

The first person in Cicero's letters to Atticus*

Cicero's handling of the first person is not a mere sign of vanity but a vital part of his literary achievement. In some of the genres in his wide-ranging *œuvre*, his deployment is an innovation, or a striking choice. Of his *Consolatio*, written on the death of his daughter, he says to Atticus *quin etiam feci quod profecto ante me nemo, ut ipse me per litteras consolaretur; quem librum ad te mittam, si descripserint librarii. adfirmo tibi nullam consolationem esse talem* (*Att.* 12.14.3, March 45, Astura), 'I have even done what no one has before me: console myself in a written work. I'll send you the book if the scribes have written it out. I assure you there is no work of consolation like it.' The self-praise in the last sentence probably extends beyond the self-consolation (cf. below *Att.* 13.13.1 *ne apud Graecos quidem simile quicquam*); he is proud of the work, and stresses its unusual relation to its author. He looks back on the whole generic tradition: he has read every work in it, he says.¹

His hexameter poems *De Consulatu Suo* and *De Temporibus Suis* unusually present narrative about a third person (fr. 9 Courtney) who is firmly identified with the author; this phenomenon is related to first-person narrative. Dignified narrative hexameter (epic) had commonly kept the life of the author at a distance, while didactic, bucolic, and satirical

* I am grateful to John Henderson for encouragement. The quantity of quoted and translated text leaves little space for footnotes, but the references should give the reader leads to further literature.

¹ Cf. the link suggested *ap.* Volk 2013, 110 n. 59. 'Boasted' at Wilcox 2012, 40, of *Att.* 12.4.3 is a nice verb, but perhaps does not catch the dignity from Cicero's own perspective. The first person has been a considerable object of discussion in French literature, for example, particularly for works of fiction (so Rousset 1973; further complications e.g. in Östman 2003, 102-7, Lucey 2006, Cornelio 2014).

hexameter had come closer to it. There are first-person, and authorial, narrative elements in e.g. Parmenides, Empedocles, Theocritus, Lucilius.²

In Cicero's dialogue, the dramatic form is most often introduced by a personal epistle—a distinctive choice (cf. *Att.* 4.16.2 (June/July 54, Rome) for Aristotle). Over the course of his production in this form, he moves from presenting only speakers other than himself to making himself a central figure. He speaks in letters of this generic choice as following Aristotle rather than Heraclides Ponticus (*QF* 3.5.1-2 (Oct./Nov. 54, *Tusculanum*), *Att.* 13.19.4 (June 45, *Arpinas*)). He actually recasts some works already written or partially written to set the work in the present and give himself a part. He presents other matters as entering into these changes: justification through generic traditions, historical plausibility, impact of the content, pleasing some people who are written into the works. Whatever his motivation, he sees literary aspects as significant; thus the preface to book 2 of *De Oratore*, in which he is not a speaking character, shows him anxious on historical plausibility.³

Cicero is a crucial figure in his own oratory. The difference from even bouletic Greek oratory is marked (forensic Greek oratory was commonly written for delivery by someone else). Here Roman tradition will be very much involved; the fragmentary remains of other Republican oratory show us a tradition which permits the man who devised the speech to talk about himself (Cato the Elder or C. Gracchus were not shy). The increasing tendency of Cicero's speeches to focus on Cicero might suggest a parallel with the change in the dialogues; but it precedes that change, and has still more relations to Cicero's political career.

² Cf. Volk 2013. The *praetexta* on Balbus' deed (Pollio, *Cic. Fam.* 10.32.3 (June 43, Corduba)) is not necessarily written by himself (cf. Shackleton Bailey 1977, 558-9, Hutchinson 1998, 110); but Catullus, Varro, Caesar and others are interested in doing things with the first person (or a third person used of the writer). For related generic extension in the Hellenistic period, cf. Hutchinson 2013b, 39-40.

³ On dialogue, and Heraclides Ponticus, cf. Hutchinson 2013a, 253-7, 2013b, 48-50, Nelsestuen 2015, 9-19.

Manifold tensions appear: the case and the client in a trial, the selflessness demanded by the *res publica*, the authority of the speaker, the wish to set matters straight and to answer opponents. The handling of the first person is an important part of the speech in what one might call creative terms: the speaker is a key member in the cast of characters whom the speech must fashion for the audience, or for the reader. The skill and deftness with which Cicero presents himself is perhaps likely to have been distinctive at least in the detail (it is bound up with his distinctively accomplished style and expression); but we do not have the material to be sure.

Letters are a genre in prose which gives particular prominence to a first person equated with the author. There may be generic complications—thus what are formally letters may blend into prefaces and whole works—but there is nothing generically surprising or noteworthy simply in the prominence of the first person in Cicero’s letters. We may turn this point round, however. The genre of letters most completely meets and fosters a characteristic of Cicero’s output; in his letters, we see him treating the first person in especially interesting ways. It may be objected that letters are not a genre; but if we mean by ‘genre’ simply a particular kind of written work, there is no doubt that Cicero sees them as such a kind, with sub-divisions. (Thus he speaks of generic originality in a letter of recommendation as in a defence speech: *Fam.* 13.15.3 (to Caesar; May? 45) | *genere nouo sum litterarum* | *ad te usus ut intellegeres non uulgarem esse commendationem* [recurring phrase!] |, ‘I have employed a new type of letter in writing to you, so that you could realize this is no ordinary recommendation’, cf. *Arch.* 3 | *uti prope nouo quodam et inusitato* | *genere dicendi* |, ‘to use a way of speaking which is more less new and unaccustomed’.) Most especially, letters by famous authors and other great men were valuable pieces of writing, in his opinion: cf. e.g. *Att.* 9.10.2 (March 49, *Formianum*), where [Plat.] *Epist.* 7 348a1-2 is alluded to like other literature. [Plat.] *Epist.* 9 358a2-5 is referred to at *Fin.* 2.45, translated at *Off.* 1.22, and is

behind *Mur.* 83, *Mil.* 104, *Phil.* 3.8, 4.9, 5.24, 6.9, 14.32, cf. 13.46, 14.25 (it or Dem. 18.205 is already alluded to at *Ad Her.* 4.55). At *Fin.* 2.96-100 Epicurus' short letter is *praeclara* (cf. *praeclare* at *Off.* 1.22 of [Plato] *Epistle* 9)—for its magnificent ethical utterance, which it is hard to separate from writing. Cicero's own letters were preserved, in large numbers. The letters which he was least likely actually to circulate are the most interesting in their treatment of the first person, the letters to Atticus; but we will see many reasons to connect their expression with that of circulated works, and to view them as organized and skillful writing. Sen. *Ep.* 21.3-5 leaves no doubt that he, only a century later, regards the letters to Atticus, like Epicurus' letters and his own, as major works; Nepos, not long after Cicero's death, at any rate regards them as like a continuous history in impact (*Att.* 16.3-4).⁴

Aspects to note in the discussion as it proceeds include: agency, shifting of causation; separation from others, interaction with others; monologue, self-defence, self-presentation; pride, humour against the self; epigram, brevity, rupture; temporal range and closeness; change of stance, cohesion; intertextuality, intellectual context.

