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## From *hostes acerrimi* to *homines nobilissimi*

Two Studies in the Ancient Reception of the Social War

**ABSTRACT:** The paper explores aspects of the Roman reception of the Social War during the first century BCE. The first study considers the evidence of Cicero, whose references to the war reflect the tensions still surrounding the memories of this conflict as well as the revaluation of the past that took place during a period of rapid political and cultural change. The second analyses the anecdote of Cato the Younger and Poppaedi, also revisiting Lucceius' lost history, which may have played a significant role in formulating a new 'conciliatory' version of the war, focused on Italian demands for citizenship.

*Keywords:* Social War – Cicero – Cato the Younger – Lucceius – memory – historiography

The Social War poses unique questions that go to the very heart of our understanding of this important turning-point in the history of the Roman republic.<sup>1</sup> The uncertainties are firmly rooted in the ancient record itself, which offers radically different versions of the aims of the Italian insurgents. The historiographic tradition of the war was, as I have argued elsewhere, both complex and dynamic, evolving in tandem with profound historical changes that transformed the status of the former allies, the Roman citizenship and the cultural landscape of Italy.<sup>2</sup> This paper explores aspects of this process by looking at the ways in which the Romans dealt with the conflict during the first century BCE, the crucial period when the political map of Italy was redrawn and a new version of the war was forged in response to these changes.

It consists of two parts. The first study examines the testimony of Cicero, a participant in the war and contemporary observer of the post-war settlement. A close reading of his references to the war – and his notable omissions – allows us to trace the steadily evolving image of the war and of Rome's former opponents and as well as the slow and

- 1 I would like to thank Caroline Barron, James Corke-Webster, Ittai Gradel, Martin Jehne, and Maggie Robb for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
- 2 For an overview of the historiography see H. Mouritsen, *Italian Unification. A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (BICS Suppl. 70: London 1998), cf. id. 'Hindsight and historiography: writing the history of Pre-Roman Italy', in *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in republikanischer Zeit*, eds. M. Jehne and R. Pfeilschifter (Frankfurt a. M. 2006) 23–37. For some recent restatements of the traditional 'citizenship' interpretation of the war see e. g. A. Keaveney, *Rome and the Unification of Italy* (Exeter 2005); S. Kendall, *The Struggle for Roman Citizenship: Romans, allies and the wars of 91–77 BCE* (Piscataway, NJ 2013), C. J. Dart, *The Social War, 91–88 BCE* (Farnham 2014), and F. Carlà-Uhink, *The "Birth" of Italy. The Institutionalization of Italy as a Region, 3<sup>rd</sup>–1<sup>st</sup> century BCE* (Berlin-Boston 2017).

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fractured process of Italian integration, which arguably was still incomplete by the time of Cicero's death.

The second study focuses on a single, famous anecdote associated with the war. The protagonists are the young Cato and the Marsic leader Poppaedi, and while much will have to remain conjecture regarding the precise origins and purpose of the story, its unique importance lies in the fact that it must date to the period of Cato's political ascendancy. It therefore belongs to the pivotal but poorly documented transitional phase between the early post-war accounts of the Sullan era and the later imperial tradition of the war as a fraternal dispute. As such it offers a rare glimpse of the historiographic shift that took place around the middle of the first century BCE, when the Social War gradually passed from *memoria nostra*, 'living memory', into *res gestae*. Both studies thus seek to cast light on the nature of historical memory, which in the case of the Social War meant responding to rapidly changing political circumstances and the sudden transformation of former enemies into fellow citizens.

### 'Don't mention the war': Cicero and the Italians

Although Cicero is our primary source for the late republic, there has been little interest in him as a source on the Social War, the only one in which he saw active service. There is, however, an obvious explanation for the apparent oversight, for what is most conspicuous about Cicero and the Social War is the sheer rarity with which it features in his works. This may seem an unpromising starting point for an inquiry, but the very dearth of evidence may itself be revealing, albeit in an oblique and unintentional way. Studying something that is not there raises obvious methodological questions, but when the absence is so pronounced that it no longer seems accidental, we may treat it as a historical feature in its own right. The Social War appears with a striking infrequency in Cicero's works – public speeches as well as treatises and letters – and in contexts where one might have expected it to figure, such as legal cases relating to local Italian communities.

