A Commentary on PANEGYRICI LATINI II(12)

An Oration Delivered by Pacatus Drepanius before the Emperor Theodosius I in the Senate at Rome, AD 389

ROGER REES

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The renowned Gallic poet Pacatus Drepanius journeyed to Rome in the summer of 389 CE to deliver a speech to the Emperor Theodosius; both men stood for the first time before the Roman senators. It was a moment of high political charge. The Latin speech survives and is here presented both in the original and with facing English translation; the introduction and commentary capture the groundbreaking character of the work and set it in its historical, rhetorical and literary contexts.

ROGER REES is a Professor of Classics at the University of St Andrews. He is a leading authority on the Latin oratorical collection known as the *XII Panegyrici Latini*. His publications include *Layers of Loyalty in Latin Panegyric 289–307* (2002) and *Latin Panegyric* (ed., 2012).

A COMMENTARY ON *PANEGYRICI LATINI* II(12)

AN ORATION DELIVERED BY PACATUS DREPANIUS BEFORE THE EMPEROR THEODOSIUS I IN THE SENATE AT ROME, 389 CE

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PREFACE

My defence for writing a big book on this speech is simply that the speech is long, important and underrated.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	*L'Année Epigraphique*. Paris, 1889–
BMCRE	*Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, ed. H. Mattingly and R. A. G. Carson. London, 1923–63
CAH	*Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd series). Cambridge, 1970–2005
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berlin, 1853–
ICUR	*Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*. Rome, 1857–
ILT	*Inscriptions Latines de la Tunisie*, ed. A. Merlin. Paris, 1944
KHS	R. Kühner, F. Holzweissig and K. Stegmann, *Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache*. 2 vols (in 3 parts). Hanover, 1912–14
L&S	*A Latin Dictionary*, ed. C. T. Lewis and C. Short. Oxford, 1879
LHS	I. M. Leumann, J. B. Hofmann and A. Szantyr, *Lateinische Grammatik*. 2 vols. Munich, 1963
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. Zurich, 1981–2009
LSA	*Last Statues of Antiquity* (www.laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/)
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P. G. W. Glare. Oxford, 1968
PanLat	*XII Panegyrici Latini*
PLRE	*Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (3 vols.), ed. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris. Cambridge, 1971–92
RIC	*Roman Imperial Coinage*. London, 1923–
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. Munich, 1894–

INTRODUCTION

1 PACATUS DREPANIUS

Some 1,600 years have passed since the death of Latin[i]us Pacatus Drepanius, and he remains an important but shadowy figure in what we know about literary culture in the western Empire in the late fourth century.[1] The full name is preserved in manuscripts of the panegyric that is the subject of this book;[2] in most other ancient references he is known severally as 'Pacatus' or 'Drepanius', but the names are rare enough and the contexts plausible enough for most moderns to accept that they denote the same man;[3] crucially, Ausonius twice connects the two names Drepanius and Pacatus.[4] In modern scholarship he has generally been known simply as 'Pacatus'.[5] From letters we have, we know that he was an acquaintance of Symmachus, the consul of 391, although the nature of their association and their dates elude us;[6] and from literary dedications in works by Ausonius (consul in 379) we know that he was a friend of that Gallic poet and

[1] On the *–ius* suffix in nomenclature, see Salway 1994: 131; Sarullo 2013: 540.

[2] See below ad loc.

[3] He is *Pacatus* at Aus. *Technop. Praef.*, 5.2 and 16.2, although there are MSS variants (see Green 1991: 596; Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 54–8); *Drepanius* at Sid. *Ep.* 8.11.1–2 and both *CTh* 9.2.4 and 9.42.13; *Pacatus* in the salutation to Symm. *Ep.* 8.12; 9.61; 64; *PLRE* 1.272. Valpy 1828: 1550.

[4] *Pacatus* at Aus. *Praef. Var.* 4.13, prefaced *Ausonius Drepanio filio*; and *Lud. Sep. Sap.*, prefaced *Ausonius consul Drepanio proconsuli sal.*, has the vocatives *Drepani* (2) and *Pacate* (5).

[5] Baehrens 1921; Hanslik 1942; Cameron 2011: 228, following the practice of Étienne (1962) and Turcan-Verkerk (2003), notes that he should be called 'Drepanius'.

[6] Symm. *Ep.* 8.12 is dated by Callu 1995: 118 to 397; 9.61 and 64 are dated by Callu 2002: 39–40 to 390 (?); cf. Sogno 2006: 69.

teacher of rhetoric;[7] some have surmised that Ausonius was his former teacher.[8]

Pacatus Drepanius addressed his prose panegyric to the emperor Theodosius in Rome, in the summer of 389.[9] In the panegyric to Theodosius, the orator identifies himself unequivocally as Gallic: he opens by apologising for the roughness of his *Transalpinus sermo* ('transalpine speech', 1.3); describes his journey to Rome *ab ultimo Galliarum recessu, qua litus Oceani cadentem excipit solem* ('from the furthest recess of Gaul, where the shore of Ocean receives the setting sun', 2.1); uses the first-person plural of *Galli* (23.1, 24.6, 25.1); refers to Gaul as *mea Gallia* (24.4); and foresees his own reception back in the cities of Gaul after his delegation to Rome (*quae reuersus urbibus Galliarum dispensabo miracula!,* 'what wonders I will dispense to the cities of Gaul when I get back!', 47.5).[10] A passing remark in a letter from Sidonius in the mid-fifth century allows for further narrowing-down – he connects 'Drepanius' to the Nitiobriges, a people from the Agen (Aginium) region of the Garonne.[11] Although it has found much support, more vulnerable is the conjecture that he was a professor of rhetoric at Bordeaux (see below, §5).

If the evidence of names is accepted, soon after he addressed Theodosius in Rome, Pacatus Drepanius was Proconsul of Africa in 390 (*CTh* 9.2.4, 4 February 390).[12] Again, if we accept the evidence of names, some time before the summer of 393 he

[7] See above, n. 3.

[8] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 9–51, 149; Cameron 2011: 229; McGill 2017: 269–75.

[9] See below, §3.

[10] Rees 2014.

[11] *Ep.* 8.11.1–2 – see below. Valpy 1828: 1551. McGill 2017: 274 n. 93 identifies Pacatus Drepanius' home as the 'south of France'.

[12] That his predecessor in that office, Felix Iunioris Polemius, was Praetorian Prefect of Italy and Illyricum by 16 January 390 (*CTh* 15.1.26) suggests Pacatus Drepanius was *Proconsul Africae* by then, perhaps even late 389; *PLRE* 1.710, Matthews 1971: 1078. *ILT* 619 Pacat[o Drepanio]. Ausonius *Technop.* and *Ludus Sept. Sap.* identify Pacatus Drepanius as proconsul.

became *comes rei privatae* to Theodosius in Constantinople (*CTh* 9.42.13, 12 June 393).[13] Short offices were quite standard in the late fourth century, at least in civilian administration – for example, from the reasonably complete lists of holders of the proconsulship of Africa between 357 and 417, it has been estimated that the average tenure of office was barely more than a year.[14] Pacatus Drepanius' Gallic identity might have been a factor in his political appointments; John Matthews cited the examples of Claudius Lachanius, Flavius Rufinus and Marcellus as Gauls who found favour under Theodosius.[15] What is less clear is what would have secured Pacatus Drepanius his appointment in Africa in 390. Again, later fourth-century parallels are illuminating: for example, Symmachus had held the proconsulship of Africa in 373, after he had been *quaestor*, *praetor* and *corrector Lucaniae et Brittiorum*;[16] before he was appointed *Proconsul Africae* by Julian in 363, Clodius Octavianus had already held a priesthood and the vicariate at Rome.[17] It might be the case that Pacatus Drepanius had held an administrative office before 389 and so gained suitable experience to be considered for the African proconsulship in 390[18] – and from the autobiographical detail of his speech, we would assume such a post would have been held

[13] Chadwick 1955: 29–30; Lippold 1968a: 228; Matthews 1971: 1078–82; Cameron 1985: 175; Nixon and Saylor Rodgers 1994: 439; Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 52–4, 149–52.

[14] Jones 1964: 381: 'The general practice would then seem to have been to keep men in any given office for a brief spell only. This tendency was more marked in the civilian than in the military offices'; *PLRE* 1.1072–4; see also Kelly 2004: 37–40, 91–2.

[15] Matthews 1971; see Kelly 2004: 173, 194.

[16] *PLRE* 1.865–6; Sogno 2006: 6.

[17] *PLRE* 1.637.

[18] Nixon 1983 demonstrated how few panegyrists of the Tetrarchic and Constantinian periods were engaged in imperial service at the time they addressed their speeches – although some exceptions and the case of Claudius Mamertinus (see below, §4) prove there was considerable variety in this respect.

in Gaul.[19] But no such post is attested, and besides, comparison with other careers suggests that sometimes relevant experience or expertise were by no means necessary prerequisites in securing even major civilian appointments in the imperial administration. A. H. M. Jones observed: 'A proconsul had little more work to do than any other provincial governor … These offices were therefore in especial demand, particularly by members of the senatorial aristocracy who wished to maintain their prestige and precedence without an undue expenditure of effort.'[20] It seems impossible to pinpoint conclusively, therefore, what qualified Pacatus Drepanius for proconsular office, and much must be left to conjecture; but at the very least, it is clear that his panegyric did his career no harm, and it is tempting to posit a close and causal relationship between his presence in Rome in the summer of 389 and his appointment to the proconsulship of Africa some months later. His panegyric can be seen as part of his concerted – and successful – attempt to secure his own good standing in a new political landscape.[21]

[19] For his references to Gaul, see above. Such a post would have been held under Magnus Maximus, and so would have necessitated some carefully handled representation after the usurper's death (see below, §2): we might suspect that, rather like Pliny the Younger, who under Trajan had to deal with the success his career had enjoyed under Domitian, or like Symmachus, who under Theodosius offered a defence for a panegyric he had addressed to Magnus Maximus, Pacatus Drepanius felt the need to account for his activity in Gaul between 383 and 388. For Pliny, see Gibson and Morello 2012; for Symmachus, see Sogno 2006: 68–9.

[20] Jones 1964: 386. See also Marrou 1956: 310–12; Matthews 1975: 35–49, 107–15; Matthews 1989: 271–4, Sivan 1993: 79 and Kelly 2004: 44–5, 193–6. Zosimus 4.28.3 alleges that under Theodosius, provincial governorships were for sale.

[21] See below, §§ 3 and 5. Jones 1964: 388: 'Literary distinction was also very highly prized.' Sogno 2006: 69 suggests that Ausonius recommended Pacatus Drepanius for the delivery of the speech; see also Sivan 1994: 591. See Gillett 2012: 267 on the rewards a panegyrist might hope to receive. Claudian is an instructive parallel, a panegyrical poet and also tribune and notary in imperial service, *CIL* 6.1710, Ware 2012: 1–5, 30–1.

With these details of his biography and career, his birth can hardly be thought to have been later than 355.[22] No epigraphic or documentary references to Pacatus Drepanius can be dated after 393, but the scholarly consensus is that, like other western provincials who held administrative office in the East, he returned to Gaul, perhaps in 395.[23]

It seems, then, that Pacatus Drepanius was well respected in his own community, well connected outside it, and a man of power and influence beyond his immediate circles. But in his lifetime and later in antiquity, Pacatus Drepanius' principal reputation was as a poet. In a prefatory poem, Ausonius paid him a very estimable compliment:[24]

> hoc nullus mihi carior meorum
> quem pluris faciunt nouem sorores
> quam cunctos alios Marone dempto.
> 'Pacatum haud dubie, poeta, dicis?'
> ipse est.