The very passages in the letters where Cicero discusses other genres make a rewarding way in. Authorship seems at first an activity which necessarily separates the author from others, and leads to decisive achievement; in the passage below it interacts with other people and things.

⁴ For some of the issues cf. Hutchinson 1993, 1998, 2007, 2013a, 6 n. 2, Schröder 2004-5, Gibson and Morrison 2007, White 2010, ch. 4. On the letters to Atticus and their qualities, cf. e.g. Schröder 2004-5, esp. 203-5.

Henderson in this volume presents an acute and probing discussion, from a different angle. More widely Schöne 2015 does much to encourage the close analysis of letters by famous authors as crafted texts (most of those he studies with such skill seem less immediately inviting than Cicero's letters). On the first person in letters (including Demetr. *Eloc.* 227 on self-portrayal), cf. Neger 2015; Bishop 2019, 237. On *Fin.* 2.45 and *Off.* 1.22 cf. Madvig 1869, 222.

quod me ab hoc maerore recreari uis, facis ut omnia; sed me mihi non defuisse tu testis es. [a] nihil enim de maerore minuendo scriptum ab ullo est quod ego non domi tuae legerim; [b] sed omnem consolationem uincit dolor. [c] quin etiam feci . . . [see above]. [d] totos dies scribo, non quo proficiam quid sed tantisper impediatur—non equidem satis (uis enim urget), sed relaxor tamen, omniaque nitor non ad animum sed ad uultum ipsum, si queam, reficiendum, idque faciens interdum mihi peccare uideor, interdum peccaturus esse nisi faciam. solitudo aliquid adiuuat, sed multo plus proficeret si tu tamen interesses. (Cic. Att. 12.14.3 (March 45, Astura))

In wanting me to recover from this grief, you're being your usual self. But you can bear witness that I have not been failing myself. There is no work by anyone on reducing grief that I did not read at your house; but all consolation is overcome by my sorrow. I have even done [see above] . . . I spend the whole of each day writing; this is not in the hope of making any mental progress, but I am restrained for a little while—not enough, as the power of the grief presses me, but the pressure is relieved, and I struggle all I can to restore, not my spirit but my face, if I can. In doing this I sometimes think I'm doing wrong, sometimes that I'll be doing wrong unless I do it. The isolation here is of some help, but would be of much more if you were here.

The first person partly stands in isolation, and partly interacts with the second person. Cicero will show Atticus the book he consoled himself with; Cicero read consolations at Atticus' house, and solitude would be improved if Atticus were there. Atticus comes in partly as witness that Cicero has been true to himself (*me mihi non defuisse tu testis es*), though the witness is also an antagonist to be answered. The syntactical structures convey an oscillation between self-defence and contrary feelings. [a] *nihil* etc. and [c] *quin* etc. mark a rising movement of proving his own determination, and authorial achievement (note *enim*); but the movement is interrupted by [b] *sed omnem consolationem uincit dolor*, where the word-order shows the power of emotion. The sentence [d] *totos dies . . . faciam* starts from the positive of authorial work. It develops with jolting twists and negations, but rises with the assertion *omniaque nitor . . . reficiendum*, even here with a dip (the *animus* cannot be reached). The

sentence continues, however (*idque* etc.): it stands back from the action and contemplates it in utterance which captures conflict. The elegant and chiasmic balance (*faciens . . . peccare, peccaturus . . . nisi faciam*) distances the confusion it portrays. These sentences are highly expressive, and quite unlike the swelling flow more common in the sentences of the speeches. The element of self-disclosure, and the summation of undecided thought in artful paradox, makes this different from the robust assurance which the speeches show.⁵

The passage is worth comparing with Lact. *Inst.* 3.28.2 CCEL xix 265 (Cic. *Consol.* fr. 3 Vitelli), however Lactantius' words relate to Cicero's. He indicates self-criticism in the *Consolatio* itself.

| M. Tullius in sua Consolatione | pugnassem se semper contra Fortunam loquitur eamque a se esse superatam | cum fortiter inimicorum impetus retudisset; | ne tum quidem se ab ea fractum cum domo pulsus patria caruerit; | tum autem cum amiserit carissimam filiam, | uictum se a Fortuna turpiter confitetur. | 'cedo' inquit, 'et manum tollo'. |

Cicero in his *Consolation* says that he had always fought against Fortune and overcome her when he had courageously repelled the assaults of his enemies. He says that he was not broken by her even when he was driven from his house and deprived of his country; but when he lost his beloved daughter, he shamefully admits that Fortune defeated him. "I give up," he says, "I surrender."

Here the main sentence builds up Cicero's fortitude, only for Fortune finally to exceed it; that is not like the constant eddying and interruption in the letter. Even the brief final sentence is part of a fluent structure; and the whole original utterance is likely to be part of the initial section of the work. Consolations usually proceed from sympathy with the extreme grief of the addressee to bidding them be strong; in Cicero's consolation he will have achieved this

⁵ For *ipsam* cf. Shackleton Bailey 1965-70, v.311.

transformation himself (and perhaps ended with rapt second-person praise of his daughter, fr. 23 Vitelli).⁶

Something more like the long sentence in Lactantius is seen on authorship at *QF* 3.5.1-2 (Oct./Nov. 54, *Tusculanum*). Quintus is a male free-born addressee only less intimate than Atticus; but the stylistic approach to the first person is quite different from the conflicted sentences to Atticus. An enormous sentence explains a drastic change in the dialogue Cicero has been writing:

| nam iam duobus factis libris, | in quibus nouendialibus feriis | quae fuerunt | Tuditano et Aquilio
 consulibus sermo est a me institutus | Africani | paulo ante mortem | et Laeli, Phili, Manili, <P. Rutili,>
 Q. Tuberonis, et Laeli generorum, Fanni et Scaeuolae, | sermo autem in nouem et dies et libros |
 distributus | de optimo statu ciuitatis | et de optimo ciue | (sane texebatur opus luculente hominumque
 dignitas | aliquantum orationi | ponderis adferebat |), ii libri cum in Tusculano | mihi legerentur |
 audiente Sallustio, | admonitus sum ab illo | multo maiore auctoritate | illis de rebus dici posse si ipse
 loquerer de re publica, | praesertim cum essem non Heraclides Ponticus sed consularis | et is qui in
 maximis uersatus in re publica rebus essem; | quae tam antiquis hominibus attribuerem, | ea uisum iri
 ficta esse; oratorum sermonem in illis nostris libris, | quod esset de ratione dicendi, | belle a me
 remouisse, | ad eos tamen rettulisse | quos ipse uidissem; | Aristotelem denique | quae de re publica et
 praestanti uiro scribat ipsum loqui. |

I had already written two books. In them I began a dialogue between Africanus, shortly before his death, and Laelius, Philus, Manilius, P. Rutilius, and Q. Tubero, and of Laelius' sons-in law Fannius and Scaevola; this was set in the nine-day festival in the consulship of Tuditanus and Aquilius [129 BC]. It had been divided into nine days and nine books; it was on the ideal set-up of the state and the ideal citizen. The work was being crafted brilliantly, and the standing of the characters was lending a certain weightiness to the language. Those books were being read to me in my villa at Tusculum; Sallustius was listening. I was advised by him that a treatment of those subjects would carry much

⁶ Vertical lines mark the ending of one rhythmic phrase and (usually) the beginning of another. Cf. Hutchinson 1995, 1998, esp. 9-12, 2018.

more authority if I spoke about the state myself, especially as I was, in his words, not Heraclides Ponticus but an ex-consul, with experience of the state in affairs of supreme importance. Remarks, he went on, which I gave to people of so long ago would seem as though they were made up. Now, I'd pulled off a nice stroke, he said, in shifting the dialogue of the orators away from myself in my *De Oratore*, which you know; after all, it was on how to speak. But I had given the dialogue to men I'd actually seen. Aristotle, he said, was his own speaker for the things he wrote about the state and the outstanding man.