Cicero's reticence with regard to the Social War needs to be put into perspective, for despite its relatively short duration, the conflict was a cataclysmic event in the history of the republic, which caused great devastation and changed the geo-political landscape of Italy for good.<sup>3</sup> For the first time in more than a hundred years the Roman heartland became the scene of widespread destruction and bloodshed. The conflict soon grew to remarkable proportions, with huge armies being raised on either side. After a year of fighting the situation became so critical that the Romans had to break the taboo against calling up former slaves, a measure last required during darkest days of the Hannibalic War. The fortunes of war gradually shifted in Rome's favour, but the severity and impact

3 E. S. Gruen recently re-emphasised the magnitude and historical significance of the Social War, 'The Last Generation of the Republic revisited', in *Politische und soziale Struktur der Römischen Republik. Bilanzen und Perspektiven*, eds. M. Haake and A.-C. Harders (Stuttgart 2017) 553–67, esp. 562–5; cf. H. Mouritsen, *Politics in the Roman Republic* (Cambridge 2017) 171–2.

of the conflict should not be minimised. The Social War left an indelible mark not just on Italy and the Roman Republic but presumably also on all those who took part in it.

Among them was Cicero himself, who was called up as *tiro* in 89 at the age of seventeen. The year turned out to be the only one in which the future orator would see active combat and thus remained his sole reference point in terms of military experience until his minor campaign against Pindenissum in 50. Nevertheless, it is not until 44 – forty-five years after the war ended – that we come across the first allusion to Cicero’s participation, and tellingly the reference is so vague that the conflict is not even mentioned by name. Thus, in the *De divinatione* we are told that Cicero personally witnessed Sulla sacrificing at Nola before he led his army against the Samnites.<sup>4</sup> The date must be 89 and the passage seems to match Plutarch’s brief comment that Cicero served under Sulla against the Samnites (*Cic.* 3). However, the following year Cicero mentioned in his Twelfth Philippic that as a *tiro* he had been present at a meeting between Cn. Pompeius Strabo and the Marsic general Vettius Scato.<sup>5</sup> The date must again be 89 but this time the location is the northern front. The apparent discrepancy has generated some discussion among historians regarding Cicero’s *tirocinium*.<sup>6</sup> While the two references may seem contradictory, they are also quite imprecise and it has been suggested that Cicero may have been transferred from one commander to another during the year of 89.<sup>7</sup> Still, what is perhaps most telling is the general lack of clarity about this important stage in Cicero’s life. Ernst Badian saw it as an example of Cicero’s deliberately ‘misleading presentation’ of his early life, also pointing to omissions and manipulations in the *Brutus* about his education.<sup>8</sup> However, the issue probably goes beyond a simple re-editing of the orator’s past; there is, for example, no obvious reason why Cicero would try to suppress or misrepresent his war record, which, as far as we know, was entirely respectable. At the root of this vagueness lies a more general disquiet about the Social War and the memories it evoked; for what is most remarkable is precisely Cicero’s reluctance to engage directly with the conflict.

A survey of Cicero’s works shows that he refers to the war on twenty-three occasions, although on a number of these he does not actually name it.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the large majority of the instances are strikingly uninformative about the nature of the conflict and provide no details about specific military events. In fact, most references are not really concerned with the war as such and merely serve to indicate the context in which other events took place. For example, in his speech for Archias Cicero explains the lack of

4 *Div.* 1.72; 2.65.

5 *Phil.* 12.27, cf. the discussion of this passage below.

6 In *Lig.* 21, delivered in 46, Cicero described L. Aelius Tubero as his ‘*militiae contubernalis*’, providing the first hint of his military service.

7 Cf. T. N. Mitchell, *Cicero. The Ascending Years* (New Haven 1979) 8 f., who suggested Cicero first served with Sulla at Nola and in the later part of 89 with Pompeius Strabo in the north.