> 'None of my own family is dearer to me than the man whom the Nine Sister Muses bless more than all the others, Vergil excepted. "Surely you speak of Pacatus, o poet?" That's him.' (*Praef. Var.* 4.10–14)[25]

Later, in the middle of the fifth century, in a letter already mentioned, the Gallic poet Sidonius Apollinaris wrote of him in terms that characterise him as a poet: the context is a quarrel between two Gallic peoples, the Nitiobriges (from the Agen

[22] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 51–4 puts his birth at 350–5.

[23] Although on the dating of Symmachus' letters, see n. 5. Matthews 1971: 1088, Delmaire 1989: 127, Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 58, 151–2. In part this dating is based on identification of echoes of Pacatus Drepanius' panegyric in Claudian and Ammianus Marcellinus, each writing in the 390s; Kehding 1899: 28–53; Cameron 1970: 106, 254, 383; Ware 2012: 5–10, 26; Sabbah 1978: 323–7. See below, §5.

[24] Rees 2013a: 253–4; McGill 2017: 269–75.

[25] See also *Technop.* 1 *Praef.* and *Ludus sept. sap.* 1–18, where Pacatus Drepanius' reaction to Ausonius' poetry is invited.

region) and the Vesunnici (modern Périgueux), both claiming Lupus as their kinsman, and Sidonius addresses Lupus; *tu uero utriusque praesentiam tuam disposite uicissimque partitus nunc Drepanium illis, modo istis restituis Anthedium. et si a te instructio rhetorica poscatur, hi Paulinum illi Alcimum non requirunt* ('In fact you split your time fairly between them in turn, now giving Drepanius back to the former, now Anthedius back to the latter. And if rhetorical instruction is demanded of you, the latter don't miss Paulinus, nor the former Alcimus', *Ep*. 8.11.1–2[26]). The references assume the reader's easy identification of Drepanius and Anthedius as poets, and Paulinus and Alcimus as rhetors.[27]

Ausonius opens his poem with a verbatim quotation of Catullus 1.1 *cui dono lepidum nouum libellum?* ('To whom do I give this smart new pamphlet?'), so aligning himself with the Veronese poet, and, by extension, his dedicatee Pacatus Drepanius with Catullus', Cornelius Nepos.[28] This provides the basis for characterisation of Pacatus Drepanius as 'no less learned and more kind than he whom Gaul offered to Catullus' (*nec doctum minus et magis benignum* | *quam quem Gallia praebuit Catullo*, 8–9).[29] In the verse preface to the *Ludus septem sapientum*, dedicated to him as proconsul and so dated to 390, Pacatus Drepanius is again characterised as *doctus* ('learned', 16).

[26] Rees 2013a: 253–4.

[27] For Anthedius, Sid. *Carm*. 9.311–12, 22.pr.2–3, *PLRE* 2.93; for Paulinus *PLRE* 2.846; for Latinus Alcimus Alethius, Aus. *Prof. Burd*. 2, Jer. *Chron*. 354, *PLRE* 1.136–8.

[28] McGill 2017: 273–4.

[29] Nepos was from Cisalpine Gaul (Pliny the Elder *NH* 3.127); his literary output included the *Chronicles* and some poetry (Pliny *Ep*. 5.3.6); his kindness to Catullus is implicit in Cat. 1.3–4, his learning in 6–7. Assimilation of Pacatus Drepanius with Nepos via Cat. continues in the first preface to the *Technopaegnion* (dated to 390 by the dedication *Pacato proconsuli*), *tu facies ut sint aliquid* ('you will bring it about that [the poems] are something'), recalling Cat.1.3–4 *solebas* | *meas esse aliquid putare nugas* ('you were accustomed to think my poetic trifles were something').

For centuries readers were unable to test Ausonius' or Sidonius' estimation of Pacatus Drepanius as a poet[30] – until 2003, that is, when a radical reattribution of a poem entitled *De Cereo Paschali* identified its author as Pacatus Drepanius. The poem had been long since and erroneously known (and largely neglected) as a work of a ninth-century author, Florus of Lyons.[31] But Anne-Marie Turcan-Verkerk reattributed the poem to Pacatus Drepanius, the thesis hanging on two different arguments.[32] First is the name Drepanius: as is the case for the literary, epigraphic and documentary sources discussed above, the very rarity of the name encourages its identification with the panegyricist.[33] Secondly, an aggregation of lexical parallels between the panegyric and the poem urges the case for common authorship (see below at 2.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 5.3, 8.3, 10.1, 20.3, 22.2, 23.1, 27.5).[34] Turcan-Verkerk's thesis and its ramifications were welcomed in review and reaction.[35]

Perhaps the most sensational feature of the reattribution of *De Cereo Paschali* to Pacatus Drepanius is that it characterises him as a Christian.[36] The poem opens with an invocation, *alme deus rerum* ('nourishing God of nature', 1), then moves to a catalogue of natural phenomena under God's sway (2–14); God is called to look kindly on those celebrating the single divinity under its triple name, who unlike other cults, in pure prayer, honour God and his son, born of a virgin mother (15–30); a crowd of worshippers bring candles to the altars to illuminate their rite (31–9); the whole world is said to confess Christ, whose name and praises will be sung for ever (40–50). The rite may be unclear, but

[30] See, for example, Scheffer in Valpy 1828: 1552–3.

[31] Scheffer, for example, denied any connection between 'Drepanius Florus', a hymn-writer, and Pacatus Drepanius (in Valpy 1828: 1553).

[32] Turcan-Verkerk 2003.

[33] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 16–17, 36–7; Cameron 2011: 229 'this unusual name'.

[34] Turcan-Verkerk (ad locc. 72–80) also claims some thematic and stylistic parallels.

[35] E.g. Nixon 2006; Cameron 2011: 227–30.

[36] Liebeschuetz 1981: 396–97.

the vocative *Christe* (45) and the reference to the Trinity (18) unequivocally cast the poem as Christian. Alan Cameron seized on this to juxtapose the poem with Pacatus Drepanius' panegyric: the poem is Christian, the speech, according to Cameron, pagan (on religion in the panegyric, see below, §6).[37] Cameron used this as a tidy illustration of moderns' inclination to distinguish too rigorously between pagan and Christian in late antiquity; in Cameron's view, Pacatus Drepanius showed how an adept literary figure could conform to the demands of genre without embarrassment. In fact, Turcan-Verkerk had suggested that *De Cereo Paschali* can be dated with a fair degree of confidence to 393–6, and therefore, that Pacatus Drepanius might have converted to Christianity after 389 (the date of his panegyric) and before writing the poem.[38] She also concluded that he was a layperson rather than a cleric.[39]

The date of Pacatus Drepanius' death is not attested, but building on her reattribution, Turcan-Verkerk identifies him as 'Pacatus', the author of a Christian tract against Porphyry, dating to the second decade of the fifth century, and known (only) for its citation by Victor of Capua;[40] and also as the addressee – again, named Pacatus – of a letter dated to 431, written by Uranius, presbyter to Paulinus of Nola.[41] In the letter, Uranius discloses that Pacatus was preparing to write in verse a life of Paulinus, recently deceased. It is probable that Paulinus, who had been a student and correspondent of Ausonius in Bordeaux, knew Symmachus too;[42] such a circle of acquaintances could quite plausibly have included Pacatus Drepanius, perhaps in

[37] Cameron 2011: 227–30.

[38] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 82–6, 140–8, 150.

[39] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 110–12.

[40] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 132–3, following Harnack 1921.

[41] Turcan-Verkerk 2003: 135–7, quoting Uranius from *PL* 53, cols. 859ff.; the text, known as *De Obitu Paulini*, is translated into English in Trout 1999: 293–8.

[42] Trout 1999: 36–8; Coneybeare 2000: 3–8.

his late seventies by 431. Like the tract against Porphyry, the poem has not survived (if it was ever written). Although Turcan-Verkerk's evidence is circumstantial and depends very heavily on the reattribution of the poem to Pacatus Drepanius, the portrait of a long-lived and versatile Christian author is appealing.[43]

Proud Gaul, friend to men of letters, orator in Rome, Christian poet, and high-ranking government official in Africa and the East – Latin[i]us Pacatus Drepanius seems to have been a brilliant and versatile man.[44] Even if he was unusually successful in several fields, in his *curriculum vitae* is a set of achievements whose interrelationships, although difficult to pinpoint, illuminate a particular time in Roman culture. So, although his speech now dominates what we know for sure about Pacatus Drepanius, he remains a valuable witness to relations between the provinces and capital, between the two capitals, between prose and poetry, and between paganism and Christianity.

2 GAUL IN THE LATE FOURTH CENTURY

By the late fourth century Gaul already had a rich and eventful history as part of the Roman Empire.[45] Hundreds of years had passed since the consolidation of Republican Roman interest in Narbonensis; a rampant Julius Caesar had pushed further north, towards the Rhine and across the Channel to Britain; the following decades had seen various struggles, some more costly than others, but gradually a hard-won congruence of Roman

[43] See e.g. Pataroli 1708: 451 for diffidence about the attribution of Christian texts to Pacatus Drepanius; Baehrens 1921 was not convinced by Harnack 1921; on the possible assimilation, Trout 1999: 264 'surely not the Aquitanian orator'.

[44] See §5 below for the possibility that Pacatus Drepanius was also a literary editor and a professor of rhetoric.

[45] Jullian 1920–6: vols. 3 and 4; Woolf 1998: esp. 29–47. This section is deliberately painted with broad brushstrokes; for more detailed analysis of the military and political narratives as recorded by Pacatus Drepanius, see below, §6 and the commentary ad locc.

and Gallic cultural practices and political interests had rendered violence less common. Veteran colonies had first appeared in Narbonensis, later in the Rhine region; along with others, many evolved into the centres of urbanised Roman Gaul. The infrastructure of road networks and organised water supply had transformed the landscape and economy; great cities like Narbonne, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Lyons, Nîmes, Vienne and Clermont-Ferrand became the most enduring and conspicuous centres of human activity. Meanwhile, under the emperor Claudius, Gallic aristocrats had been granted the right to be admitted to the Senate – in effect, to participate in Roman governance. Cultural change was not without political upheaval: in the empire-wide confusion of the third century, a separatist 'Gallic empire' under Postumus had briefly held power around Trier, Cologne and Mainz, but it hardly represented a reaction to Roman culture and was soon brushed aside;[46] later, in the 280s, a people known as the Bagaudae had ravaged parts of Gaul, but were crushed by the emperor Maximian.[47] A few years later, Carausius had set up a short-lived separatist state in Britain and northern Gaul.[48] In the mid-fourth century Gaul had witnessed intermittent unrest, such as the usurpation of Magnentius, which ended in the Battle of Mons Seleucus against Constantius II in 353 CE, and a further attempt at usurpation two years later, by Claudius Silvanus. But perhaps more pressing than these isolated examples of crises in domestic government was the chronic threat of invasion from the Rhine frontier.[49] Strategically placed on the Mosel, Trier was an important base for military operations on the Rhine frontier, and as one of the provincial capitals patronised by the Dyarchy and Tetrarchy under Diocletian, was regularly home to the reigning Roman emperor during the late third and fourth centuries.[50]

[46] Drinkwater 1987.
[47] Thompson 1974; Lassandro 2000: 105–44.
[48] Casey 1994.
[49] Szidat 2015: 120.
[50] Wightman 1970: 58–62; Szidat 2015: 121–6.