The size of the sentence conveys all the elaborate achievement of the two books which Cicero had already accomplished, only for advice from Sallustius to turn him in a quite different direction—like Cicero and Fortuna above, but with some play here from Cicero at his own expense. The construction of Cicero's edifice is overtaken in the sentence by the eloquence of Sallustius. Before that point, a parenthesis, of a kind uncharacteristic in the speeches, revels in the original work, and not least the contribution of the original characters—but only to heighten the change of vision which Sallustius effects. The sentence conveys the agency of Sallustius: it is not self-love that turns Cicero into the main speaker, nor Cicero who talks about his own understanding of politics. But the structure also conveys the startling alteration of Cicero's views on his own work, with a tinge of incongruity and humour at himself, partly because the work is his own, and partly because constancy is admired in dignified Romans. The self-sufficiency of authorship is undermined, while the statesman is exalted, and modesty preserved.⁷

What follows is nearer the styles of the letters to Atticus:

⁷ On the changes in Cicero's plans over the *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus* cf. Schmidt 2001, Dyck 2004, 7-12.

For the *Academica* (below), cf. recently Cappello (2019), 13-81; T. Reinhardt's commentary and edition are eagerly awaited too. On the spatial setting of the changes, cf. Hutchinson 2016, 102-3.

| commoui<t> me, et eo magis quod maximos motus | nostrae ciuitatis | attingere non poteram, quod erant inferiores quam illorum aetas qui loquebantur. | ego autem id ipsum tum eram secutus, | ne in nostra tempora incurrens | offenderem quempiam. | nunc et id uitabo et loquar ipse tecum; | et tamen illa quae institueram | ad te, si Romam uenero, mittam. | puto enim te existimaturum | a me illos libros non sine aliquo meo stomacho esse relictos.

His words really had an effect on me, all the more because I hadn't been able to touch on the greatest disturbances of our state: they came after the time of those speakers. But I had pursued that aim deliberately, so that I didn't cause offence to someone by coming into our own day. With the new plan, though, I will avoid the offence and, in the dialogue, actually talk with you. But I'll send you what I'd begun if I come to Rome. I think you'll be able to imagine that I was a bit cross to abandon the books I'd written.

commoui<t> me begins, with colloquial word-order, and the points that concern Cicero are to do, not with glorifying himself, but with *nostrae ciuitatis*, offence of others, and, finally, the chance of speaking in the dialogue with Quintus, the addressee of the letter. The idea of Cicero's crossness at abandoning the books he had started lends a light touch: he is not quite so high-minded.

That last section brings us nearer to *Att.* 13.13.1 (June 45, *Arpinas*; cf. *Att.* 13.12.3 (June 45, *Arpinas*)), on the *Academica*:

commotus tuis litteris, quod ad me de Varrone scripseras, totam Academiam ab hominibus nobilissimis abstuli, transtuli ad nostrum sodalem et e duobus libris contuli in quattuor; grandiores sunt omnino quam erant illi, sed tamen multa detracta. tu autem mihi peruelim scribas qui intellexeris illum uelle; illud uero utique scire cupio quem intellexeris ab eo ζηλοτυπεῖσθαι—nisi forte Brutum. id hercle restabat! sed tamen scire peruelim. libri quidem ita exierunt, nisi forte me communis φιλαυτία decipit, ut in tali genere ne apud Graecos quidem simile quicquam. tu illam iacturam feres aequo animo quod illa quae habes de Academicis frustra descripta sunt. multo tamen haec erunt splendidiora, breuiora, meliora.

I was inspired by your letter and your thoughts on Varro; so I took the whole Academy away from those distinguished men, passed them to our friend, and turned the work from two to four books. The new ones are much bigger than the old; but I've still cut a lot. I'm really keen for you to write and tell me what you thought his wishes were like. Anyway, I'm eager to know who you thought he was jealous of—unless it was Brutus, by any chance. The final straw! I'm dying to know, though. As for the books themselves, they've turned out in such a way that not even the Greeks have got something like it in this type of writing—unless by chance the standard fondness for oneself is fooling me. I'm sure you won't mind the loss in having the *Academica* that was already with you copied to no purpose. The new version, though, will be far more finely written, more concise, and just better.

The causal role of Atticus is stressed, like that of Sallustius; now the cause is the person addressed. The new version is focused, not awkwardly on the first person, but riskily on a particular third person. A significant moment in Latin literature is presented by the author, but not straightforwardly. Cicero's pride in his authorship and his decisive speed is mixed with play at his vandalism. *abstuli*, the immediately following *transtuli*, and then *contuli* take almost parodically far a toying with verbs found in the speeches (*Ver.* 1.29 *tulit . . . protulit*, *Caec.* 85 *attulisse . . . rettulisse*, *Lig.* 25 *tulistis . . . detulistis*). Removing, not the books but the Academy, from *hominibus nobilissimis* and giving them to *nostrum sodalem* sounds like an unfitting act of robbery; *nobilissimis* refers primarily to Roman rank, but also hints secondarily at the fame of philosophers (so *Tusc.* 3.12 *Crantor ille, qui in nostra Academia uel in primis fuit nobilis*, 'the well-known Crantor, especially distinguished in our Academy'). Cicero's actual case is that the *homines nobiles* were less, not more, suitable speakers (*Att.* 13.12.3, 19.5 (June, *Arpinas*)). He proceeds, with paradox, to the less problematic change of expansion (bigger, but much has been removed). He then returns eagerly to the personal guesses and gossip, seeking to get inside Atticus' mind, and through his into Varro's (the personal relations are much more awkward and uncertain here than appears from *Acad. Post.* 9-12; the circulated works operate in grand, public gestures, cf. *Att.* 13.12.3). The interruption

of the thought with *nisi forte Brutum. id hercle restabat!* presents a dramatic dropping of the penny and ensuing indignation; it is too sudden to be altogether dignified, especially with the relapse to acknowledged ignorance, in the same language (*scire, peruelim*).