8 E. Badian, ‘*Quaestiones Variæ*’, *Historia* 18 (1969) 447–91, 454 f.

9 *Cluent.* 21, 162; *Arch.* 8; *Pis.* 87; *Balb.* 50; *Brutus* 303 f.; *Leg. Man.* 28; *Div.* 1.72, 99, 2.54, 59, 65; *De or.* 3.8; *Font.* 41; *Verr.* 2.2.5; 2.5.6; 2.5.8; *Off.* 2.75; *Har. resp.* 18; *Agr.* 2.80, 90; *Phil.* 8.31; *Fam.* 5.12.2. In some instances, the same point about the war is repeated several times, in which case they have been counted as a single reference.

documentation for his client's citizenship by referring to 'the public records of Heraclea, which everybody knows were destroyed in the fire of the record office during the Social War'.<sup>10</sup> Likewise in his defence of Cluentius, he tells the story of M. Aurius, who 'as a young man had been captured at Asculum during the Social War and fell into the hands of the senator Q. Sergius, he who was tried and condemned in the assassination court, and was in his slave prison'.<sup>11</sup> A similar situation is mentioned later in the speech, when Cicero notes that, 'One Ceius, a Samnite, brought an action against him after the war to recover his wife'.<sup>12</sup>

In his invective against Piso Cicero mentions in passing that 'when already a grown-up youth' Piso had seen his 'home choked full of the profits made by your father in the Italian war, when he was in charge of munitions'.<sup>13</sup> Cicero also observes in his speech for Balbus that Pompeius Strabo after his great exploits in the Italian War had granted citizenship to an *eques* from Ravenna.<sup>14</sup> Similarly neutral references to the war are found in the *Brutus*, where he first mentions that '... the courts were interrupted by the war ...', before adding that 'In the first year of the war Hortensius served in the ranks, in the second as military tribune'.<sup>15</sup>

In a number of instances, the war is alluded to as a terrible disaster, which divine signs had foretold. Paradoxically the work in which the war features most frequently is therefore Cicero's *De divinatione* where it appears five times in discussions of various omens associated with the conflict. For example, we are told that: 'In recent times, during the Marsian War, the temple of Juno Sospita was restored because of a dream of Caecilia, the daughter of Quintus [Metellus]'. Cicero also informs us that 'the fact that just before the Marsian War mice had gnawed the shields at Lanuvium was pronounced by the haruspices to be a great portent'.<sup>16</sup>

In the *De oratore* Cicero includes the war among a series of great calamities which a timely death spared the orator Crassus from witnessing: 'He [Crassus] did not see Italy ablaze with war, the senate burning from hatred ...'.<sup>17</sup> The scale and gravity of the conflict are also emphasised in Cicero's praise of Pompey in the *De lege Manilia*, where he noted

- 10 *Arch. Poet.* 8: 'hic tu tabulas desideras Heracliensium publicas, quas **Italico bello** incenso tabulario interisse scimus omnes'.
- 11 *Cluent.* 21: 'M. Aurius adulescentulus **bello Italico** captus apud Asculum in Q. Sergi senatoris, eius qui inter sicarios damnatus est, manus incidit et apud eum fuit in ergastulo'.
- 12 *Cluent.* 162: 'Cei cuiusdam Samnitis uxorem post **bellum** ab hoc esse repetitam'.
- 13 *Pis.* 87: 'videras enim grandis iam puer **bello Italico** repleti quaestu vestram domum, cum pater armis faciendis tuus praefuisset'.
- 14 *Balb.* 50: 'Cn. Pompeius pater rebus **Italico bello** maximis gestis P. Caesium equitem Romanum virum bonum qui vivit Ravennatem foederato ex populo nonne civitate donavit?'.
- 15 *Brutus* 303: '... iudicia intermissa **bello** ...'; 304: 'Erat Hortensius in **bello** primo anno miles, altero tribunus militum'.
- 16 *Div.* 1.99: 'Caeciliae Q. filiae somnio modo **Marsico bello** templum est a senatu Iunoni Sospitae restitutum'; 2.59: 'Ante vero **Marsicum bellum** quod clipeos Lanuvi, ut a te dictum est, 'mures rosissent, maximum id portentum haruspices esse dixerunt'.
- 17 *De or.* 3.8: 'non vidit [sc. Crassus] flagrantem **Italiam** bello, non ardentem invidia senatum, non sceleris nefarii principes civitatis reos, non luctum filiae, non exilium generi, non acerbissimam C. Mari fugam, non illam post reditum eius caedem omnium crudelissimam, non denique in omni genere deformatam eam civitatem, in qua ipse florentissima multum omnibus gloria praestitisset'.

