

o cogitationes inanes meae! Uses and Abuses of Ciceronian *exclamatio*

Cicero the rhetorical theorist stresses the essential role of stirring audience emotion in persuasion (*Orator* 69, *De or.* 1.202; 2.115 & 178; v. esp. Wisse 1989). He further stresses that an audience will only feel emotionally stirred if the orator is stirred himself. Tinder, no matter how dry, will not burn without a spark. (*De or.* 2.190). Thus it is essential that the orator convey his own emotional engagement, whether felt or feigned (Hall 2014; Cavarzere 2011, with lit.). Resting atop this fundamental aspect of Ciceronian persuasion is an added layer of complexity. Most of Cicero's audiences, certainly his hearers in the senate and his juries in the courts, are themselves trained in public speaking. They carry the expectations of the rhetorical education that is a badge of their membership in the elite (Craig 2010:76). These expectations are clearest and most detailed for judicial speeches, which form the backbone of the treatments in Cicero's own *De Inventione* and in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, the two rhetorical manuals from Cicero's time that show us the kind of how-to rhetorical education that he and his elite audiences have in common. Thus a full understanding of Cicero's persuasive employment of emotion must account for the rhetorically educated audience's expectation for emotional appeals set forth in these works. While modern scholars of persuasive process criticism have long accounted for some of these teachings (v. Craig 2002: 517-520), one understudied aspect is the functioning of the recognized stylistic devices, both figures of speech and figures of thought, that the rhetorics prescribe as tools *to perform the orator's emotions*, and thus to stir those emotions in his audience. Quintilian will in the future treat this topic intelligently and at length, largely based on his study of Cicero's speeches (*IO* 9.2.26ff. with Russell 2001 *ad loc.*). But that discussion comes a century and a half after Cicero's pleadings before his rhetorically educated juries. Looking to the rhetorical lessons of his own time brings us to the catalogue of figures in

the 4th book of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s remarkably full treatment of 45 figures of speech and 19 figures of thought (Caplan 1954: lvi-lviii *et ad loc.*), identifies only two that specify the speaker's own show of emotion in order to engage the emotion of his hearers. These are the vaguely defined figure of thought, *exsuscitatio* (*RhetHer*.4.54), which is beyond the scope of a fifteen-minute paper, and the clearly defined figure of speech *exclamatio* (*RhetHer*. 4.22): "Exclamatio est quae conficit significationem doloris aut indignationis alicuius per hominis aut urbis aut loci aut rei cuiuspian compellationem" "Exclamatio is [the figure] which produces an expression of pain or indignation through the address of some person or city or place or thing."

This paper will contribute to the larger project of understanding Cicero's emotional appeals to a rhetorically sophisticated audience by first clarifying the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s definition of *exclamatio*, which differs substantially from Quintilian's account of *exclamatio*, *apostrophe*, or any other figure. Then, distilling from a fresh collection of the instances of *exclamatio* in Cicero's speeches, it will briefly exemplify Cicero's principal uses of this stylistic figure 1) to express his own *dolor* and appeal for the jurors' pity (*Planc.* 101 and parallels), 2) to express and inflame *indignatio* (*Verr.*2.5.163 and parallels), and 3) to manipulate his audience's expectations. This manipulation will be illustrated with a brief discussion of *Mil.* 94, "'O frustra' inquit 'mei suscepti labores, o spes fallaces, o cogitationes inanes meae!'" Cicero's client Milo famously declines to show the distress expected of a defendant. So the orator brazenly ventriloquizes his client's thoughts, and puts in the defendant's mouth an *exclamatio* to express the *dolor* and stir in the jurors the pity for which his client flatly refuses to ask.

15 minutes. Handout.

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