The sequence opened: Varro, books; now, after Varro, it comes back to books (*libri quidem*), with neat organization. It also returns from anxiety and dependence to self-standing pride. As on the *Consolatio*, Cicero's work stands out as unique against the Greek generic tradition; but *nisi forte* again cuts in, and a Greek philosophical word and *communis* keep the pride in check. The Greek terminology is also part of Cicero's personal language with Atticus; Cicero turns considerately to Atticus and his wasted effort, and the final praise of the new work is notionally not there to vaunt but to console Atticus (*tamen* against *iacturam* and *frustra*). The run of comparatives ending alike and with no addition takes to an extreme the rhetoric of the speeches (cf. e.g. *Mur.* 66 *grauior, sapientior*; rarely in treatises or letters). *breuiora* is striking after the earlier *grandiores*; the tricolon itself is dense, not bland. The enthusiasm of the author for the latest stage in his work reaches at the end an uninhibited exultation; but it coexists with self-consciousness and second-person interactions.

An intricate and mobile treatment of the first person is even more apparent in the political sphere. The style and the freer scope for self-expression make possible a pithy and candid shaping of events, and of Cicero's own life; the writing also attains a compacted density of reference and thought. *Att.* 14.21.3-4 (May 44, Puteoli) was written and dictated by Cicero during dinner at Vestorius' house: evidently social requirements did not exclude something yet more obtrusive than texting during a meal. The mention of the occasion at the end of the letter (4) heightens the self-conscious speed and abruptness; but the effect is calculated: Cicero is in control.

mihī autem non est dubium quin res spectet ad castra. acta enim illa res est animo uirili, consilio puerili. quis enim hoc non uidit, [*<regem sublatum,> add. Shackleton Bailey*] regni heredem relictum?

quid autem absurdius? 'hoc metuere, alterum in metu non ponere!' quin etiam hoc ipso tempore multa ὑποκόλωνα. Ponti Neapolitanum a matre tyrannoctoni possideri! legendus mihi saepius est 'Cato maior' ad te missus. amariorem enim me senectus facit; stomachor omnia. sed mihi quidem βεβίωται; uiderint iuuenes. tu mea curabis, ut curas.

Personally I have no doubt that things are heading for war. That deed was done with the courage of men, and the political foresight of children. Who could not see that the heir to the kingdom had been left behind? What could be more ludicrous? 'To fear one thing, but not to regard the other as fearful!' Even at the moment there are lots of things which are slight howlers. To think that the estate of Pontius near Naples is owned by the mother of the tyrant-slayer! I'd better keep reading the *Cato the Elder* which I dedicated to you. Old age is making me rather bitter; I get cross at everything. But my own life is done; over to the young ones. Be kind enough to look after my interests in future as you are doing at present.

The killing of Caesar but not Antony is summed up with incisive elegance (*acta* etc.). Cicero both thinks the mistake obvious and stresses his own expertise; the emphatic *mihi* relates to the prophecy rather than just the mistake. *quid autem absurdius?* is brusquer in its isolated structure than | *quo quid absurdius dici aut existimari potest?* |, 'than which what could be said or thought that is more ridiculous?' (*Phil.* 8.4, cf. *Fin.* 2.41, *Div.* 2.98; isolated, by contrast, *Att.* 7.11.3 (Jan. 49, *Formianum*)). The quote (*hoc metuere*, etc.) stands back in learned scorn; it is part of his literary repertoire, and appears at *Top.* 50. Cicero moves on to the more immediate present and lesser matters. The ὑπο- shows a more indulgent restraint (cf. *sub-* and Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 1.2 615d ὑποκολοικότερον, 'rather gratingly out of place'); but the exclamatory accusative and infinitive (*possideri*) raises the temperature again. Cicero then reins himself in: the representation of himself here has a conscious drama (from *legendus* on). Numerous strands now come together: the literary work on old age, Greek turns of phrase, debates on how old men should live. Expansion on each of these is needed to see what is contracted into these short sentences.

The dialogue *Cato Maior* (44 BC) presents old age through the distanced medium of characters from another time, somewhat like Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*. The tempo of the treatment is of course leisurely. The idea that old men are *iracundi*, 'prone to anger', is raised and countered (65): although the conditions of old age make such temper understandable, life can be made sweeter through *moribus bonis et artibus* |, 'commendable ways and behaviour' (| *quae tamen omnia dulciora fiunt* |, 'all these things become sweeter', cf. *amariorem* here of Cicero himself). The image of ripe fruit makes approaching death acceptable (71, cf. 5): serenity prevails.⁸

βεβίωται (lit. 'it has been lived') is an established phrase, used sometimes in a context of past or imminent death, sometimes figuratively, sometimes, in a different sense of the perfect, with the addition 'enough'. βεβίωται for 'my life is over' is found e.g. at Chariton 2.6.2 βεβίωταί μοι (Dionysius thinks he is about to die), Sen. *Ep.* 12.8 (sung at the mock-funeral of a voluptuary) βεβίωται, βεβίωται. Balbus, engaged in luxurious building rather than politics, has already had in full the life he sought: *uerum si quaeris, homini non recta sed uoluptaria quaerenti nonne βεβίωται?*, 'if you want to know the truth, hasn't this man who has always sought not what is right but what is pleasurable, had his life in full?' (Cic. *Att.* 12.2.2 (April? 46, Rome). At Nymphod. (iii-ii BC?) *FGrHist* 572 F 4 an aging runaway slave urges his boy-love to cut his head off and gain a reward: ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν χρόνος ἱκανὸς βεβίωται, σὺ δὲ νέος εἶ καὶ ἀκμὴν ἔχεις τοῦ ζῆν, 'I have lived time enough; but you are young, and at the peak of life.' So here the antithesis *sed mihi quidem βεβίωται; uiderint iuuenes* (here an obligation, not an opportunity).

⁸ Varro, *RR* 1.1.1-2, a generally circulated work, strikes a different note, while speaking directly of the author's old age.

The phrase is bound up with one that was current at this point: ‘I have lived long enough.’ Cicero uses it at the end of the *First Philippic* (2 Sept. 44): 38 | *mihi fere satis est quod uixi uel ad aetatem uel ad gloriam: | huc si quid accesserit, | non tam mihi quam uobis reique publicae accesserit.* |, ‘I have had more less enough life, as regards either age or glory; if any more is added, it will be added for you and the state more than me.’ He uses it also in a letter to Plancus, here moving from *patria* (cf. *uobis reique publicae*) to the second person singular: | *itaque mihi maximae curae est | non de mea quidem uita, | cui satis feci | uel aetate uel factis | uel, si quid etiam hoc ad rem pertinet, gloria, | sed me patria sollicitat | in primisque, mi Plance, | exspectatio consulatus tui* | (*Fam.* 10.1.1 (Rome, 44)), ‘My great concern is not for my own life; I have done enough for it in age or deeds, or glory, if that is relevant. What makes me anxious is my own city, and especially, dear Plancus, waiting for your consulship.’ It has been thought notable that the expression goes back to Caesar: cf. *Marc.* 25 (Sept. 46), where Cicero forcefully adds *patriae* to Caesar’s formulation, and *Suet. Jul.* 86.2 where Caesar includes *rem publicam* as his point. But both Cicero and Caesar’s utterances probably go back to Greek ideas. Cf. *Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom.* 4.11.6, where the artful Tullius pretends he is nobly about to leave Rome: βεβίωται γὰρ ἤδη μοι καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν καὶ πρὸς εὐδοξίαν ἀποχρόντως . . . τῆς παρ’ ὑμῶν εὐνοίας ψευθεῖς, ἣν ἀντὶ παντὸς εἰλόμην ἀγαθοῦ | . . . , ‘I have already lived sufficiently as regards merit and glory . . . if I were robbed of your favour, which I have preferred to every other good thing . . .’⁹