he had ‘... left school and the studies of boyhood to join his father’s army and study warfare in a great war against fierce enemies.’<sup>18</sup> Similarly in the *De haruspicum responso* Cicero briefly lists the great disasters that had befallen Rome in the recent past, including ‘*Italicus belli funesta illa principia*’, ‘the calamitous outbreak of the Italic War’, which was followed by the ‘*Sullani Cinnanique temporis*’.<sup>19</sup>

A passage of the *Pro Fonteio* gives a rare glimpse of the way in which the conflict initially was remembered. In the early sixties, probably 69, Cicero defended M. Fonteius against a charge of provincial extortion.<sup>20</sup> While outlining his client’s family background Cicero also invoked the memory of Fonteius’ father who, as legate of the praetor Q. Servilius, had been among the Roman victims of the massacre at Asculum, which – somewhat prematurely – set off the Social War during the autumn of 91.<sup>21</sup> Cicero declares: ‘Then there is the still recent memory of his father, by whose blood not only the Ascullans, by whom he was killed, but that entire Social War was infected with the stain of crime, ...’<sup>22</sup> In describing the uprising, albeit in passing, as tainted with ‘*macula sceleris*’, Cicero came the closest that he ever did to offering a public condemnation of the revolt. His choice of the term *scelus* implies an impious transgression committed by the allies who by killing the Roman envoys not just broke their *fides* but also violated the laws of *hospitium*.

It is difficult to escape the impression that Cicero’s apparent reluctance to engage with the memory of the Social War reflects a general unease about this particular topic. Thus, he otherwise shows little compunction about tackling sensitive subjects from both Rome’s distant and her more recent history, some still painful and vividly remembered. The highly controversial figure of Sulla is, for example, mentioned in Cicero’s works around 150 times, while Cinna’s much-reviled name occurs twenty-eight times. Even powerful opponents such as Pyrrhus and Hannibal who inflicted humiliating defeats on Rome are mentioned thirty-nine and forty-eight times respectively. This is in stark contrast to the roughly twenty-three times the far more recent Social War is alluded to.

Cicero’s references to the younger Drusus, whose tribunate would become closely associated with the outbreak of the war, are also instructive. Drusus and the laws he passed appear on twenty-two occasions in a wide range of different contexts drawn from

18 *Man.* 28: ‘Qui [sc. Pompey] e ludo atque pueritiae disciplinis, **bello maximo** atque acerrimis hostibus, ad patris exercitum atque in militiae disciplinam profectus est’. The passage must refer to the Social War in which his father triumphed.

19 *Har. Resp.* 18.

20 A. R. Dyck, *Marcus Tullius Cicero. Speeches on behalf of Marcus Fonteius and Marcus Aemilius Scaurus* (Oxford 2012) 13 f.

21 Cf. Mouritsen (1998) 129–51.

22 *Font.* 41: ‘deinde recens memoria parentis, cuius sanguine non solum Asculanorum manus, a qua interfectus est, sed totum illud **sociale bellum** macula sceleris imbutum est, ...’. It is the only instance where Cicero uses the term *sociale bellum* to describe the conflict. His choice of words is clearly not incidental since the emphasis on the allied status of the adversary further underscores the breach of faith which the uprising represented. In *Verr.* 2.5.8, Cicero employs the unusual formulation ‘*bello sociorum*’, this time again stressing the hostile intentions of the allies. Elsewhere he mostly uses the label *Italicum bellum* or, to a lesser extent, *Marsicum bellum*, the latter especially in the *De divinatione*.