For example, although not Gallic himself, from 367 the emperor Valentinian I – 'the last of the great military rulers of the Roman empire'[51] – spent considerable time and resources shoring up the Rhine *limes*.[52] If Gaul was not the birthplace of any enduring fourth-century emperors, it was temporary home to many.[53]

Valentinian died in 375, leaving his brother Valens and his son Gratian as Augusti. Within days of his father's death, another son was proclaimed Augustus, as Valentinian II, although he was only four years old.[54] But the biggest blows to the House of Valentinian were still to be felt. Valens was killed in action against the Goths in the Battle of Adrianople on 9 August 378;[55] five years later, Gratian was assassinated near Lyons by Andragathius, a general fighting for Magnus Maximus.[56] Maximus was of Spanish origin but had been raised to imperial power by his troops in Britain, where he had been serving as *comes Britanniarum*.[57] On Gratian's death, Maximus based his rule in Trier, from where he ruled Gaul, Spain and Britain. Meanwhile, Valentinian II, now twelve years old, was based in Milan, and not well placed to avenge his half-brother's assassination. However, he was able to enlist the support of an imperial colleague.

Theodosius had been inaugurated as Augustus in January 379. Like Maximus, he had been born in Spain, *c.*346 CE, to Flavius Theodosius.[58] The elder Theodosius had served as *comes rei militaris* (368–9) and *magister equitum* (369–75), in which office he put

51 Matthews 1975: 33.

52 E.g. Amm. Marc. 28.2.1, 5.11, 30.3.1.

53 Drinkwater 2007: 266–319.

54 Amm. Marc. 30.10.4.

55 Lenski 2002: 325–41.

56 Zosimus 4.35.3–6; McEvoy 2013: 83–6; Szidat asserts 'Gratian was overthrown because of his preference for Alans and his inexperience as a ruler' (2015: 131).

57 Ensslin 1930; Lee 2015: 103 with bibliography, on Maximus' rank; and Omissi 2018: 263–4.

58 For biographies of Theodosius, see Lippold 1968b and Williams and Friell 1994.

down the revolt of Firmus in Africa (in 373).[59] In 374, as the *dux Moesiae*, the young Theodosius, 'his first beard just beginning to grow', successfully repelled the invading Sarmatians;[60] but late in 375 or early in 376, Theodosius *comes* was arrested and executed at Carthage.[61] The circumstances and reasons remain very obscure.[62] It can hardly be coincidence that about the same time, the younger Theodosius interrupted his promising military career and withdrew to his rural retreat in Spain; there he married Flavia Flaccilla, who gave birth to Pulcheria and Arcadius. Sources are not clear on the circumstances surrounding the end of this period of retreat, but Theodosius returned to military service on the Danube frontier and was heralded Augustus in January 379.[63] Theodosius proclaimed his infant son Arcadius Augustus in January 383, a development not recognised by Gratian.[64] When Gratian was assassinated in Gaul on 25 August the same year, Theodosius was immersed in imperial administrative business in Constantinople.[65]

Theodosius' attitude towards Maximus in the years immediately following the assassination of Gratian is elusive.[66] It seems likely that it was subject to circumstance and opportunity. Perhaps Theodosius was not at liberty to act as he might have wanted, but was effectively held back by military concerns in the eastern empire, where the Goths and Persians variously demanded attention.[67] Zosimus writes of a treaty between Theodosius and

59 *PLRE* 1.902–4; Matthews 1975: 93–5. To distinguish him from his son, he is often referred to as Theodosius *comes* in scholarship.

60 Amm. Marc. 29.6.15–16 *prima etiam tum lanugine iuuenis* (at 15); Jones 1964: 386 attributes Theodosius' appointment to his father's position.

61 See below on chapter 5; Demandt 1969; Matthews 1975: 64; Nixon and Saylor Rodgers 1994: 517–19.

62 See below on chapter 9.

63 See below on chapters 10 and 11.

64 McLynn 1994: 154; McEvoy 2013: 83.

65 See below on chapter 23.

66 McEvoy 2013: 86–7; Kelly 2015: 215; Omissi 2018: 266–8.

67 Lippold 1968a: 229 n. 11; Matthews 1975: 177–8, esp. on Them. *Orat.* 18; Ando 2000: 248–9.

Maximus, but adds that Theodosius was privately planning to declare war (4.37.2–3).[68] In 384 Theodosius gave instructions for images of himself, Valentinian II and Maximus to be displayed in Alexandria (Zos. 4.37.3). The consuls for 386 were Theodosius' baby son Honorius (b. 9 September 384) and Maximus' Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, Evodius;[69] they were recognised both in the East and in the West, although Matthews thought this a 'temporary remission in what might otherwise be best described as a "cold war"'.[70] Meanwhile, the relationship between Maximus in Trier and Valentinian II in Milan was evolving: through a range of loyal appointments, Valentinian controlled Italy and Africa; Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, twice travelled to Trier to negotiate with Maximus for the return of Gratian's body to his half-brother; Maximus seems to have remained steadfast and dismissive, although there were signs too of cooperation between the courts in relation to a military response to barbarian threats.[71]

To the chagrin of Ambrose, Valentinian II followed the Arian tendency of his influential mother Justina. Theodosius and Maximus, both Spanish in origin, were orthodox Catholics, and an unusual episode in church history might be thought likely to have presented them with some common ground.[72] At the Synod of Caesaraugusta (Saragossa), convened in 380, the ascetic practices and other activities of Priscillian, Bishop of Avila, had been condemned as heretical.[73] The Synod's ruling was confirmed by Gratian. In 382 the Priscillianists secured an edict of toleration, not from Gratian or Damasus, the Bishop of Rome, or from Ambrose, but from Macedonius, the *magister officiorum* at Milan. But after Maximus' usurpation, a synod at Bordeaux in 384

[68] See below on chapter 30.

[69] Burns 1994: 93; Matthews 1975: 179.

[70] Matthews 1975: 179; see also Vanderspoel 1995: 211–12.

[71] Matthews 1975: 176–81.

[72] Matthews 1975: 160–71; Chadwick 1976; Burrus 1995.

[73] Sulp. Sev. *Chron.* 2.47.1.

condemned the Priscillianists again; Priscillian next appealed to Maximus, and a hearing was held at Trier before the praetorian prefect Evodius. Evodius' recommendation to Maximus was that the condemnation be upheld. Seven people, including Priscillian himself and Euchrotia, wife of the poet and rhetor Delphidius, were executed, and others were exiled. Maximus' intervention in ecclesiastical affairs provoked outrage, but not from Theodosius, a fellow Catholic; his severe attitude towards Manichees suggests he would have approved of the condemnation of Priscillianism.[74] It is perhaps hazardous to interpret the sources' silence about Theodosius' attitude to the affair, but the fact that Evodius was recognised in the East as a consul for 386 might suggest a measure of approval of the condemnation of the Priscillianists.[75]

However, if the consulship of 386 represents a relaxation of political tension, it was not to last for long. Maximus crossed the Cottian Alps into northern Italy in the summer of 387. The reasons for the timing of this invasion are not clear – perhaps it was simply opportunistic.[76] Valentinian II was in no state of preparation to confront Maximus in battle, and fled to Thessalonica, from where he appealed to Theodosius for help.[77] The literary record gives different accounts of his motives, but Theodosius agreed to Valentinian's appeal and travelled west to face Maximus, although not until the following year.[78] Meanwhile, in Milan, Maximus assumed the court and there, probably in January 388, Symmachus addressed a panegyric to him. The sources do not record in detail Valentinian's role in the campaign, but it is clear enough that Theodosius' army travelled up through the Balkans in the summer of 388 while Maximus established his military base at Aquileia in north-east Italy.[79] Two

[74] Frend 1984: 639–40.
[75] But see below, §6 and chapter 29.
[76] See below on chapter 30; Kelly 2015: 216.
[77] Zosimus 4.43.1–2; Socrates *HE* 5.12.9.
[78] Zosimus 4.43.1–2 and 4.45.4. Various motives – political, strategic and personal – jockey for position.
[79] McLynn 1994: 293–4.

short battles decided the war, and Maximus was captured and executed.[80] His general Andragathius, who had killed Gratian five years earlier, drowned himself.[81] The victorious Theodosius sent Arbogastes, his *magister militum*, to Gaul to kill Maximus' son Victor, who had been elevated to the rank of Caesar by his father.[82] The usurpation was over.

According to Zosimus, Valentinian II was restored to power in Gaul, Italy and elsewhere (4.47.2); a law published on 14 June 389 seems to locate Valentinian in Trier;[83] later, he went to Vienne, where he was to die in 392.[84] Immediately after the campaign against Maximus, Theodosius stayed in northern Italy, and then in 389 paid a visit to Rome.[85]

3 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SPEECH

In combination, the historian Socrates and some later chronicles establish that Theodosius visited Rome with his son Honorius (Socrates, *HE* 5.14.3) between 13 June (see the year 389 for *Cons. Const.* 389,[86] *Fasti Vindobonenses*,[87] and the *Chronicon*

[80] See below on chapters 34–8.

[81] Zosimus 4.47.1; Socrates *HE* 5.14.1.

[82] Zosimus 4.47.1.

[83] *CTh* 4.22.3; McLynn 1994: 309, McEvoy 2013: 92.

[84] *RIC* 9.30, 37, 50; *Epit. de Caes.* 48.7; Matthews 1975: 227; Williams and Friell 1994: 66 locate Valentinian in Milan in the summer of 389. Socrates *HE* 5.14.3 appears to have Valentinian journey to Rome with Theodosius, which must be in error.

[85] *CTh* 15.14.6, 7, issued in Aquileia and Milan respectively; Matthews 1975: 225.

[86] *his cons. introiuit Theodosius Aug. in urbem Romam cum Honorio filio suo die iduum Iuniarum et dedit congiarium Romanis* ('When these men were consuls, Theodosius Augustus entered the city of Rome with his son Honorius on 13 June and gave a distribution to the Romans').

[87] *his cons. Theodosius Romam introiuit cum Honorio idus Iunias et exiuit inde III kal. Septemb.* ('When these men were consuls, Theodosius entered Rome with Honorius on 13 June and departed from there on 30 August').

Marcellini Comitis[88]) and 30 August/1 September 389.[89] No doubt the romance of the city's great ancestry and its topographical and architectural reality had their appeal, but his visit was more political than recreational.[90] Pacatus Drepanius is unequivocal – his speech was delivered in Rome (1.2; 47.5). In his closing chapter, he recalls Theodosius' conduct at the Senate House and the Rostra; his visiting public and private buildings; and how he processed through the city in what seems to have been a triumph (see below, 47.3).[91] The dates of his stay in Rome would have seen the first anniversary of the victory over Maximus: a triumph, if such there was, and even the delivery of Pacatus Drepanius' speech itself could have been part of the anniversary celebrations.[92] That the anniversary became an established item on the Roman festival calendar is suggested by Procopius, writing in the sixth century, who uses the present tense of its celebration by the Romans (*Hist.* 3.4.16). Mark Humphries created a composite picture of what celebrations at Rome of civil war victories might have looked like in the fourth century – imperial triumphal *aduentus*, commemorative games, ceremonies accommodating the delivery of panegyrics, and dedication of monuments.[93]

In addition to Theodosius, Pacatus Drepanius spoke before a Senatorial audience: *huc accedit auditor senatus* ('In addition to this, my audience is the Senate', 1.3); we might assume from this that the location was the Senate House. In 389 the Senate House

[88] *Theodosius imperator cum Honorio filio suo Romam mense Iunio introiuit, congiarium Romano populo tribuit urbeque egressus est kal. Septembris* ('The emperor Theodosius entered Rome with his son Honorius in the month of June, gave a distribution to the Roman people and left the city on 1 September').