The debate on whether old men should take part in politics is seen in Plutarch’s essay (783a-797f); with it go the questions whether they should retire into a life of pleasure, or at least leisure, whether they should behave differently from when they were young, whether

⁹ For *satis* cf. also *IGUR* 3.1286 (iii AD?) dead man of 40 in dialogue; note contrast: | . . . χαίρει. – καὶ εὐ γ’, ὃ ξένε· | κοὶ γὰρ μέτεστιν ἔτι χαρᾶς, ἡμῖν δ’ ἄλλοις, ‘ . . . best wishes and joy to you.’ ‘And to you, stranger; you have still got a share in joy, but I have had sufficient.’ For *patriae* at *Marc.* 25, cf. above on [Plat.] *Epistle* 9.

the last part of life should be like the last part of a work of art. In Cicero's philosophical prefaces, his retirement has been forced on him, but he does what he can for his country. Pompey and Lucullus had had a well-known dispute in the 50's on whether politics or luxury was unfitting for an old man (Vell. 2.33.4, Plut. *Luc.* 38.4-39.1, *Pomp.* 48.7, *An Seni* 785f). Plutarch likens the end of Lucullus' life to the disappointing revelry in the second half of an Old Comedy, while Cicero's Cato says of those who pursue the rewards of *auctoritas* rather than pleasure *mihi uidentur fabulam aetatis peregissee | nec tamquam inexercitati histriones | in extremo actu corruisse* |, 'I think they have acted the play of life to the end, and not collapsed in the final act like inexperienced actors.' The idea of consistency is found when Cicero proclaims his imperviousness to the charms of Cytheris at a party, now that politics is impossible: *| me uero nihil istorum ne iuuenem quidem mouit umquam,* | [PRINTER: add curved line, like saucer, under vertical] *ne<dum> nunc senem* |, 'as for me, that kind of thing never stirred me when I was young, let alone now that I'm old' (Cic. *Fam.* 9.26.2, to Paetus (second intercalary month 46, Rome)). The same stance is presented with austere concision, but in a higher key, at the end of the *Second Philippic*: *| defendi rem publicam adulescens, | non deseram senex* |, 'I defended the state in my youth; I will not desert it now I am old' (118), preceded by *redi cum re publica in gratiam. | sed de te tu uideris; | ego de me ipse profitebor* |, 'make friends with the state again. But I leave that to you; I will now make a declaration about myself' (cf. *uiderint iuuenes*).

The letter, then, emerges as bound up with discussion and expression in circulated Greek literature, and with their reflexes in the debates and utterances of recent Roman politics. Cicero's own circulated literature only adds to the intricacy. His deft movements within this whole web become visible. The circulated *Cato Maior* offers an elevated guide to which the author himself is failing to conform; the dedication of the work to Atticus makes the link neater. *amariorem* picks up the language of the dialogue, with a moderating

comparative; the brisk *stomachor omnia*, by contrast, paints Cicero at an extreme of the unreasonable. This confessional and wondering tone would have no place in a speech, unless changed into irony. (Cf. to Caelius *Fam.* 2.16.6 (May 49, *Cumanum*) *recordor enim desperationes | eorum qui senes erant adulescente me. | eos ego fortasse nunc imitor | et utor aetatis uitio. uelim ita sit; sed tamen.* |, ‘I remember the despairs of those who were old when I was a youth. Perhaps I’m imitating them now, and showing the fault of age. I hope so; but anyway never mind.’) The withdrawal from these political issues in *sed mihi quidem βεβίωται; uiderint iuuenes* brings in a complex of thoughts; rather than simply justifying the first person, it raises the question of political dedication even in old age. The jolts and pace of the language are not matched by the fluency in Nymphodorus, or even the measured transition | *sed de te tu uideris; | ego de me ipse profitebor.* | The gesture in the letter is histrionic, and not a final word. The apparently final reference to the addressee bids to impose closure (*tu mea curabis, ut curas*); but the continuation (not quoted) shows Cicero continuing with political plans. He then abruptly abandons them for the thought of flight, but so as to avoid civil war, *castra*; the word picks up the opening of the previous section (cf. also *qui otium non timeat* ‘who does not fear peace’ with 2 *timere otium* ‘fear peace’).¹⁰

A complex of feelings is conveyed in this passage, as in a monologue. The more public and sustained works could not match these speedy strokes, this wry self-exposure. But it is an expressive performance rather than random jottings; the shaped and reflective sequence is palpable. In general, condensation and speed need not remove self-presentation,

¹⁰ For the stance on old age here cf. Fuà 1995, 208.

as anyone who has composed even rapid electronic messages will know—and we are not Cicero.¹¹

Cicero, then, stands back from his life, views its shape in the light of literature and discussion, and displays that shape with clipped utterance. To events too a masterful curtness is applied (*animo uirili, consilio puerili*, etc.); stylistic instruments are deployed on third-person material which are also used on first-person material. But even the third-person versions display the first person, with his insight, his epigrammatic elegance, and the confident frankness only possible with such a friend. Pompey, the supreme point of reference for the first person, is one victim of this concision: so *Att.* 8.16.1 (March 49, *Formianum*) *quem ego hominem ἀπολιτικώτατον omnium iam ante cognoram, nunc uero etiam ἀστρατηγητότατον*, ‘I knew already that he was the most unskilled person in the world at politics; now I see he is at generalship too.’ For Cicero Greek words of this type are only at home in letters, especially those to Atticus; they communicate intellectual understanding of Roman activity, and an extraordinary contempt for a man with three triumphs and three-and-a-bit consulships. *Att.* 7.25.1 (Feb. 49, *Formianum*) *o rem miseram! malas causas semper obtinuit, in optima concidit*, ‘What a wretched thing to happen! He has always won in a bad cause, and has fallen in the best one’ could be from the Elder Seneca, but with the depth of history. Cicero writes of himself with similar temporal range and verbal compression: *non recordor unde ceciderim sed unde surrexerim*, ‘I call to mind not where I fell from, but where I have risen from’ (*Att.* 4.18.2 (Oct./Nov. 54, Rome)). The brief and asyndetic sentence stands amid others: [a] *domus me et rura nostra delectant*. [b] *non recordor unde ceciderim sed unde surrexerim*. [c] *fratrem mecum et te si habebo, per me isti pedibus trahantur; uobis*

¹¹ Such writing might actually appeal to Seneca’s taste more than that of the works Cicero circulated. He affects a lack of sympathy for the treatment of the first person at one point in the letters to *Atticus* (*Brev.* 5.2-3); but his treatment of the first person in the *Letters to Lucilius* indicates his sensibility to this aspect.