Cicero's entire public career.<sup>23</sup> Still, the picture Cicero presents of the controversial tribune remains remarkably consistent – and unequivocally positive. Cicero describes him in glowing terms as *clarissimus* and *nobilissimus*, and characterises him as a 'gravis orator', while also noting his *severitas*.<sup>24</sup> At one point Drusus is even compared to Cicero's hero Scipio Aemilianus.<sup>25</sup> Cicero repeatedly stresses Drusus' close association with the senate and its cause as well as the firm backing he enjoyed from the most senior statesmen at the time.<sup>26</sup> Other aspects mentioned are Drusus' contentious judiciary reform which antagonised the *equites*, his struggle with the consul Philippus, the formal flaws in his legislative programme which led to its eventual repeal, and finally his assassination which Cicero deeply deplores.<sup>27</sup> On a few occasions Cicero hints at the contemporary criticism levelled against Drusus, including that of recklessness, *temeritas*, and of meddling too much in public affairs, 'multa in re publica molienti'.<sup>28</sup> Cicero himself, however, never goes further than describing his tribunate as 'colluvione Drusi', 'the turmoil of Drusus' while listing a series of dramatic moments in Rome's recent history.<sup>29</sup>

What is notably missing from these references is any allusion to the Italians; at no point does Cicero connect Drusus to the allied revolt that erupted towards the end of his tribunate. Only once, in the *De officiis*, do we find an oblique reference to Drusus' judiciary reform being ultimately responsible for the war. Thus after a discussion of *repetundae* laws and their terrible consequences we are told that: 'But afterwards came so many laws, each more stringent than the other, so many men were accused and so many convicted, such a war was stirred on account of fear of the courts, such was the pillaging and plundering of the allies when the laws and courts were suppressed, that now we find ourselves strong not in our own strength but in the weakness of others'.<sup>30</sup> It is clear from the context that the dreaded *iudicia* in question were the *repetundae* courts which Drusus had tried to restore to senatorial control. This ties in with other comments by Cicero, who stressed the centrality of the judicial reform to Drusus' tribunate, as well as the *invidia* the senate incurred thereby.<sup>31</sup> The implication is that the attempt

23 *Cluent.* 153; *Arch.* 6; *Rab. perd.* 21; *Rab. Post.* 16; *Planc.* 33; *Mil.* 16, 20; *Dom.* 41, 50, 120; *Vat.* 23; *Leg.* 2.14, 31; *Brut.* 182, 222; *De or.* 1.24 f., 97, 3.2; *Or.* 213; *Nat. deor.* 3.80 f.

24 *Clarissimus*: *Cluent.* 153, *Dom.* 120; *nobilissimus*: *Rab. Post.* 16, *Mil.* 16; 'gravis orator': *Brut.* 222; *severitas*: *Off.* 1.30.

25 *Mil.* 16. His power and influence are also stressed, with terms like *potentissimus* recurring, cf. *Cluent.* 153; *Rab. Post.* 16.

26 *Cluent.* 153; *Mil.* 16; *De or.* 1.24. Cf. *Diod.* 37.10.1; *Liv. Per.* 71; *Vell.* 13.2.

27 *Equites*: *Cluent.* 153; *Rab. Post.* 16; Philippus: *De or.* 1.24, 25, 3.2; repeal of laws: *Leg.* 2.31; *Dom.* 41, 50; assassination: *Nat. deor.* 3.80, 81.

28 *Or.* 213; *Planc.* 33.

29 *Vat.* 23: on the survival of the *leges Aelia et Fufia* '... in Gracchorum ferocitate et in audacia Saturnini et in colluvione Drusi et in contentione Sulpici et in cruore Cinnano, etiam inter Sullana arma ...'.

30 *Off.* 2.75: 'at uero postea tot leges et proxumae quaeque duriores tot rei tot damnati tantum [**Italicum**] **bellum** propter iudiciorum metum excitatum tanta sublatis legibus et iudiciis expilatio direptioque sociorum ut inbecillitate aliorum non nostra uirtute ualeamus'.

31 In *Brut.* 223 Cicero also makes it clear that the political issue separating Drusus and his adversary Q. Caepio (cf. *Dom.* 120, on Caepio as Drusus' *inimicus*) was the latter's particular attachment to the equestrian order, rather than any question related to the Italians; as Cicero states: 'Q. Caepio nimis equestri ordini deditus a senatu dissesisset'.

to reform the courts set in motion a sequence of events that eventually led to the allied revolt. More obliquely, Cicero draws a similar connection in the *Brutus*, when he refers to Rutilius' notorious *repetundae* process as 'the trial which we know completely tore the *res publica* apart', again suggesting a link between the battle over control over the courts and the war with the allies, although in this case the chain of events connecting them is more hinted at than spelled out.<sup>32</sup>