[89] Zosimus does not record the visit to Rome: at 4.48.1 he narrates Theodosius returning to Thessalonica. For a modern discussion of the circumstances surrounding the speech, see Valpy 1828: 1550.

[90] Matthews 1975: 227; Williams and Friell 1994: 65–6; Humphries 2015: 162–66.

[91] Matthews 1975: 228. Note the contested text at 47.3 – see ad loc.

[92] Socrates *HE* 5.15.4; Claud. *VI Cons. Hon.* 392–5; McCormick 1986: 45.

[93] Humphries 2015: 156–61.

was about a century old, having been rebuilt after a fire in the 280s.[94] However, it is notable that at 47.3, *quis in curia fueris* ('your manner in the Senate House'), there is no demonstrative adjective or other word to emphasise his location.[95] In the Republican and earlier imperial period, the Senate is said to have met on occasion in places such as the Capitol, the Temple of Concord, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus or the Temple of Castor and Pollux;[96] in the early fifth century there is evidence that the Senate met in a private house, albeit a very grand one.[97] Perhaps Pacatus Drepanius addressed Theodosius somewhere else in the city, but the image of the ghosts of eminent Republican orators attending the speech (1.4) might best suit a setting in a public space such as the Senate House.

If all the exciting ceremonial and elegant oratory before the emperor and the togate aristocracy of Rome constituted pleasing political theatre, we should not consider it devoid of meaningful substance. For while it remains difficult to reconstruct the attitude towards recent events of ordinary Romans, for Emperor, Senate and orator a great deal was at stake in the summer of 389.[98]

Imperial visits to Rome were rare occasions in the fourth century; the most recent triumphal entry seems to have been that of Constantius II in 357, famously recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus (16.10).[99] Such visits could no longer have been considered routine.[100] As far as our evidence attests, this was

[94] Coarelli 2007: 57–9.

[95] McLynn 1994: 310; Kelly 2015: 216–17.

[96] Talbert 1984: 113–20.

[97] Matthews 2000: 32–4.

[98] Gillett 2012: 279.

[99] Barnes 1975b sets out the evidence for eight such visits, against the three attested by Claudian *VI Con Hon.* 393. Zosimus 4.45.4 also has Valentinian II being sent to Rome in 388 though there is no evidence that he actually arrived; Humphries 2015:151–5, 160–1.

[100] Grig and Kelly 2012a: 18–23. Matthews 1975: 178, 225; Matthews 1989: 11–12 suggests that Ammianus' account of Constantius' entry was written 'with Theodosius' State Visit in mind'. McLynn 1994: 88, 151; C. Kelly 2015: 216; G. Kelly 2016: 347, 353–4.

Theodosius' first visit to Rome, at least as emperor: until this point, he seems to have spent his entire reign engaged in campaigns or negotiation on the eastern frontiers, with occasional periods in Thessalonica and Constantinople.[101] But if, after the defeat of Maximus, there remained in some quarters an expectation that Valentinian II would be restored to the constitutional authority the usurper had seized from him – that is, effective jurisdiction over Italy and Africa – as well as that over Britain, Gaul and Spain, which his brother Gratian had exercised until his assassination, Theodosius was decisive in seizing the political initiative.[102] While Valentinian went north-west to Vienne, Lyons and Trier, presumably to confirm afresh his legitimate rule over Gaul after Maximus' death and to attend to the restless Rhine frontier, politically Theodosius' unprecedented visit to and extended stay in Rome looks decidedly assertive.[103] By 389, Valentinian II had been on the throne for fourteen years, against Theodosius' ten, but it is difficult to see the latter's triumphal entry into Rome as anything other than a considered display to the Senate and people of Rome of his status as the *de facto* senior Augustus.[104] To add to this impression, Theodosius brought with him to Rome his four-year-old son Honorius. Again, this seems a carefully considered move. Honorius was in the east with his brother Arcadius when summoned by his father.[105] After his controversial appointment of Arcadius as Augustus in 383 (see above, §2), Theodosius will have known that his introduction at Rome of his younger son would be seen as a snub to Valentinian and a further notice of his own dynastic ambitions.

Like Theodosius himself, the Senate at Rome had much to gain from his extended stay. Although circumstances had kept

[101] Zosimus 4.25.1, 27.1, 32.1, 33.1, 43.2.

[102] In 385 Theodosius had imposed his own favoured candidate Flavius Neoterius as Praetorian Prefect of Italy; Matthews 1975: 179.

[103] Ambrose *De obit. Val.* 23; McLynn 1994: 310, 335.

[104] Omissi 2018: 286–7.

[105] Socrates *HE* 5.14.3; Claudian *VI Con Hon.* 53ff.; Matthews 1975: 227.

Theodosius far from the western realm for a decade, the imperial college was not formally divided between east and west, and according to a letter from Ambrose to Valentinian in 384, Theodosius was a frequent source of advice to the younger emperor.[106] On Maximus' invasion of Italy in 387, the younger (but senior) emperor had certainly needed Theodosius' military help and had hurried to Thessalonica to try to secure it. Meanwhile, senators at Rome had adapted to recent events. Soon after September 387, the Praetorian Prefect at Rome, Valerius Pinianus, had been replaced in office by Rusticus Julianus, presumably on the order of Maximus, now in Milan. Rusticus Julianus was by then a long-time friend and correspondent of Symmachus, and it was quite plausibly at his bidding that Symmachus made the journey from Rome to Milan to deliver a panegyric in honour of Maximus' consulship in January 388;[107] the embassy would have reprised many of the features of Symmachus' trip to Trier in 369–70, where he had addressed panegyrics to Valentinian I and Gratian, or his trip to Milan in 387 to address a panegyric to Valentinian II.[108] The speech to Maximus does not survive, but the fact of its delivery indicates, in the words of Meaghan McEvoy, 'the essential pragmatism and motives of self–preservation of power-players among the senatorial elite at Rome, more threatened by the enemy on their doorstep than by a distant boy-emperor or an even more distant eastern emperor'.[109] But Maximus' execution will have changed things: about the same time, Rusticus Julianus died in office, possibly violently, and Rome's new *Praefectus Urbi*, Sextus

[106] Ambrose *Ep.* 72.12 to Valentinian, *certe refer ad parentem pietatis tuae principem Theodosium, quem super omnibus fere maioribus causis consulere consuesti* ('for sure, refer to your prince Theodosius, father of your piety, whom you are accustomed to consult on almost every serious business'); McLynn 1994: 166–7.

[107] Socrates *HE* 5.14.4–9; Matthews 1975: 48 calls Rusticus Julianus 'a literary connoisseur from Gaul'; see also 54; Symm. *Ep.* 3.1–9, dated to the late 360s, are addressed to Rusticus.

[108] The speeches of 369–70 survive in fragmentary form; the speeches to Valentinian II and Maximus are lost.

[109] McEvoy 2013: 90.

Aurelius Victor, put up a statue of Theodosius in the Forum of Trajan in Rome (*CIL* 6.1186). Nonetheless, despite such displays of political support, when, in the summer of 389, Theodosius' arrival at Rome was anticipated, at least some Roman senators would have been anxious to reassure him of their loyalty.[110] Symmachus himself, who may have been in the audience to hear Pacatus Drepanius, was certainly under pressure, and made his excuses to Theodosius for his panegyric to Maximus;[111] and others associated with him as spokesperson may have been implicated in the affair. Theodosius' visit to the city granted Romans the opportunity to dispel any doubts about their support for him.[112]

The motivation for Pacatus Drepanius' presence in Rome is a matter for conjecture (see above, §1). Johannes Scheffer rather vaguely identified the reason as the orator's 'admiration for Theodosius' virtues'.[113] Cristiana Sogno's suggestion that Pacatus Drepanius was appointed 'court panegyrist' on the recommendation of Ausonius makes sense of some circumstantial evidence, such as the friendship between the two Gallic men of letters, and Ausonius' relations with the imperial court, but its basic premise that there was at this point a position of 'court panegyrist' is vulnerable, and does not explain why Pacatus Drepanius could have held such a post so briefly before his dispatch to

[110] Matthews 1975: 223 'Symmachus himself, acting no doubt on behalf of the Senate'; Williams and Friell 1994: 64; Sogno 2006: 67–8; *PLRE* 1.479, 702; Ammianus Marcellinus 27.6.1–2. A clear example of division within the Senate is the controversy of the Altar of Victory; McLynn 1994: 151–2, 295–6.

[111] *Ep.* 2.31; Sogno 2006: 68–9, although see Kelly 2015: 221–2 n. 39 on the possibility that Symmachus was not present. See below on 2.2–4. Perhaps anachronistically, Socrates *HE* 5.14.5 calls Symmachus 'the leader of the Senate' at this time.

[112] 'Symmachus seems to have ignored the Gallic court', McLynn 1994: 312.

[113] *causa fuit admiratio uirtutum Theodosii, quae ipsum ab ultimo Galliarum recessu sicut ipse loquitur exciuit* ('the reason was his admiration of Theodosius' virtues, which roused him from the furthest recess of Gaul, as he himself says', Valpy 1828: 1552).

Africa.[114] Unlike some other panegyrics, the speech does not have a specific request to make (see below, §6), again raising questions about its function.[115] Pacatus Drepanius' own reasoning does not give much away: *ad contuendum te adorandumque properassem, ut bona quae auribus ceperam etiam uisu usurparem* ('I had hastened to behold and adore you, to hold in my sight the good things I had heard', 2.1). Celebration of the sight of an emperor is a regular trope in *Panegyrici* informed by the ideology of imperial *praesentia*, so Pacatus Drepanius' rehearsal needs to be understood in the context of that particular literary and rhetorical tradition.[116] And assuming it was true, that he claims to have 'hastened' to Rome from western Gaul prompts questions about how he knew Theodosius would be there; how he would himself be received; in what capacity – as an individual, or a civic or provincial delegate? – he addressed the emperor; how long he thought Theodosius would be in Rome, and so on. No doubt his silence about some of these matters can be ascribed to the fact that when the speech was originally delivered, no elaboration was required; other silences might be considered more tactical.[117] For example, in 'rushing' to Theodosius at Rome, Pacatus Drepanius must have chosen to bypass Valentinian II, who was himself in Gaul or northern Italy in the summer of 389.[118] In whatever capacity Pacatus Drepanius spoke, and whatever ambitions he nursed, the fact of his journey to Theodosius at Rome represents a significant preference between the two imperial courts.

What can be seen in this consideration of the particular and various concerns and priorities of emperor, Senate and orator

[114] Sogno 2006: 69; Claudian's role in court epideixis within a few years might lend Sogno support, although cf. Gillett 2012: 268 'Claudian and Stilicho jointly introduced an alternative model for the operation of panegyric'.

[115] Cf. e.g. *PanLat* IX(5) or V(8).

[116] See below on 2.1 and 47.5; Rees 2013b.

[117] Cf. 'Nazarius' silence about recent and current events was deliberate, calculated and total' (Barnes 2011: 184).