ἐμφιλοσοφῆσαι *possum*. [d] *locus ille animi nostri stomachus ubi habitabat olim concalluit*, ‘What delights me is my house and country estate. I call to mind . . . If I have you and my brother with me, as far as I’m concerned that lot can be dragged off by the feet; in the company of you two I can practice philosophy. The place in my nature where the stomach of my anger used to live has long hardened over.’ The first two sentences [a, b] portray a willed contentedness; the third [c] swells into affection and philosophy, with animus against others; the fourth [d] portrays with medical detachment the abolition of the feelings his reader might have imagined. Earlier, the same neat style as in [b] exhibits a supposed absence of emotion combined with malevolent satisfaction: *nullus dolor me angit unum omnia posse; dirumpuntur ii qui me aliquid posse doluerunt*, ‘I am not distressed by any pain at one man having all the power; the ones who were pained that I had some power are being burst by sorrow.’ His own feelings and those of others are organized into a chronological and verbal structure.¹²

Such a style also clothes the cynical wisdom which Cicero has now attained (*Att.* 4.5.2-3 (June? 56, Antium)) *quoniam qui nihil possunt, ii me nolunt amare, demus operam ut ab iis qui possunt diligamur . . . sed iam tempus est me ipsum a me amari, quando ab illis nullo modo possum*, ‘since those who have no power don’t want to love me, let me attend to getting the liking of those who do have power. . . . But it’s now time for me to be loved by myself, since I can’t be loved by those people at all.’ The language of affection (*amare, diligere*) displays the actual distance between any allies and himself—his only real friend in

¹² Greek words in Cicero: cf. Hutchinson 2013, 155-6, Mullen 2015, 216-17, contrast Hortensius *ORF*⁴ 92 F 39, even if untypical, with Berry 1996, 24-6. For the letters particularly see further Hutchinson 1998, 13-15, Swain 2002, Adams 2003, 308-47, Rollinger 2015. For *stomachus* cf. Hoffer 2007, 87-99. For the depiction of Pompey in the letters, including the writing, cf. La Penna 2002, 6-14. On questions of power and will in the letters cf. Citroni Marchetti 2001, esp. 49-61.

the political world. In between these isolating sentences come sentences which relate to the second person, who does care for him. They credit the enlightenment to the addressee, and do the wise speaker down: *dices 'uellem iam pridem'. scio te uoluisse et me asinum germanum fuisse*, 'You will say, "I wish you'd done that long ago." I know that was your wish, and I was a real donkey.' The passage is even introduced with an abrupt gesture of self-interruption: *finis sit*. 'Let's end it there.' It is used also in circulated works (*Mil.* 105, *Off.* 3.115), but here reflects on Cicero's own futile indignation.¹³

Earlier a more copious language has shown the emotion involved in the shape of Cicero's life: *sed ualeant recta, uera, honesta consilia. . . . senseram, noram inductus, relictus, proiectus ab iis*, 'But goodbye to right, true, honourable policies. . . . I had realized, I knew; I had been lured in, abandoned, and thrown out by them.' Somewhat akin is the sequence in Demea's monologue: lavish rhetoric on his sons' preference for his brother followed by a cynical decision to change his behaviour (*Ter. Ad.* 871-81, 879 *ego quoque a meis me amari et magni fieri postulo*, 'I want myself to be loved by my own sons and made much of by them'). But in Cicero's case the language of love is more ironical, the style pithier.¹⁴

The mobility and vivacity of such writing show Cicero's craft on a more minute scale than the sweeping cohesion characteristic of the speeches. The whole passage goes behind the scenes of a speech, and considers its assertions with rueful regret. In *quin etiam (<iam> dudum enim circumrodo quod deuorandum est) subturpicula mihi uidebatur esse παλινωιδία*, 'indeed (I've long been nibbling round the edges of what I must just swallow) my song of reversal seemed to me just slightly shaming', a parenthesis mimics Cicero's reluctance. Then the sentence issues in self-condemnation, amusingly understated (*sub-* and diminutive for the

¹³ Otherwise Shackleton Bailey 1965-70, ii.186.

¹⁴ A judgement of the passage which generously reduces its self-conscious cynicism: Lehmann 2014, 97-8.

intrinsically strong *turpis*), and a humorous Greek word to distance the embarrassing self-contradiction and turn the Latin speech into a Greek poem.¹⁵

A last passage, *Att.* 16.7 (19 August 44, on board ship for *Pompeianum*), gives less of a broad perspective over Cicero's career; it offers a close narrative of an important decision by Cicero, the return to Rome which led ultimately to his death. The account in *Phil.* 1.7-10 can be compared; space allows only for a quotation from 8-9 below, and a quotation here only of *Att.* 16.7.1-4.¹⁶

1 . . . summam spem nuntiabant fore ut Antonius cederet, res conueniret, nostri Romam redirent. addebant etiam me desiderari, subaccusari. quae cum audissem, sine ulla dubitatione abieci consilium profectionis, quo mehercule ne antea quidem delectabar. 2 lectis uero tuis litteris, admiratus equidem sum te tam uehementer sententiam commutasse, sed non sine causa arbitrabar. etsi, quamuis non fueris suasor et impulsor profectionis meae, at probator certe fuisti, dum modo Kal. Ian. Romae essem. ita fiebat ut, dum minus periculi uideretur, abessem, in flammam ipsam uenirem. sed haec, etiam si non prudenter, tamen ἀνεμέεητα sunt, primum quod de mea sententia acta sunt, deinde etiam si te auctore, quid debet qui consilium dat praestare praeter fidem?

3 illud mirari satis non potui quod scripsisti his uerbis: 'bene igitur tu qui εὐθανάειαν, bene! relinque patriam!' an ego relinquebam aut tibi tum relinquare uidebar? tu id non modo non prohibebas uerum etiam adprobabas. grauiora quae restant: 'uelim εχόλιον aliquod elimes ad me, oportuisse te istuc facere.' itane, mi Attice? defensione eget meum factum, praesertim apud te qui id mirabiliter adprobasti? ego uero istum ἀπολογισμὸν συντάξομαι, sed ad eorum aliquem quibus inuitis et

¹⁵ Cf. Isocr. *Hel.* 64, Plat. *Phdr.* 243a2-b7, thought to have a common source by Davies and Finglass 2014, 310 (for Plato cf. Schollmeyer 2014); the word carries more sense of a work than at *Plb.* 27.10.2. The work is certainly a piece of writing for circulation, and probably a speech; the speech is commonly taken to be *De Prouinciis Consularibus*, but Grillo 2015, 14-16 argues otherwise.

¹⁶ On the place of such decisions in the correspondence and the importance of opinions, cf. White 2010, 131. For the two accounts, cf. Denniston 1926, 75-8, Ramsey 2003, 98-107. On *Ad Atticum* 16.7 see also Henderson and Morello in this volume.

dissuadentibus profectus sum. etsi quid iam opus est *εχολίωι*? si perseuerassem, opus fuisset. ‘at hoc ipsum non constanter.’ nemo doctus umquam (multa autem de hoc genere scripta sunt) mutationem consili inconstantiam dixit esse. 4 deinceps igitur haec: ‘nam si a Phaedro nostro esses, expedita excusatio esset; nunc quid respondemus?’ ergo id erat meum factum quod Catoni probare non possim? flagiti scilicet plenum et dedecoris. utinam a primo ita tibi esset uisum! tu mihi, sicut esse soles, fuisses Cato.