The question is how we interpret this apparent unwillingness to engage with the Italian revolt and its causes. The Social War was exceptional in the way the outcome changed the status of those on the losing side, who gained formal equality with the victors. Unlike most other conflicts in which the vanquished are either annihilated or reduced to a state of powerlessness, the defeated Italian insurgents became incorporated into Rome and through a complex series of measures managed to obtain a relatively secure status as full citizens. The process was not completed until 70 when the first – at least partially – effective census was conducted and the former allies finally received political rights in the much-expanded Roman state. This settlement laid the ground for the slow transformation of former rebels into solid pillars of society who could command public respect and – at least in theory – exert a degree of influence on Roman politics. The process took time, however, and initially only very few of the former allies came anywhere near the levers of power. Their impact was severely limited by the fact that politically Rome remained as centralised as it had ever been. This meant the Italians could be safely ignored by candidates seeking high office, and, as Quintus' passing comment in the *Commentariolum petitionis* hints, that was precisely what most nobles did.<sup>33</sup>

Cicero was unusual in the extent to which he cultivated the new constituency, but he was of course a new man with particular needs and family roots outside the capital. On several occasions he defended local Italian nobles in court while also offering patronage to municipalities across Italy. His efforts paid off in the consular election at which he claimed to have enjoyed the support of *tota Italia*.<sup>34</sup> His Italian base was apparently so solid that their support could again be relied upon to assist in his recall from exile, a measure which he later repeatedly stressed had been passed with extensive Italian backing.<sup>35</sup> The changing perception of the Italians – from foes to friends – is well illustrated by Cicero's defence of Cluentius in 66. In exalted tones he describes the *homines nobilissimi* from all over Italy who had rallied to Cluentius' support. Cicero specifically mentions those hailing from the Ferentini, Marrucini, Teanum Apulum, Luceria, Bovianum and

32 *Brut.* 115: '... quo iudicio convulsam penitus scimus esse rem publicam'. Cf. R. Kallet-Marx, 'The trial of Rutilius Rufus', *Phoenix* 44 (1990) 122–39, who questioned the significance of the case for the events of 91, despite the fact that Drusus was Rutilius' nephew and Velleius, 2.13.2, confirms the link. Other trials may also have contributed, above all that of Scaurus, Asc. 21C; Flor. 2.5.4–6.

33 *Comm. Pet.* 31: 'hos ceteri et maxime tui competitors ne norunt quidem ...'.

34 E. g. *Pis.* 3. In 59 Cicero predicted that the Italians would rally to his support should Clodius launch an attack, *Q. fr.* 1.2.16 (SB 2), cf. *Att.* 3.15.7 (SB 60).

35 *Red. Sen.* 24–9, 38 f.; *Red. Quir.* 1, 10 f., 16, 18; *Dom.* 5, 26, 30, 57, 75, 87, 90, 132, 142, 147; *Har. resp.* 5, 46; *Pis.* 23, 34, 51; *Sest.* 25 f., 32, 35–8, 72, 107, 128 f., 131, 145; *Vat.* 8; *Mil.* 38; cf. *Att.* 4.1.4 (SB 73).

‘totum Samnium’, in addition to those from the defendant’s hometown of Larinum.<sup>36</sup> The list is remarkable since it includes some of Rome’s fiercest opponents in the Social War, against whom Cicero and his contemporaries in the court had personally fought.<sup>37</sup>

A passage of Cicero’s speech for Publius Sulla helps to explain some of the new-found enthusiasm for the erstwhile enemies.<sup>38</sup> In response to a claim by the prosecutor, the young noble L. Manlius Torquatus, that Cicero has become a *rex peregrinus* in the wake of the Catilinarian affair, Cicero first declares that Rome had twice been saved by Arpinates, namely Marius and himself, before warning Torquatus that the insult he aimed at Cicero in fact applies to the majority of citizens, including those members of the Italian elites who will soon be among Torquatus’ competitors ‘de honore ac de omni dignitate’. Interestingly, he then goes on to remind Torquatus that he himself is of municipal descent on his mother’s side; as he puts it, although that branch of his ancestry was ‘honestissimi ac nobilissimi generis’, it still came from Asculum – ‘sed tamen Asculani’. This close family link between Roman nobles and Italians is particularly striking since it is just one generation removed from the uprising, in which Asculum played a key role. It hints at the gradual assimilation of the Italian elite into the ruling circles in Rome at a personal and familial level.<sup>39</sup> And as the local ruling classes became better and better integrated, the memory of the war became more and more awkward – for the Italians as well as for the Romans. The fact that these were the same people who had literally been at each other’s throat a few decades earlier created an obvious tension between the recent past and the new political realities. The polite – and politically expedient – response seems to have been to ignore the former and celebrate the latter. It is in this context we may interpret Cicero’s apparent reluctance to embrace the subject or deal with it in anything other than the vaguest of terms.

