are common traits and characteristics specifically associated with being a Roman historian. Now, as we saw in Sallust and Livy, there is an assumption that “good” Romans have a genuine and sincere desire to participate in the repetitive cycle of exemplarity, because they truly believe that preserve their traditions, synonymous with morality, is for the greater benefit of all. This belief imbues all three modes of transmission (genetic, educational, and literary) with a sense of altruism and idealism.

Furthermore, because history was the domain of the elite, few needed to be paid, which further characterized historians as noble and public-spirited. This, in fact, is why many scholars have been puzzled by this passage on historians. Edward Courtney writes:

Historians are given little space because Juvenal’s case is weak here; they must be included to represent prose writers, since history was at this time the most prominent branch of prose, but they were usually aristocratic, retired politicians and the like, not poor men in need of patronage (Livy is the most striking exception).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Pasco-Pranger 2015: 296 who uses this phrase to describe literature as a source of *exempla* – “The narrative itself served as the *monumentum* for the exemplum, and its details are often evoked in place of the exemplary deed itself” (2015: 296). I am using the term in a different way – cf. the section on literary exemplarity in Chapter Two, which draws upon Thomas Baier’s observation that the purpose of literary history is continuity, namely the focus on tradition and origins of the author, and that “literary works were no longer seen as the product of an ingenious individual author” (2017: 47).

¹⁰⁹ Courtney 1980: 316.

Why are these historians being included in a list of writers who accepted payment for their work? My proffered solution to this conundrum is that this is an elaborate example of Juvenalian pushback against the repetitive cycle of exemplarity. Based upon my arguments regarding literary exemplarity, it has become a *mos*, or custom, for historians not to be paid for their work, dating all the way back to the time of Cato the Elder. Indeed, the act of being paid to teach ethics and morality surely soured, and maybe even contradicted, the lofty and altruistic ideals espoused in these historical texts. As such, because authors like Cato and Sallust have essentially made being unpaid for writing history a tradition, Juvenal's historians fail to live up to the *exemplum* set by their literary ancestors. In fact, they are hypocritical — for them, writing history is a paid career, rather than a noble pursuit. It is this repetitive aspect of exemplarity which has set up Juvenal's historians to fail. By wanting (and most likely needing) payment, they are unable to compete with their literary ancestors.

Furthermore, the use of agricultural language and imagery, such as *fecundior*, *crescit*, *seges*, *terrae*, *fructus*, and *apertae*, subtly draws attention to this literary genealogy of Roman history by conjuring up the memory of Cato the Elder, one of Rome's earliest and most prominent historians. This shadow, or *umbra*, of Cato further accentuates the divide between Rome's earlier historians and Juvenal's. Juvenal's reader has traveled from the origins of this genealogy all the way down to its current heirs. In the preface of his *De Agricultura*, Cato ties traditional Roman agricultural activity to morality and exemplarity, observing that *at ex agricolis et uiri fortissimi et milites strenuissimi gignuntur*, “[But] both

the strongest men and bravest soldiers are born from farmers”.¹¹⁰ Here, agriculture works in favour of the aristocrat, and establishes the exemplary cycle as advantageous.

Unfortunately, Juvenal’s historians do not reap the benefits from the agricultural imagery. Their work is not *fecundior*, which in this case means “profitable”. Consider this passage from Cicero’s *Orator*:

Nihil enim est feracius ingeniis, eis praesertim quae disciplinis exculta sunt. Sed ut segetes fecundae et uberes non solum fruges verum herbas etiam effundunt inimicissimas frugibus, sic interdum ex illis locis aut levia quaedam aut causis aliena aut non utilia gignuntur.

Nothing is more fecund than one’s natural capacity, especially one which has been cultivated by education. But as fruitful and fertile fields yield not only crops but also weeds, so too sometimes are certain arguments, which are trivial, irrelevant, or useless, brought forth from those places (Cic. *Part. or.* 48).¹¹¹

Cicero tells us that the human mind, just like agriculture and farming, can produce both good and bad results, which is what has happened with Juvenal’s historians. They have worked hard — Juvenal says the earth, metaphorically speaking, has been ploughed: *terrae apertae*. Yet, what crops and fruits, *seges* and *fructus*, do they have to show for their *labor*? The only growing is a larger and larger page count (*millensima pagina*). *Crescit* has been used to denote rapid agricultural growth,¹¹² but in this instance, the yield does not match the *labor*. Our historians have megalithic works, and that is all.¹¹³ Although Juvenal

¹¹⁰ Cato *Agr.* Praef. 4.

¹¹¹ Translation from *Loeb*.

¹¹² Ie. Cat. *Agr.* 43.2, Lucr. 1.253, Varro *Rust.* 1.41.5, and Verg. *G.* 3.206 for some examples.

¹¹³ Cf. Geue 2017: 63-4, which sums this idea up nicely: “Here again – even more so than before (cf. 48-49) – literary production is a menial and thankless georgic labour, all effort and no reward. The enterprise wastes more time and oil (presumably relative to poetry’s *uigilata proelia*); the magnitude of the work is just that much more imposing. While it grows at breakneck speed (*surgit...crescit*), consuming papyrus to accommodate the ever-multiplying documentable facts,

dismisses these historians as a *genus ignauum*, a “lazy sort”. *Genus*, of course, brings to mind genealogy, and consequently, exemplarity. Are these historians unable to match the *exempla* of literary ancestors like Cato the Elder because of laziness? This is a curious little retort, because the rest of the passage (*millensima pagina, terrae apertae, and labor, of course*) points to remarkable productivity. There must be another double-entendre at play here — *ignauus*, by virtue of being lazy or useless, can also mean “ignoble”.¹¹⁴ We can see this use in Sallust: *Nam gloriam, honorem, imperium bonus et ignavos aequae sibi exoptant*, “For when it comes to glory, honour, and power, a noble and an ignoble man equally seeks it for themselves” (*Cat.* 11.2). Here, *ignavos* is juxtaposed with *bonus*, which is often used to describe noble or aristocratic men. Unlike Cato, Sallust, and the majority of other historians, Juvenal’s historians are not in a position to do this *labor* for free. By wanting payment, they lack the aristocratic *nobilitas* displayed by their predecessors Cato the Elder and Sallust. Thus, there is a failure to thrive for these historians, because the repetitive nature of exemplarity has displayed them as hypocrites and has rendered them unable to live up to the expectations set by their literary ancestors.

