

## *Exempla* and Ideology in Ciceronian Dialogue

This paper considers the intersection of the genre of dialogue and Cicero's use of *exempla*. The generic character of the dialogue becomes particularly relevant when assessing the truth-value of Cicero's characterizations and exemplary citations. *Exempla* have the potential to function differently in the dialogues than in, for example, Cicero's speeches because of the doubled layer of historical referentiality so common to the genre. That is, while Cicero does occasionally make use of an *exemplum* in his first-person prefaces, most of the references are ventriloquized through the mouths of the interlocutors, many of whose historical truth-value is already in question. By considering a sample of some of Cicero's favorite exemplary figures according to the manner in which they are used by Cicero as *exempla* within the dialogues, I will attempt to determine what such *exempla* can teach us about how Cicero viewed and employed elements and ideas of the past in the dialogues in particular.

Cicero considered a certain class of figure worthy to act both as an interlocutor and as an *exemplum* in other dialogues in which that figure does not speak. At stake in his selection of these figures was Cicero's own conception of the *boni* and, as I will argue, the principles of Panaetius' *persona* theory outlined by Cicero in the first book of *De Officiis*. These figures range from those with relatively small roles, such as L. Manlius Torquatus, interlocutor in *Fin.* 1-2 and the object of brief discussion in the *Brutus*, to those of much greater significance, culminating in Scipio Aemilianus, interlocutor in *De Republica* and *De Senectute*, and *exemplum* on dozens of occasions.

The first class tends to be identifiable by one or two pieces of information. So, for example, M. Pupius Piso Frugi, who appears as an interlocutor in *Fin.* 5, is consistently characterized by his interest in philosophical nomenclature (*Fin.* 4.73, *Brutus* 236) and his

fervency for Peripatetic philosophy (*Nat. Deor.* 1.16, *Brutus* 236, *De Or.* 1.104). In this role he becomes caricaturized, serving more as symbol of a particular set of values than as an individual. What is less predictable is that Cicero's usage of the second, more prominent class of *exempla*, for its part, bears many similarities to his use of this first type. For example, Cato Maior frequently appears as an example qua his authorship of the *Origines* (at least nine direct references), but Cicero only ever actually mentions two events narrated in this work (the prosecution of Galba, mentioned twice; and the tale of the passing of a flute at a banquet, told three times). This type of use hints that the dialogue's use of *exempla* more closely resembles that of oratory or poetry than historiography. That is, his goal seems to be persuasion, entertainment, or something else entirely, and not historically accurate representation. Cicero's *exempla* may accordingly be understood for their potential to demonstrate elements of his ideology and interest in pursuit of these goals.