[118] *RIC* 9.8–9; Matthews 1975: 227; McLynn 1994: 295; Williams and Friell 1994: 66; Omissi 2018: 273.

in Rome in the summer of 389 is a moment of great opportunity. Aspects of the recent past, such as any Gallic complicity in Maximus' reign, Theodosius' treatment of Valentinian, or Symmachus' embassy to Maximus, could have been seen as problematic or even inflammatory; but polite politics could include studied silence as well as public support and, no doubt, private cultivation of relationships.[119] All parties at Rome had the opportunity to identify and develop common interests and powerful allies. Within a few years, Valentinian II was dead (in suspicious circumstances); Theodosius' sons Arcadius and Honorius were being readied to succeed their father in due course, in Constantinople and Milan/Ravenna respectively; Symmachus' political rehabilitation was capped with the consulship of 391; and Pacatus Drepanius seems to have moved from Rome to the proconsulate of Africa, and then to a major financial position in Constantinople (see above, §1).

Typically of the genre, Pacatus Drepanius does not introduce himself by name, although he makes much of his Gallic provenance. Perhaps a herald announced the speaker. Pacatus Drepanius was probably about thirty-five years old; Theodosius was forty-three.

4 PANEGYRIC IN ROMAN SOCIETY

Michael Dewar observed that 'the history of panegyric is inseparable from the history of many other genres';[120] although the evidence suggests that Pacatus Drepanius' speech held an unusual place within that history, the form, content, terminology and ethics of panegyric in Roman society were far from stable, over the centuries.[121]

[119] On silence in panegyric, see Omissi 2018: 52–4.

[120] Dewar 1996: xxii.

[121] See Burgess 1902 (repr. 1980); Pernot 1993; 2015; Nixon and Saylor Rodgers 1994; Rees 2007a; 2018a; Flower 2013: 33–77.

Greek Praise

A panegyric is a literary work of praise, in verse or prose. In traditional rhetorical taxonomies, panegyric is classified as a form of epideictic ('showcase'; in its Latinate equivalent, *demonstratiuus*) oratory, together with its converse, invective (work of abuse).[122] Epideictic oratory was one category of the tripartite subdivision of oratory, along with the forensic (i.e. legal) and the deliberative (i.e. political).[123] The Greek adjective πανηγυρικός denotes 'belonging to a public gathering', from which we can assume the standard context for formal praise-giving. In Greek culture, public praise was given in a variety of contexts: for example, winners in games would be feted in laudatory verse (such as Pindar's epinician odes and Bacchylides), speeches or poems could praise leaders or states on civic occasions (such as Theocritus' *Idylls* 16 and 17) and eulogistic speeches to the dead could grace funerals (such as Pericles' speech in Thucydides Book 2.35–46).[124] Gorgias, Isocrates and Lysias all gave speeches at Olympic festivals in the fourth century BCE; Isocrates boasted that his *Evagoras* was ground-breaking for celebrating in prose a recently deceased man (*Evag.* 5–11).[125] Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* attest an appetite for instruction in rhetorical praise-giving in Athenian society. Not all surviving works of Greek prose praise are to be taken entirely seriously – Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* and Lucian's *Encomium of a Fly*, for example, can be seen as parodies, perhaps purely for entertainment or more realistically as playful examples of the form for educational purposes; but at the same time, of course, these works assume a degree of familiarity with a norm. In classical and Hellenistic Greek culture, praise-giving had been

[122] Aristotle *Rhet.* 1.9.5–6; Petkas 2018; on invective, see Arena 2007; Flower 2013.

[123] Aristotle *Rhet.* 1.3.

[124] Burgess 1902, repr. 1980; Russell and Wilson 1981: xiii–xxii; Loraux 1986; Pernot 1993, 2015; Carey 2007.

[125] Morton Braund 1998: 53; Roche 2011b: 3–4.

recognised, taught and practised as a respectable branch of literature.[126]

Praise-giving was presented as a Greek cultural practice in much Roman discourse.[127] Cicero distinguishes Roman custom from the Greek: *nos laudationibus non ita multum uti soleremus* ('we are not used to employing *laudationes* that much', *De Oratore* 2.341). This attitude was to be echoed by Quintilian, who claimed that Roman deployment of praise-discourse was geared towards practical affairs, *sed mos Romanus etiam negotiis hoc munus inseruit* ('but Roman practice has even woven this task into business matters', *Instit. Orat.* 3.7.1–2).[128] In this self–characterisation by Roman intellectuals is the sense that, in Roman society, forensic and deliberative oratory had meaningful civic application in the courts and political assemblies, but that epideictic oratory, designed for its own performance and not to further civic business, lacked similar utility. This Roman identification of panegyric as culturally Greek was not without racist undertones. In his defence of Flaccus (59 BCE), Cicero adopted the ostentatious tactic of jettisoning a laudatory character witness statement from the people of Acmonia (in Asia Minor) on the grounds of its untrustworthiness:

> idem laudationem quam nos ab Acmonensibus Flacco datam proferebamus falsam esse dicebat. cuius quidem laudationis iactura exoptanda nobis fuit. nam ut signum publicum inspexit praeclarus iste auctor suae ciuitatis, solere suos ciuis ceterosque Graecos ex tempore quod opus sit obsignare dixit. tu uero tibi habeto istam laudationem; nec enim Acmonensium testimonio Flacci uita et dignitas nititur.
>
> He said the speech of praise that was given to Flaccus by the people of Acmonia and presented by us was false. In fact, the loss of this speech of praise had to be welcome

[126] Morton Braund 1998: 53–5; Innes 2011; Rees 2012b: 4–8.

[127] Petkas 2018: 195; cf. Polybius 6.54–55 on funerary orations in Rome.

[128] See also the observation in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.15 that opportunities for panegyric were infrequent; Rees 2007a: 136–7; Pernot 2015: 21–3.

> to us, for when that distinguished leader of the city-state saw the public seal on the letter, he said his citizens and all the other Greeks sign and seal testimony as circumstances demand. So, you can keep that speech of praise; Flaccus' life and reputation do not depend on the testimony of the people of Acmonia. (*Pro Flacco* 36)[129]

In the context of the case against Flaccus, this tactic is not as surprising as it might seem in isolation: the prosecution depended heavily on Greek testimony, so that Cicero's general condemnation of Greeks as opportunistic and unreliable served to undermine the case against Flaccus.[130] The tendency among Latin authors both to identify rhetorical praise-giving as Greek and to denounce it as untrustworthy was still strong in late antiquity. In the early fourth century, Lactantius criticised pagan poets for elevating their ancestors to the status of gods, so giving impetus to the creation of cults. Lactantius likens that poetic practice to the delivery of praise to kings: *sicut faciunt qui apud reges, etiam malos, panegyricis mendacibus adulantur. quod malum a Graecis ortum est: quorum leuitas, instructa dicendi facultate et copia, incredibile est quantas mendaciorum nebulas excitauerit* ('They are just the same, those who flatter kings – even bad ones – with dishonest panegyrics. This evil came from the Greeks: it is unbelievable what clouds of lies their fickleness has roused, informed by their facility and capacity to speak' *Div. Inst.* 1.15.13). Lactantius' racist overtones were to be further accentuated by Isidore, Bishop of Seville in the seventh century, in his definition of 'panegyric': *panegyricum est licentiosum et lasciuiosum genus dicendi in laudibus regum, in cuius conpositione homines multis mendaciis adulantur. quod malum a Graecis exortum est, quorum leuitas instructa dicendi facultate et copia incredibili multas mendaciorum nebulas suscitauit* ('Panegyric is the licentious and lascivious genre

[129] See also Tac. *Ann.* 15.20–22.

[130] Rees 2011b: 87–8; see also *isti uero fallaces sunt permulti et leues et diuturna seruitute ad nimiam assentationem eruditi* ('Really, in their masses they're deceitful and fickle, brought up in lasting slavery to excessive *assentatio*', *Ad Q. fr.* 1.1.16); *In Pis.* 70; *Lael. De Amic.* 99. Rees 2010a: 15.

of speaking in praise of kings, in the composition of which men give praise through many lies. This evil came from the Greeks, whose fickleness, informed by an incredible facility and capacity to speak, raised many clouds of lies', *Etymologiae* 6.8.7).[131] Isidore's reprise of Lactantius suggests a fossilisation in Latin attitudes towards rhetorical praise-giving, but it is noteworthy that both of these Christian authors characterise the phenomenon as Greek in origin (*ortum est/exortum est*) but not limited to Greeks in practice. The works of Lucian, Aelius Aristides, Eusebius, Julian, Libanius and Themistius, among others, demonstrate that rhetorical panegyric was a regular genre in Greek literature of the high and later Roman empire.[132]

Political Praise

But any Latin author's insistence on the Greekness of praise was disingenuous because, despite occasional protestations otherwise (see above), Roman society had many outlets for praise discourse.[133] Cicero's *Pro lege Manilia* is recognised as being an early example of Latin panegyrical oratory. The speech was delivered before the Roman assembly in 66 BCE, in support of the bill proposed by Gaius Manilius to grant Pompey unrestricted military authority in Rome's ongoing war against Mithridates. If the political context of the speech formally casts it as deliberative, in fact Cicero's flattering characterisation of Pompey dominates it (chapters 27–50) and demands its panegyrical nature be acknowledged.[134] That characterisation is organised through an aretalogy of four qualities – *scientiam rei militaris, uirtutem, auctoritatem, felicitatem* ('military knowledge, courage, authority, success', 28), each of which Cicero illustrates in Pompey with examples from his career. The rhetorical elaboration of virtues had been

[131] Pernot 2015: 77; Rees 2018a: 214–15.

[132] See Pernot 1993.

[133] Gillett 2012: 266; Pernot 2015.

[134] Morton Braund 1998: 74–5; Rees 2007a: 139–40.

recommended in treatises from classical Greece up to Cicero's own day, and its stylish execution by the Republic's leading orator made it an influential model for later Latin writers, whether by direct intertext or wider generic practice.[135] Twenty years later, after Pompey's defeat in civil war and the disintegration of Republican government, Cicero mourned *eloquentia obmutuit* ('eloquence fell silent', *Brutus* 22). Certainly, forensic and deliberative oratory had fewer outlets under autocratic rule, but epideictic found unprecedented opportunity. Cicero's 'Caesarian' speeches date to 46 and 45 BCE; *Pro Marcello* is a speech of thanks to Caesar for his clemency to Marcellus, who had supported Pompey in the civil war; similarly, in *Pro Ligario* and *Pro rege Deiotaro* Cicero asks Caesar for forgiveness towards the two men who had also supported his enemy. In all three speeches, Cicero works his rhetorical leverage by commending Caesar, in an elegant literary style, for his relevant personal virtues;[136] like *Pro lege Manilia*, the Caesarian speeches are not formally classified as epideictic, but attest the application of epideictic rhetoric to political-judicial affairs.[137]

Early in the imperial period, the delivery of a speech of thanksgiving for the consulship seems to have become standard. The evidence is a little vague, but writing from exile on the Black Sea coast, Ovid imagines the consul Pompeius entering office in 13 CE.

> purpura Pompeium summi uelabit honoris,
> ne titulis quicquam debeat ille suis. …
> templaque Tarpeiae primum tibi sedis adiri
> et fieri faciles in tua uota deos, …
> cumque deos omnes, tum quos inpensius aequos
> esse tibi cupias, cum Ioue Caesar erunt.
> Curia te excipiet, patresque e more uocati
> intendent aures ad tua uerba suas.

[135] Klotz 1911; Morton Braund 1998: 75; De Trizio 2009: 27–8; Manuwald 2011; Rees 2011a: 182; MacCormack 2013: 263–4.

[136] Gotoff 1993.

[137] Morton Braund 1998: 68–71.

hos ubi facundo tua uox hilarauerit ore,
utque solet, tulerit prospera uerba dies
egeris et meritas superis cum Caesare grates
(qui causam, facias cur ita saepe, dabit),
inde domum repetes toto comitante senatu,
officium populi uix capiente domo.