Conclusion

This is by no means a comprehensive survey of the role exemplarity plays in Juvenal’s *Satires*. However, what I hope to have shown is that there is far more than the simple binary of virtuous Republic and inferior Empire at play. The apparent failure of the

the unstoppable biological momentum is really a form of destruction (*pagina...perit damnosa*). No crop, no fruit to the activity – merely vast swathes of papyrus mown down.”

¹¹⁴ *OLD*, s.v. “ignavus (a.), sense 4.”

genetic and educational modes of transmission within instances of exemplary discourse suggest that it is the preoccupation with exemplarity, and especially the emphasis on repetition, which unites the Republic and the Empire as a common target in Juvenal. Most importantly, Juvenal is not satirizing Republican virtues because they do not fit in the Imperial era. Rather, he is attacking an obsession with tradition, repetition, and the undeserved status which has been afforded to the Roman traditions of genetic and educational transmission.

CONCLUSION

Nam saepe ego audiui Q. Maximum, P. Scipionem, <alios> praeterea civitatis nostrae praeclaros viros solitos ita dicere, quom maiorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissime sibi animum ad virtutem accendi. Scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere, sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flammam egregiis viris in pectore crescere neque prius sedari quam virtus eorum famam atque gloriam adaequaverit.

For I have often heard that Q. Maximus, P. Scipio, and other distinguished men of our state were accustomed to speaking thus: that whenever they looked upon the *imagines* of their ancestors, doing so most ardently kindled a desire in their minds to pursue virtue. It is clear that neither the wax nor the effigy possess such influence in and of themselves, but rather that this flame in the hearts of these pre-eminent men springs up from the memory of those achievements, and is not stilled until their virtue has been made equal to the fame and glory of their ancestors (Sall. *Jug.* 4.5-6).

Given the cyclic and repetitive nature of exemplarity, it is perhaps fitting to end where we started. Throughout this dissertation, I have argued that the role of family and biological kinship in exemplarity should not be underestimated. The *flamma* which kindles the hearts of Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus, specifically corresponds with the overwhelming pressure felt by both men to fulfill these extraordinary familial obligations; in gazing upon the *imagines* of their *maiores*, there is a dawning realization that there can be no rest or *otium* until “their virtue has been made equal to the fame and glory of their ancestors”.

This is not to diminish the significance of education, the other mode of exemplary transmission identified in this dissertation. Although genetic kinship sets the expectations for exemplary transmission within families, it is impossible to guarantee the consistent replication of character traits, making the mode of genetic transmission unreliable at the best of times.¹ As such, this dissertation has made a strong case for the interlocking (and at

¹ Cf. the section i) in the Introduction for a more detailed discussion of the tenuous nature of the

times inextricable) nature of the modes of genetic and educational transmission – both frequently complement one another. In the above passage, *memoria* points to the pedagogical element of exemplarity, and highlights the ways in which education and genetics reinforce one another: in belonging to the same family as these exemplary *maiores*, Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus more than likely heard stories and anecdotes about their ancestors for as long as they could remember; they may have even delivered a *laudatio funebris*, the purpose of which is to commemorate and celebrate the achievements of deceased *maiores*.²

Although the story of Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus illustrate both modes of transmission working in tandem to ensure the preservation and propagation of elite Roman culture, it is rare that such processes work together seamlessly. This goes to the core of my overarching argument: that genetic and educational transmission are often in tension, both with each other, and the contexts within which they are situated. In Silius Italicus' *Punica*, the stories of Serranus and Crixus, spurred by the memories of their ancestors, highlight a problematic aspect of genetic transmission: the expectation that all traits inherited are positive, and worth emulating.

Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, designed to teach his readers how to educate an aristocratic statesman in Imperial Rome, blurs the boundaries of the modes of genetic and educational transmission, by focusing on the innate talent (*ingenium*) of his students, rather than inherited familial virtues. In doing so, Quintilian seemingly rejects the heredity of

mode of genetic transmission.

² Cf. the final section of Chapter Three for more detail.

biological kinship, and instead encourages both his students and readers to embrace adaptation and innovation, as well as demonstrate critical judgment when imitating *exempla* from the past.

The third chapter identifies Pliny the Younger's adoption of Quintilianic elements in the *Panegyricus* as a meta-exemplary form of educational transmission, and argues that the discussion of Trajan's adoption, the subsequent prayer for Trajan to have his own biological children, and the incorporation of elements of the traditionally Republican *laudatio funebris*, all encourage the reader to both reevaluate and refashion expectations associated with both genetic and educational transmission. As is the case with Quintilian, the modes of genetic and educational transmission do not clash with each other, but rather with more "traditional" versions of themselves.

Finally, Juvenal's *Satires* 1, 2, 7, 8, and 14, as poems which reject the repetitive and cyclic process of exemplarity, offer the most overt examples of tension and contradiction. Juvenal provides several consequences in response to what he perceives as an unhealthy obsession with continuity and exemplarity: complacency, hypocrisy, and unachievable standards.

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