The people from Rhegium reported that hopes were extremely good of Antony giving in, agreement being reached, and our friends returning to Rome. They added that people were missing me, and criticizing me a bit. On hearing this, I unhesitatingly abandoned my plan of a journey; even before, I hadn’t relished it.

When I read your letter, I was amazed that you had changed your position so drastically—but not without reason, I thought. Yet, though you were not the one who urged and drove me to my journey, you certainly approved of it, provided I was in Rome by 1 January. Along those lines, I would have been away while the danger seemed less, and returned into the midst of the flame. But in this, while there was imprudence, there was nothing reprehensible, first because I acted on my own opinion, secondly because, even if I did so on your suggestion, what does the person who gives advice have to provide other than his own good faith? What I can’t wonder at enough is you writing, ‘So that’s fine, as you want a good death; go on, quit your country!’ Was I quitting it, or did you think I was then? You didn’t just not stop me doing that: you actually approved. Worse is what follows: ‘I’d like you to work up a little piece addressed to me, to say that you should have done that.’ Really, my friend? Does my deed need a defence, especially to you, who gave it such extraordinary approval? I’ll write that defence, but I’ll address it to one of those who were unwilling when I set out, and urged me not to go. Yet what need is there now for a little piece? If I had continued with my plan, there would have been a need then. ‘But that very change shows inconsistency’, you may say. No wise author (lots has been written in this area) has ever said that changing your plan is inconsistency. Then you go on: ‘If you came from the Epicurean school of my dear Phaedrus, excusing you would be straightforward; but as you don’t, what reply have I got?’ So my deed was such that I couldn’t show Cato it should be approved. Oh yes, it’s full of wickedness and disgrace. I wish you had thought so from the first. You would have been my Cato, as you generally are.’

This account, like that in the *First Philippic*, offers self-justification, and gives strong emphasis to the feelings that caused the return. The choice in the *First Philippic* is gradual, here an instant decision—one that fits with a particular defence of himself. The *First Philippic* is in form just narrative: a series of encounters with people (people from Rhegium, Brutus) and material (speech of Antony, edict of Brutus and Cassius, speech of Piso) which create and intensify Cicero's feelings. The account in *Ad Atticum* 16.7 is organized, and neatly begins and ends with the South wind. But the presentation of the meeting with people from Rhegium is divided from the presentation of the meeting with Brutus (5) by Cicero's protests to Atticus (2-5) on the letter he has received from him: on the change in his advice and on his present reproaches. Atticus' words on Brutus form the link back to Brutus, which the narrative had been designed to come on to (there are many references to Brutus in 1); but even after the summary in 6, Cicero returns to another letter of Atticus. The treatment of Atticus' first letter (2-5) is in some respects a digression, but it occupies most space and can be taken to constitute the initial impulse to writing. Here, then, the first person appears above all in exchange with a second person singular.

Atticus is partly a window on to other people's views; but Cicero has first-hand information on Brutus. Although Atticus' advice obviously reflects the changing comments he is getting from others, Cicero is primarily concerned with Atticus' own opinion. The passage again shows the first person wishing to shift agency in some degree on to someone else; but this time, when it is a really serious matter, he displays a balanced position, and avoids moving the blame entirely on to Atticus. His own change of opinion (*mutationem consili*, 3) recedes behind the assault on Atticus' change of opinion (*te tam uehementer sententiam commutasse*, 2), attacked not so much for itself as for its inconsistency with Atticus' censorious tone; the assault is self-defence. The first person, then, is very much engaged with a second person; but at the same time the isolation of the first person emerges

clearly. It is his safety and his reputation that the decision affects, and he who has had the agony of deciding, and must guess at what other people think. The agony and the guessing do not appear in the *First Philippic*.

Other texts are important to this text. The same is true, to a lesser degree, of *Phil.* 1.7-10. In the speech, speeches are important (speeches are at least verbal artefacts): Antony's *contio*, which first started Cicero's change of mind and is not mentioned in the letter, Piso's speech in the senate, which is mentioned and dwelt on at *Phil.* 1.10, and implied more fleetingly at *Att.* 16.7.5 *Pisonem ferebat in caelum*, 'he lauded Piso to the skies', *7 num quis Pisoni est adsensus?*, 'Surely no one agreed with Piso.' In the letter, we have Atticus' two letters, alert and expressive in language, and a letter from Brutus and Cassius to ex-consuls and ex-praetors (1). There are other texts too. We have the edict of Brutus and Cassius (1), as at *Phil.* 1.8, and the edict of Antony, and Brutus' and Cassius' response (7). A *σχόλιον* of explanation is requested by Atticus, no doubt to show to others, though Cicero affects to see Atticus as the only audience (3); *ἀπολογισμός* sounds somewhat more substantial (note e.g. Lycurg. fr. 1-4 Conomis), though it would again be addressed to one person. In both sentences the verbs *elimes* and *συντάξομαι* stress effort in composition. One might wonder if this work has any relation in genesis to the section of the *First Philippic* which concerns us, billed as separate from the speech proper (cf. *Phil.* 1.1). In the letter, the philosophical tradition is evoked as a written context for Cicero's change of view: *nemo doctus umquam (multa autem de hoc genere scripta sunt) mutationem consili inconstantiam dixit esse*. This tradition leads on to more recent philosophers and philosophical types, Phaedrus and Cato: oral rather than written. Finally there is a quote with regard to old age and burial: *sed abesse hanc aetatem longe a sepulcro negant oportere* (7, 'but they say at this age one should not be far away from the place one wishes to be buried'). We see a whole range of writing, and action in the context of this writing; but particularly noteworthy is the verbal engagement

with Atticus' letter. Such extensive quotation of Atticus is unusual; it calls to mind the engagement with Antony's letter in the *Thirteenth Philippic*.¹⁷

Let us consider the first part of the passage in more detail, and compare it with *Phil.* 1.8-9: *Att.* 16.7.1 [a] *summam spem nuntiabant fore ut Antonius cederet, res conueniret, nostri Romam redirent.* [b] *addebant etiam me desiderari, subaccusari.* [c] *quae cum audissem, sine ulla dubitatione abieci consilium profectionis, quo mehercule ne antea quidem delectabar.* Cf. *Phil.* 1.8-9 | *addebant praeterea—fit enim plerumque ut ei qui boni quid uolunt adferre adfingant aliquid quo faciant id quod nuntiant laetius |—rem conuenturam; Kalendis senatum frequentem fore; | Antonium, repudiatis malis suasoribus, remissis prouinciis Galliis, | ad auctoritatem senatus esse rediturum.* | 9 *Tum vero tanta sum cupiditate incensus ad reditum | ut mihi nulli neque remi neque uenti satis facerent, | non quo me ad tempus occursurum non putarem, | sed ne tardius quam cuperem rei publicae gratularer* |, 'Besides this, they added the following (those who have something good to report often make something up to increase the joy of their tidings): that agreement was going to be reached; that the Senate would be well-attended on the 1st; that Antony would get rid of his evil advisers, give back the Gallic provinces, and return to the authority of the Senate. At this, I was so inflamed with desire to return that neither oars nor winds could content me—not that I thought I would not turn up on time, but so that I would not be later than I wished in congratulating the Roman state.' The tricolon of the first sentence [a], simpler and more flowing than the similar tricolon at *Phil.* 1.8, swiftly builds up the hope; it contrasts with the following very short sentence appended ([b]), and missing from *Phil.* 1.8-9 (*addebant* in *Phil.*