> The purple of the highest office will cloak Pompeius, so that he lacks nothing from his honours. … [I see] you first approaching the temple of Tarpeia's hill, and the gods show themselves assenting to your vows. … and while you wish the gods to be well disposed, you will more urgently wish Caesar and Jupiter to favour you. The Senate will welcome you, and the fathers, duly summoned, will offer their ears to your words. When your voice has cheered them with its eloquence and the day has brought favourable words, as is its wont, and you have given due thanks to the gods along with Caesar (who will often give you cause to do so again), then you will return home escorted by all the Senate, as your home scarcely contains the homage of the people. (Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 4.4.25–42)

Ovid is surely appealing to an established norm here.[138] The earliest surviving speech of thanksgiving for the consulship is the *Panegyricus* of Pliny the Younger, dated to 100 CE; letters 3.13 and 18 help to contextualise it. Pliny confirms that by then a consular *gratiarum actio* was customary: *officium consulatus iniunxit mihi, ut rei publicae nomine principi gratias agerem* ('the consulship enjoined on me the duty of giving thanks to the emperor in the name of the State', *Ep.* 3.18.1). With the annual turnover of consuls, such speeches would have become very familiar in Roman political ceremony, and Pliny acknowledges the challenge in delivering a speech the like of which everybody had heard before: *in hac nota uulgata dicta sunt omnia* 'in this [type of speech] everything is known, common knowledge, [already] said', *Ep.* 3.13.2); *quam in senatu*

[138] Paladini 1961; Nixon and Saylor Rodgers 1994: 3; Fantham 1999: 228–9.

quoque, ubi perpeti necesse erat, grauari tamen uel puncto temporis solebamus ('[a speech] which, even in the Senate, where it was necessary to endure it, used to bore us even after a minute', 3.18.6). Fronto delivered a speech of thanks for his consulship in 143, but it does not survive.[139] In addition to Pliny's, two consular *gratiarum actiones* have survived, by Claudius Mamertinus and Ausonius, demonstrating that the custom was still in force in the fourth century.[140]

Even before Pliny's reflections on the challenge of making a consular *gratiarum actio* arresting, Seneca the Younger offers a glimpse of a similar sense of *ennui* with praise-giving in Roman politics, in this case unsolicited approaches to a provincial governor. Seneca advises a strong riposte:

> cum quis ad te adulator accesserit, dicito: 'uis tu ista uerba, quae iam ab alio magistratu ad alium cum lictoribus transeunt, ferre ad aliquem qui paria facturus uult quicquid dixeris audire? ego nec decipere uolo nec decipi possum: laudari me a uobis, nisi laudaretis etiam malos, uellem'.
>
> When some flatterer approaches you, say to him 'These words – which are now transferred with the *lictors* from one magistracy to another – do you want to take them to someone else, someone prepared to do likewise and willing to listen to whatever you say? I don't want to deceive and cannot be deceived. I would be happy to be lauded by you if only you didn't laud even bad men'. (*Quaest. Nat.* 4 pref. 13)

Seneca appears to associate the practice of praise-giving with the changing of political office. Furthermore, some of the sub-sections in the two Greek treatises by Menander Rhetor suggest a diverse range of official, political applications for epideictic oratory in Roman society.[141] The treatises are dated to late antiquity (the late third century is the accepted view)[142] and include recommendations

[139] See below, 'Naming Praise'.
[140] See below, §5; on Pliny, see Roche (2011a).
[141] Heath 2004; Gillett 2012: 266 'Panegyric was … an inherently political genre'.
[142] Russell and Wilson 1981: xl.

on material for speeches to be delivered in praise of harbours (351–2) or cities (353–7), as an ambassador (423–4) and as part of an invitation to a governor (424–30); Menander's language is Greek, but the society is unmistakably Roman, and within that epideictic, panegyrical oratory had clearly found a place.[143]

Praise in Patronage

As it did in Greek, panegyric appeared in both prose and verse in Latin literary culture. Although not as central as Cicero to the canon of surviving classical literature, various examples of Latin praise poetry survive from the late Republican and early imperial period.[144] The pseudo-Tibullan *Panegyricus Messallae* ('Panegyric of Messalla') and the anonymous *Laus Pisonis* ('Praise of Piso') illustrate how poetry could try to mobilise the benefits of Roman patronage.[145] And if the names of those authors are lost to us, Horace *Odes* 4 and several of Statius' *Siluae* demonstrate that high-profile poets too turned to panegyrical verse, again within the one-sided patron–client relationship.[146] Seneca's satirical *Apocolocyntosis* includes a short hexameter poem in praise of the emperor Nero;[147] and the proem to Lucan's *Pharsalia* is an example of epideictic spirit informing a different genre.[148] These early imperial poems in particular seem to have helped legitimise the genre, and served as authoritative precedents for panegyrical hexameters of late antiquity, such as Claudian in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Sidonius in the fifth and Corippus in the

[143] Ulpian 1.18.6.2.

[144] Dewar 1996: xxii–xxiii.

[145] Nauta 2002, ch. 9; Rees 2010a: 10, 2012b: 9–10; the argument of Peirano 2012, ch. 3, that the poems are both literary fakes, reinforces the impression of a culture of versified praise.

[146] Hardie 1983; Coleman 1988; Geyssen 1996; Newlands 2002; Rees 2012b: 10–13; Brunetta 2013.

[147] *Apocol.* 4.

[148] Dewar 1994.

sixth.[149] This is a considerable body of literature, and although it has not always found favour, it attests to an instinct for ornamentation in praise.[150]

Reliable evidence of the efficacy of panegyrical technique within the networks of patronage is apparent too in letters of recommendation (*commendaticiae*), particularly those of Pliny, Fronto and Symmachus.[151] Romans recognised that their custom of funeral addresses (*laudatio funebris*) drew its character from panegyrical technique;[152] and Fronto identified the origins of legal-testimony speeches (*laudatio iudicialis*) as linked to the custom of letters of recommendation.[153] But although, in monarchy and patronage, Roman society had social structures in which praise could have useful application, rarely were Roman examples of panegyric completely free from all sense of anxiety. We have seen above how, at its ugliest, this manifested itself in anti-Greek racism. It can also be seen in chronic concern about the very name praise could take.

Naming Praise

Again Cicero seems to stand as the point of departure.[154] In his moralising treatise about friendship, he warns about relationships being corrupted by dishonest discourse:

> sic habendum est nullam in amicitiis pestem esse maiorem quam adulationem, blanditiam, assentationem; quamuis enim multis nominibus est hoc uitium notandum leuium hominum atque fallacium ad uoluntatem loquentium omnia, nihil ad ueritatem.

[149] Cameron 1970; Ware 2012; Schindler 2009; Rees 2012b: 45–8.

[150] Rees 2012b.

[151] Cotton 1981, 1985; Rees 2007b.

[152] Durry 1942; Kierdorf 1980; Rees 2007b: 138; Covino 2011; Roche 2011b: 1–2.

[153] Fronto *Ad Amicos* 1.1, discussed in Rees 2011b: 83–5.

[154] For a discussion of Roman panegyric, see Rees 2010a.

> So you should remember that there is no greater bane in friendships than *adulatio*, *blanditia*, *assentatio*; there are as many words for this as you like, but it should be branded the vice of fickle and deceitful men who say everything with a view to giving pleasure, and nothing with a view to the truth. (Cic. *Lael. De Amic.* 91)[155]

Pacatus Drepanius' contemporary Paulinus of Nola is strikingly reminiscent of Cicero in terms and style:

> adulatorum quoque assentationes et noxia blandimenta fallaciae uelut quasdam pestes animae fuge; nihil est quod tam facile corrumpat mentes hominum, nihil quod tam dulci et molli uulnere animum feriat.
>
> Also, avoid the *assentationes* of those giving adulation, and the poisonous blandishments of deceit as if they were diseases of the soul; there is nothing to corrupt the minds of men so easily, nothing to assault the heart with such sweet and gentle wounding. (*Appendix Ep.* 2.17)

This concern about terminology betrays a lasting anxiety about the ethics of praise-giving in Roman society. It seems that Cicero's nexus of words of praise, original to him or not, was a version of a Roman truism about the suspect nature of praise-giving.[156] It is of particular interest in this context that the word *panegyricus* itself does not feature. As was seen in the outbursts by Lactantius and Isidore (above, 'Greek Praise'), the Greek word had a transliterated Latin version. If 'panegyric' did have opportunities to thrive in Roman society, the word itself was not common.[157]

[155] Gould and Whiteley 1941: 130 gloss the italicised terms 'bowing and scraping', 'soft-soaping' and 'the yes men'.

[156] Ahl 1984; Rees 2012b: 11–12. For a Tacitean example of diffidence, see *pessimum inimicorum genus, laudantes* ('the worst type of enemies, those who laud you', *Agric.* 41).

[157] The standard Greek terms for rhetorical praise were ἔπαινος and ἐγκώμιον. Πανηγυρικός first appears as the title of Isocrates' speech of 380 BCE. At Cic. *Orat.* 37, Quint. *Instit. Orat.* 3.8.9 and 10.4.4, the Latin word refers to that

The standard Latin verb for praise was *laudare,* and there are many more occurrences of the word *laudatio* than *panegyricus* in surviving Latin, from the late Republic onwards. According to Seneca the Younger, *laudatio* was the verbal performance of *laus* ('praise'): *aliud est laus, aliud laudatio, haec et uocem exigit* ('*laus* is one thing, *laudatio* is another – the latter needs to be spoken' *Ep.* 102.14), as might be thought to be corroborated by the terminology of *laudationes funebres* and *iudiciales* ('funerary' and 'judicial' respectively);[158] but against Seneca, *laus* too could denote performed praise, such as in the *Laus Pisonis*, Fronto's *Laudes fumi et pulueris* 'Praises of smoke and dust', or Augustine's lost speech to the emperor.[159] Seneca's deliberately fine distinction was perhaps part of his ambition as a Stoic to combat the appetite for public acclaim that Roman society cultivated in individuals.[160] The vast majority of occurrences of the term *laudatio* in surviving sources denote praise given to the dead (*laudatio funebris*) or

speech; Quint. *Instit. Orat.* 2.10.11 and 3.4.14 seems to use the term to signify a Greek rhetorical form – see Reinhardt and Winterbottom 2006: 173. The word *panegyricus* at Quint. *Instit. Orat.* 3.8.7 is in the context of Greek oratory; in the fourth century, Aus. *Comm. Prof. Burd.* 1.13 might allude to the speech by Isocrates (see Green 1991: 331). For the term in Latin, see Ziegler 1949; Dingel 2007; Rees 2010a: 16–17; *TLL* 10.1.203–4. On the absence of the word *panegyricus* in the *Panegyrici Latini*, see below, §5. Symmachus' Greek vocabulary in defence of his speech to Maximus might be revealing: Maximus is *tyrannus*; the speech is a *panegyricus*; perhaps by using these terms, Symmachus hoped to underline his claim that his praise of Maximus had been extorted, as if under a typically Greek tyrant (Rees 2010a: 20–21).

[158] Seneca goes on, *nemo dicit laudem funebrem, sed laudationem* ('nobody pronounces a funeral *laus*, but a *laudatio*', *Ep.* 102.15).

[159] On the title of the *laus Pisonis*, see Di Brazzano 2004: 147; the opening line of Fronto's work suggests the title as preserved is original, *plerique legentium forsan rem de titulo contemnant* ('perhaps most readers may despise this project from its title'); see also August. *Conf.* 6.6.