¹⁷ For the underlying thought in 7 cf. e.g. *Cat.* 68.97-100; 3.12 for *negant* with a quotation. Even in Stoicism the wise man could change a plan, but if circumstances altered: cf. *Sen. Ben.* 4.34.3-4 (better still Tasso, *GL* 5.3.7-8 'nel mondo mutabile e leggiere, Costanza è spesso il variar pensiero'). On *inconstantia* cf. Fulkerson 2013, e.g. 9-11.

1.8 introduces the equivalent of the first sentence). The short sentence in *Att.* 16.7.1 presents two words in asyndeton, *desiderari, subaccusari*, a device not common in the speeches; the first word is kind, the second somewhat less so (*subaccusare* seems unique to Cicero, and comes only two other times in him). The criticism is formally a parallel addition, but also stands out. Cicero's impetuous rejection of the plan displays a strong change of mind; *Phil.* 1.9 stresses the positive desire to return is stressed, and earlier had come (1.8) *M. Antoni contionem*, | *quae mihi ita placuit ut ea lecta de reuersione primum coeperim cogitare* |, 'M. Antony's speech, which pleased me so much that after reading it I began for the first time to think about turning back'. In *Att.* 16.7.1, by contrast with *primum coeperim cogitare*, the sentence [b] proceeds into [c], Cicero's dislike for the whole original plan of leaving.

The passage of Atticus' letter (or the whole letter, with *igitur* relating to a letter of Cicero's?) seems to have run: *bene igitur tu qui εὐθανακίαν, bene! relinque patriam! uelim χόλιον aliquod elimes ad me, oportuisse te istuc facere. nam si a Phaedro nostro esses, expedita excusatio esset; nunc quid respondemus? nam Brutus noster silet*, ' . . . Our friend Brutus says nothing.' Atticus' passage moves from a vigorous mixture of assent and disapproval to a more restrained wish for defence from Cicero: the agency in producing a defence is passed from the first person, Atticus, to the second, Cicero (and a third person, Brutus, excluded). Cicero makes the quotations part of an attack which builds up in vehemence until Brutus takes over for himself. Before the first quote, the attack has been gathering, but with a characteristic tactical show of generosity in the less bad case of Atticus' earlier approval: *sed haec, etiam si non prudenter . . .* is contrasted with *illud mirari satis non potui*. Whereas in 2 *probator* is a lower point than *suasor et impulsor*, and so marks careful mildness, in 3 *adprobabas* is a higher point than *prohibebas*, in a mounting structure; the question now presses, unlike the excusing question *quid debet . . . ?* in 2. *adprobabas* is taken

to a higher point in a still more hurt and indignant question: . . . *praesertim apud te qui id mirabiliter adprobasti?*¹⁸

The moves, and the movement, of the passage recall the impassioned fluency of the speeches. The response in 4, which gives *prob-* over to Cicero, reaches extreme language with the ironic *flagiti scilicet plenum et dedecoris*. But then it abruptly changes tack, in a manner not characteristic of the speeches. Instead of reproving Atticus for thinking this of the deed now, Cicero wishes that Atticus had thought this of the deed all along. The warm counter-factual *tu mihi, sicut esse soles, fuisses Cato* redounds to Atticus' praise, though voicing regret. The affection, the intricacy of thought, the jolts and the brevity bring us into the special world of the letters to Atticus. Part of that world too is the frequently tormented consciousness of the first person, which here finds sad expression. But resolution has now been achieved (end of 5), and the solitary journey is exchanged for determination on self-defence in Rome (6).

90% of the letters to Atticus are written in places other than Rome, as in general are the dialogues and treatises; 74% of the letters to people other than Atticus are written in Rome, where most of the speeches are performed (some were not performed). Communication with Atticus was part of existence in the country. That existence was neither somnolent nor static, but still created distance for reflection, distance from the political world, which consisted of people.¹⁹

The letters to Atticus do not exactly provide a vacant wilderness where the writer can luxuriate in uninhibited self-expression. The first person cares what the second person thinks, and also has himself to persuade. He often wishes to limit his own agency in recounting past decisions and making future ones; his separation from other minds includes not knowing

¹⁸ For εὐθανασία cf. Plb. 32.4.3.

¹⁹ Cf. Hutchinson 2016, 98.

what they really think. With this last problem the second person can help, although not even his views are always certain. None the less, for all the centrality of the Ciceronian first person in other Ciceronian types of writing, there is a much greater range in the letters to Atticus for modes of first-person utterance. First-person humour can go further, deeper self-reproach can appear, the speaker can be more unsure; and because the style is not so bound to cohesion and fluency, abrupt changes expressively capture the mobility of thought and the complexity of feeling. Brevity has different dimensions: small sentences can show large vision, broad vistas over Cicero's life can appear in brusque strokes or elegant mini-structures. The speeches of course diverge from each other, and internally vary the pace and size of sentences; rhetorical flow and ampler structuring can appear in the letters to Atticus. But those letters still have a different way of writing from the other works; their different approach to rhythm is an immediate sign of this.

It would be simple-minded to think that a lack of formality means an absence of shaping intelligence and verbal design. To take short and striking sentences: we may reluctantly pass over the esoteric works of Aristotle, the distinctive writing of which is so little appreciated; but elsewhere in reach of Cicero there are plenty of alliances between brevity and design, for example in Terence, in anecdotes of Greek great men, in the one-liners and sound-bites of political and forensic life, and indeed in new Atticist tendencies (germane to the *Philippics*). There is some value in divisions between works which Cicero released for general circulation and those which he restricted to the smallest of audiences: divisions make us aware of significant differences. But a barrier between artistic and artless would be completely misleading. It would also ignore the complex intertextuality of Ciceronian, senatorial, and equestrian life. Even papyrus private letters from Greek and Roman Egypt engage with other letters, and illustrate how meditated and negotiated interaction of texts is basic to the medium. But Cicero's letters to Atticus bring out, as a

feature of themselves and as aspects of Cicero's mental world, how his approach to everything he encounters is informed by a great span of texts, utterances, and *mots justes*, by philosophy, history, and rhetoric (all bound up with texts). Everything, for him and his culture, is permeated by shaped and shaping words, including, quite inescapably, everything he writes.

Even if we were implausibly to hypothesize inarticulate feelings which preceded Cicero's utterances, the letters to Atticus show a different stage, in which alert words and restless thoughts dramatize the complicated meetings of first person, second person, and the world. No writing of Cicero is more powerful.

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