[160] Paulinus challenged the societal norm in a different climate in his letter to Celancia quoted above; the letter continues, *si uere laudabilis esse cupis, laudem hominum ne requiras … et tunc laus erit tibi a Deo* (' if truly you wish to be worthy of praise, don't seek the praise of men … and then you will have God's praise', *Appendix Ep.* 2.17).

as part of character witnessing in court (*laudatio iudicialis*).[161] The noun *laus* and the verb *laudo* appear many times in Pliny's speech to Trajan and the two letters which discuss it, usually in the context of self-referential discussion of the discourse, but *laudatio* never features;[162] very insistently Pliny designates the speech a work of thanksgiving (*gratiarum actio*).[163] Forty-three years later, Fronto gave thanks for his consulship with a speech. His speech is lost, but a letter details Fronto's hopes for it: *laudatio mea non in Actis Senatus abstrusa lateat, sed in manibus hominum oculisque uersetur* ('may my *laudatio* not lie hidden in the *Acts of the Senate* but be in the hands of men and before their eyes', *Ad Caes.* 2.4.1).[164] Fronto's use of *laudatio* for his consular thanksgiving speech was not seized upon by either of the fourth-century consuls whose speeches survive, Claudius Mamertinus and Ausonius;[165] nor does the word appear in ten of the twelve *Panegyrici Latini*.[166] The two exceptions are Nazarius, who uses the word three times in his speech of 321 CE, and Pacatus Drepanius, who uses it once.[167] In accord with this explicit designation of their praise-texts as *laudationes* are the high frequencies of the noun *laus* and the verb *laudo* in the same two speeches; and yet Pliny uses the term most.[168] What this record suggests is a determined reluctance in Pliny to use the term *laudatio* of his speech, despite his

[161] See above, 'Praise in Patronage'.

[162] E.g. *Ep.* 3.18.2, 3, 7, *Pan.* 2.6, 3.3, 4.6, 20.2, 27.3, 42.4, 53.6, 56.1, 56.2.

[163] Pliny, *Pan.* 1.2, 1.6, 2.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 52.6, 53.6, 70.8, 70.9, 90.3 and 90.4, plus *Ep.* 3.13.1 and 3.18.1. It is a *liber* at *Ep.* 3.13.1 and 3.18.4; an *oratio* at *Pan.* 1.6 and 56.2.

[164] On Fronto and Pliny, see Rees 2011a: 175–8.

[165] In his only use of the word, Ausonius prefers a *laudatio* to be funereal, *uiuentum inlecebra est laudatio* ('*laudatio* of the living is a lure', *Comm. Prof. Burd.* 25.5).

[166] See below, §5.

[167] Nazarius *PanLat* IV(10)2.9, 6.1, 34.2; Pacatus Drepanius, *PanLat* II(12)2.2 (see below ad loc.).

[168] According to Janson 1979, of the 120 instances of *laus* and *laudo* in the twelve *Panegyrici Latini*, 38 appear in Pliny, 20 in Nazarius and 17 in Pacatus Drepanius.

recognition that it was indeed lauding Trajan; and that over the decades and centuries to follow, *laudatio* became a more acceptable but not widespread term for political praise.

Interesting items in the Latin lexicon of praise are the verb *praedico* and its cognate noun *praedicatio.* They appear in explicit association with *laudo* from the Republic onwards, a clear example being Cicero's exclamatory address to Caesar *o clementiam admirabilem atque omnium laude, praedicatione, litteris monumentisque decorandam!* ('Your wondrous mercy, to be honoured in everyone's *laus, praedicatio*, writing and monuments!', *Lig.* 6).[169] Similar combinations appear six times in the *Panegyrici Latini*, including Nazarius' elaborate use of architectural imagery as he searches for an introit to his subject (IV(10)6.1).[170] Nazarius' other use of the term appears in a phrase reminiscent of Cicero to Caesar, *o tuam, imperator, non uictoriam magis quam clementiam praedicandam!* ('oh your victory no more worthy of *praedicatio* than your mercy, emperor!', 8.1). Whereas Nazarius' two uses of the term are very considered, many other praise-texts are marked by a high frequency of occurrences of *praedicatio* and *praedico*.[171] In almost all cases, the terms can be comfortably treated as synonymous with *laudatio* and *laudo*: for example, Pliny's *quid est enim in principatu tuo quod cuiusquam praedicatio vel transilire uel praeteruehi debeat?* ('for what is there in your principate which anyone's *praedicatio* ought to skip over or avoid?', *Pan.* 56.2) is sandwiched between *laudare … laudabilia* (56.1) and *laude … laudasse* (56.2), suggesting an attempt to vary diction for the sake of literary aesthetics; in his letter to Severus in the early fifth century, Paulinus used *praedico* of his speech to Theodosius, which Gennadius later called a *panegyricus*

[169] See also e.g. Ter. *Eun.* 564, Caes. *Bell. Ciu.* 2.39, Nep. *Tim.* 4, Cic. *De Dom.* 27, *Ad fam.* 15.4.11 (*TLL* 10.2.543.60–62, 553.53, and 554.7–13).

[170] Another collocation appears at XI(3)13.1, and four in Pacatus Drepanius II(12): 1.2, 4.4, 5.1 and 17.1.

[171] Of the 40 instances of *praedicatio* and *praedico* in the *XII Panegyrici Latini*, 10 appear in Pliny, 8 in XI(3) and 8 in Pacatus Drepanius; there are 5 occurrences in Ausonius' *gratiarum actio*; *TLL* 10.2.554.7–13.

(*Ep.* 28.6); and a synonymous relationship between *laudo* and *praedico* seems to have persisted in Martianus Capella's usage in the late fifth or early sixth century: *ut saepe praedicationis fiat arbiter qui laudatur* ('so that he who is lauded can often be the judge of the *praedicatio*', 5.448). But at the same time, *praedico* ('I proclaim, announce, make known') is more restrained semantically than *laudo* because in its morphemes *prae* and *dico* it does not intimate a sense of the speaker's potentially humiliating subordination before the addressee. Like *laudo*, *praedico* is a performative verb, but however disingenuously, it could claim for itself a cognitive or commemorative function which protested a stance of moral and social equality between speaker and addressee, a relationship which receives particular emphasis when speeches present the emperor as an *amicus* or fellow *ciuis*.[172] In a political culture where praise and *amicitia* were both necessary and problematic, the term *praedico* could both express and deny the praise.

Teaching Praise

In what is perhaps best interpreted as being in approximate proportion to the demands and opportunities for oratory, surviving sources for rhetorical education in Roman society are dominated by instruction in forensic and deliberative oratory; nonetheless, it is clear that instruction in epideictic oratory had a place in schools. The main direct evidence for this comes in the form of *progymnasmata* and treatises.

Progymnasmata were textbooks setting out definitions and instructions for scholastic exercises in elementary rhetorical education.[173] The textbooks prepared students for the challenges of declamatory and epideictic composition; several survive from antiquity, and, with local variation, are characterised by being subdivided into categories of rhetorical composition, such as

[172] E.g. Pliny's *Panegyricus*, and the speeches of Claudius Mamertinus, Ausonius and Pacatus Drepanius.

[173] Russell and Wilson 1981: xxv–xxix; Webb 2009: 17–19, 45–9.

refutation, ecphrasis and narrative; and, of particular relevance for epideictic oratory, praise and blame.

More sophisticated than *progymnasmata* were the treatises on oratory which were perhaps aimed at a higher level of education – under the *Rhetor* or professor of oratory, rather than the *grammaticus*. From the late Republican and early imperial periods, the recommendations from Cicero, Quintilian and the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* stand comparison. Each has different organisational principles. The *Ad Herennium* claims that praise can be of 'external circumstances, body and mind' (*rerum externarum*, *corporis*, *animi*, 3.6.10); these categories may trace the subject's career, from birth, to education, to achievements and character (3.7.13–4). Cicero distinguishes between *optanda* and *laudanda* ('the desirable' and 'the praiseworthy', *De orat.* 2.342), including birth, good looks and wealth among the former, and virtues among the latter. A similar distinction underlies the advice of Quintilian, whose recommended structure is to praise the subject either in chronological sequence, from before their birth onwards, or according to different virtues (*Instit. Orat.* 3.7.10–18). There are some differences in approach here, but essentially the treatises are likeminded: praise consists of an attribution of virtues, taken from a recognised canon, and amplified and illustrated through examples from the subject's life (and from their later reputation or legacy, if deceased); with so many variables, a resourceful speaker would never be at a loss for suitable material.[174] For appreciation of composition of imperial panegyric, the most relevant treatise is Menander Rhetor's *Basilikos Logos*, dated to the late third century. The treatise provides a template for what to say in a speech of praise to the emperor and in what order: after the preface should come the honorand's native country (369) and/or family (370), followed by birth and upbringing (371), ethical accomplishments (372), achievements in war and peace, subdivided according to relevant virtues, which

[174] Russell and Wilson 1981: xxii–xxiv; Russell 1998; Rees 2007a: 138; Buckland 2010.

Menander enumerates as fourfold (courage, justice, temperance and wisdom; 373–5), comparison (376) and epilogue (377).

That epideictic oratory was formally taught suggests there was a recognised need for orators in Roman society; and also the likelihood that many speeches were formulaic. Schools of oratory were thriving throughout the empire, with renowned centres in Rome itself, Constantinople, Antioch, Athens and Carthage. Gaul too had an excellent reputation for the quality of its rhetorical schools.[175] Eumenius is among the best-attested professors of rhetoric from late antique Gaul, thanks largely to the survival of his speech *Pro instaurandis scholis*, 'For the Restoration of the Schools', in Autun;[176] glimpses of many professors at Bordeaux are given by Ausonius in his poem of commemorative homage, *Commemoratio Professorum Burdigalensium* (on Pacatus Drepanius, see §6 below).

The Reliability of Panegyric

Edward Gibbon is clearly referring to panegyric – probably the *Panegyrici Latini* – when he interrupts his narrative of the reign of Diocletian (284–305) and says: 'A languid and affected eloquence was still retained in the pay and service of the emperors, who encouraged not any arts except those which contributed to the gratification of their pride or the defence of their power' (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 13). Denunciation of the form, usually summary, has often followed: 'It is safe to wager that the *Panegyrici Latini* find few readers today, and perhaps reasonable to guess that anyone known to loiter in their neighbourhood is mentally suspect'.[177] Panegyric has regularly and easily been assimilated into a narrative of aesthetic, moral and political decline in

[175] Symmachus, *Ep.* 9.88; Haarhoff 1920, 1958^{2}.

[176] Hostein 2012; for possible remains of the Maenianae School, see Labaune 2013.

[177] Alexander 1944: 37; Rees 2012b: 14–16. For a more sympathetic response in the early modern period, see Müller 1785: 9.

late antiquity; and central to this is designation of panegyric as *propaganda* – that is, part of a centralised, systematised, programme of political communication.[178] In the introduction to the first volume of his Budé edition of the *Panegyrici Latini*, Edouard Galletier summed up the discomfort modern readers have often felt with panegyrics as sources for reconstruction of a historical record: 'Il peut paraître étrange, et même dangereux, d'allier les termes d'histoire et de panégyriques et de demander à ces discours d'apparat un témoignage fidèle de la réalité. … Ces orateurs parfois nous déconcertent par l'imprécision de leurs récits, et l'excès de leur phraséologie nous fait douter de leur véracité' ('It can seem strange and even dangerous to join together the terms 'history' and 'panegyric' and to demand of these set speeches a reliable testimony for reality. … Occasionally, these orators disconcert us with the imprecision of their narratives, and the excess of their phraseology makes us doubt their truthfulness').[179] In his account of the content of Claudian's court poetry, Alan Cameron offered the generalisation 'more often than not the panegyrics of the later Empire contain a maximum of empty and insincere rhetoric and a minimum of hard facts'.[180] The commentators Ted Nixon and Barbara Saylor Rodgers found particular disappointment in Pacatus Drepanius: 'The first half of Pacatus' panegyric, in particular, contains … all too little of historical substance'.[181] In fact, concern with panegyric's reliability started in antiquity itself. Cicero yoked panegyric and historiography together as epideictic genres, each with a particular interest in narrative.[182] But however he classified epideictic, Cicero had an inconsistent attitude towards its deployment as a reliable discourse. In *Brutus*

[178] For example, Cameron 1970, Rodríguez Gervás 1991, Whitby 1998.

[179] Galletier 1949: xxv.

[180] Cameron 1970: 41–2; see also Woodman 1988.

[181] Nixon and Saylor Rodgers 1994: 445; for consideration of the problem, Roche 2011b: 14.

[182] *Orat.* 37, 66, *De Orat.* 2.35–6; Woodman 1988: 95–8; Leeman 1963: 168–97, 329–30; Hägg and Rousseau 2000: 4–5; cf. Cic. *Ad Att.* 1.19.10.

he bemoaned the distorting effect funeral eulogies (*funebres laudationes*) had had on Rome's written history: *quamquam his laudationibus historia rerum nostrarum est facta mendosior* ('the history of our affairs has been made more erroneous by these speeches of praise', *Brutus* 62).[183] This austere discipline sits awkwardly with Cicero's shame-faced appeal by letter to the historian Lucceius, asking him to exercise an uncharacteristic licence with the truth in writing up a history of Cicero's consulship: *deinde etiam ut ornes me postulem … rogo ut et ornes ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis et in eo leges historiae neglegas …* ('even then, I request you embellish me … I ask you to embellish those matters even more enthusiastically than perhaps you feel, and in this to neglect the laws of history-writing', *Ad Fam.* 5.12.2–3).[184] Epideictic oratory's contamination of historiography's commitment to the truth was to be characteristic of much discussion about the reliability of literary commemoration. Tacitus identified the advent of monarchical rule at Rome as the time when historiography lost its *libertas* and *veritas,* as authors began to promote their own concerns in their record of the past (*Ann.* 1.1; *Hist.* 1.1); in his *De historia conscribenda,* Lucian passionately urged that a gulf be maintained between historiography and panegyric (38–41).[185] An early imperial historian who could represent the fashion against which Tacitus and Lucian were railing is Velleius Paterculus, whose universal history has a conspicuously panegyrical attitude towards Tiberius.[186] In particular, it became a common topos for historiography to distance itself from panegyric as a means to assert its own reliability. In the late fourth century, Ammianus Marcellinus appears very familiar with the associations of the different discourses of historiography and panegyrics: at the beginning of his very favourable narrative of the reign of Julian he says *quicquid autem narrabitur,*

[183] A sentiment echoed by Livy 8.40.4; Covino 2011: 77–8.

[184] Wiseman 1979; Cape 1997; Hall 1998; Fox 2001; Damon 2007; Northwood 2008.

[185] Fox 2001: 78–82.

[186] See the discussion by Woodman 1977: 28–56.

quod non falsitas arguta concinnat sed fides integra rerum absoluit documentis euidentibus fulta, ad laudatiuam paene materiam pertinebit ('Whatever will be narrated (not arranged by cunning lies but discharged by an absolute fidelity to events, supported by documentary evidence) will almost touch the realm of panegyric', *Res Gestae* 16.1.3).[187] And like some of his fourth-century counterparts, when his text closes (31.16.9), Ammianus suggests any continuator assume a higher style (*stilus maior*), a phrase conventionally thought to indicate a panegyrical mode more suitable to articulate the achievements of the current emperor.[188]

However, against the objections of Tacitus and Lucian, classical historiography and panegyric had – or could have – many similarities. Emperors and their ethics, habits and achievements in war, domestic affairs and their own homes feature prominently in both. Modern enquiry into panegyric has often focused heavily on the use of virtues, but in theory and practice, narrative of *res gestae* was a staple component of both historiography and panegyric.[189] That *res gestae* ('achievements') provided subject-matter in the case of historiography needs no qualification, but over several centuries, rhetorical treatises recommended narrative of *res gestae* as an acceptable component of panegyric.[190] Some surviving panegyrics are explicit about their inclusion of such material: for example, an orator asked the emperor Maximian in 289 CE *an tuas res gestas enumerare conabor?* ('Or shall I try to recount what you have done?', *Pan. Lat.* X(2)2.5).[191] Commenting on the quality and quantity of information that could inform a panegyric, Donald Russell observed,

[187] Rees 2010b: 105–7.

[188] Eutropius *Breu.* 10.18.3; Festus 30; Paschoud 2004, 2005; Kelly 2007; Den Boeft et al. 2018: 301–3; see below, at 47.6.

[189] On the canon/s of virtues, see e.g. Born 1934; Burdeau 1964; Storch 1972; Seager 1983; L'Huillier 1986; Rodríguez Gervás 1991; Mause 1994.

[190] E.g. Cic. *De Orat.* 2.345; Quint. *Instit. Orat.* 3.7.15; Men. Rhet. *Basilikos logos* 372–3; Pernot 1993: 2.667–8; Murray 2018: 225–7.

[191] Pernot 1993: 2.667–8. See *Pan. Lat.* II(12)31.4, 47.1; III(11)7.3, 8.3; IV(10)2.9; VIII(4)5.4; XII(9)1.1, 24.4.

'It takes research into facts to make a good panegyric.'[192] And particularly when alternative sources are lacking, panegyric's testimony seems to increase in value: for example, the narrative sections of *Panegyrici Latini* VIII(4) are important for reconstruction of Constantius I's campaign against Allectus; so too certain details in Pacatus Drepanius' speech to Theodosius.[193]

Another frequent feature of panegyric's countervailing rhetoric was its insistence on its own truthful nature. For example, Pliny spent much time in his *Panegyricus* insisting on his own sincerity; adeptly, he presented the reliability of his words as concomitant with the freedom of speech he said Trajan promoted: *omnibus quae dicentur a me, libertas fides veritas constet* ('so that freedom, trust and truth will characterise my whole speech', *Pan.* 1.6).[194] Two speeches to Maximian, in 289 and 291 respectively, deploy the topos: *et potissimum illud arripiam quod multis fortasse mirum uidebitur et tamen* <*re*> *ipsa uerissimum est* ('And in particular I will seize upon that which will perhaps seem wondrous to many, but is in reality most true', X(2)3.1) and *sed remoueamus istinc fabulas imperitorum, uerum loquamur* ('But let us put aside the stories of the ignorant, let us speak the truth', XI(3)8.4).[195] A similar insistence on truth exercises Nazarius at the beginning of his speech to Constantine, delivered in 321 CE: *dabit enim ueniam clementia tua, si audaciorem ueritas facit* ('for in your clemency you will grant me pardon, if the truth makes me rather outspoken', IV(10)4.5).[196] But various sources combine to suggest that panegyric's licence with truth was an open secret: rhetorical treatises recommended that a panegyrist resort to lies if necessary; Quintilian wrote of the licence concerning strict accuracy that was available to an

[192] Russell 1998: 39, with examples from Libanius *Or.* 59.

[193] Used, for example, in Eichholz 1953 and Casey 1994. Other prose panegyrics with sizable sections of narrative include III(11), IV(10), VIII(4) and XII(9). For different functions of narrative in panegyric, see Rees 2010b.

[194] Morford 1992: 584–93; Bartsch 1994.

[195] Rees 2002: 200; De Trizio 2009: 70.

[196] See below, §5, for the *Panegyrici Latini*, including the reference system.

orator, if it was in the public interest (*Instit. Orat.* 3.7.25), and provided it could be managed persuasively, Menander Rhetor encouraged invention (*Basilikos Logos* 371).[197] However, the best-known testimony is provided by Augustine's later reflections on his practice as an orator about to deliver a panegyric: *pararem recitare imperatori laudes, quibus plura mentirer et mentienti faueretur ab scientibus* ('I was preparing to declaim praise to the emperor, in which I would tell many lies and win favour as a liar from those who knew', *Conf.* 6.6.9).[198] In the context of Augustine's witness to his Christian conversion and steadfast faith, this regretful notice of his previous conduct has leverage, juxtaposing the ideological values of Church and State.

More recent considerations of the reliability of panegyric have taken closer account of the original speeches' context. In his study of the poetic praise of Domitian, Ruurd Nauta helpfully isolated the issue: 'panegyric is only possible on the basis of a contract between the poet and the audience which defines the context of utterance as, precisely, panegyric'.[199] It seems it was this sort of contract that so offended Augustine. Taking Pacatus Drepanius as his example, Christopher Kelly argued that the element of high-cultural competence was a far more significant factor in display of political support than the reliability of the text's claims.[200] The model Kelly sketches works best when allied to a detailed reconstruction of the circumstances and attendant pressures on orators as they stood to address their emperors; in the combination of ceremonial majesty and military strength in the imperial courts and audience chambers, the performance of decorous speech-making is likely to have been what mattered most, rather than any detail of its claims, verifiable or otherwise. In effect, Kelly urges that modern readers should have no greater expectation of a text's reliability than its original audience had – that

[197] Rees 2010b: 105–6.
[198] Pernot 2015: 76–7.
[199] Nauta 2002: 25, and applied to Claudian by Ware 2012: 25.
[200] Kelly 2015: 220.

is to say, as the famous quotation from Augustine discloses, very little. This attitude towards the genre is perhaps akin to William Fitzgerald's formulation 'nonsincerity' – that is, neither sincerity nor insincerity – in his analysis of Martial's abusive and eulogistic epigrams.[201] Kelly's model suggests a reading of panegyric that casts it as neither 'reliable' nor 'unreliable', but 'nonreliable'. From this perspective, perhaps the question outlined above about the audience's willingness to tolerate a very long speech appears misconceived: as a civic expression of political support, perhaps being in attendance at a panegyric was much more important than paying attention to it.[202] But 'nonreliable' should not necessarily be equated with 'negligible' – for example, any senators in attendance at Pacatus Drepanius' speech who had sympathised with Maximus might well have been quick to welcome praise of the emperor's clemency (45.6–7), whether or not it was accurate, for they stood to benefit from its assertion.[203]

That said, despite their tendency to play fast and loose with topics they did not wish to confront candidly, panegyrics are clearly not without some value to later historians.[204] Adrastos Omissi has argued that court panegyric can be considered history's first response to political events, such as dynastic change or military victory, both of which feature (perhaps not coincidentally) prominently in surviving texts (see below, §5).[205] Although this need not characterise panegyric as direct propaganda (see below, §6(2)), Omissi argues that, reliability aside, panegyric was the initial step in the writing of history by history's victors. The interpretative models proposed by Kelly and Omissi are not

[201] Fitzgerald 2007: 114; on sincerity, see Bartsch 1994 and Nauta 2002: 412–16, 420–1.

[202] See also Ware 2012: 8, 'It is difficult to believe that court officials during a ceremony paid much attention to the panegyric …'.

[203] Kelly 2015: 221.

[204] Graham 2006: 65, 98–99; Rees 2012b: 33–41.

[205] E.g. Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Julian's accession in 361 or Theodosius' defeat of Maximus in 388, as told in *PanLat* XII(9) and IV(10), III(11) and II(12) respectively; Omissi 2018: 47–54.