Still, despite Cicero’s best efforts to present a positive vision of new-found harmony, the fundamental ambiguities of the Italians’ position could not be entirely concealed. It took more than one generation for the wounds to heal and even then the scars remained visible. There are indications that ancient divisions lingered long after it had become politically inexpedient to express them openly. Thus, regardless of Cicero’s courting of the new Italian constituency, a certain ambivalence shines through many of his references to the former insurgents. In particular his use of the concept of Italia offers an inadvertent

36 *Cluent.* 197f.: ‘Adsunt Ferentani, homines nobilissimi, Marrucini item pari dignitate. Teano Apulo atque Luceria equites Romanos, homines honestissimos, laudatores videtis. Boviano totoque ex Samnio cum laudationes honestissimae missae sunt tum homines amplissimi nobilissimique venerunt.’

37 It is not given that the former allies would be treated so generously in public discourse. The uprising provided rich opportunities for invective along the lines which Cicero used when he claimed that Mark Antony’s father had married the daughter of a traitor, ‘proditoris filiam’, since her father, Q. Numitorius Pullus, came from the Latin colony Fregellae which had revolted in 125, *Phil.* 3.17. The absence of similar abuse of the Italians after the Social War is striking since the war – no matter how one interprets the aims of the insurgents – represented an unprovoked attack on Rome.

38 *Sull.* 22–25.

39 On the Italian elites during the first century BCE see in general G. D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome* (Cambridge 2007). See also E. Gabba, ‘Città italiche del I sec. a. C. e la politica’, *RSI* 98 (1986) 653–63.

glimpse of the pre-war mind-set which Roman politicians continued to operate within. Although Cicero repeatedly counts the Italians as being among his core supporters, he also instinctively distinguished Italia from the actual *populus Romanus*. This separation is apparent in a number of passages scattered across his works, where Italia and the Roman People feature as discrete entities. Most instances are concentrated at times when Cicero needed to claim wide personal support, not least after his return from exile and during the final dramatic year of his life.

In the speech on his house to the pontifices in 57 Cicero lists all those who had delighted in his restoration, including the Roman people and the whole of Italy: 'If therefore, you conceive that my restoration is a source of pleasure and gratification to the immortal gods, to the senate, to the Roman people, to all Italy, to the provinces, to foreign nations, and to your own selves ...'<sup>40</sup> A similar expression is found in his contemporary address to the senate, in which he described his recall in these terms: 'I have been restored, through the initiative of these same men and the leadership of Pompeius, who, when Italy longed for me, when you demanded me, and when the Roman people yearned for me, roused all of them for my salvation, not only by his authority but also by his prayers.'<sup>41</sup> The particular phrasing was not restricted to this period, however. For example, in his defence of Milo in 52 he asked rhetorically: 'Is there anybody who doesn't approve, who doesn't praise, who doesn't declare and believe that T. Annius is the greatest benefactor of the *res publica* in history and has brought the greatest joy to the Roman people, the whole of Italy, and all nations?.'<sup>42</sup> Later, in the Philippic speeches of 44–43 Cicero repeatedly mentioned the Roman people and Italy independently. Thus in the third oration he lists all those willing to join the noble fight, asking: 'Shall we not, now the occasion is offered, our leaders ready, the spirit of the soldiers stirred, the Roman people in agreement, all Italy roused for the recovery of liberty, avail ourselves of the bounty of the immortal gods?.'<sup>43</sup> And in the seventh oration Cicero again explicitly

40 *Dom.* 147: 'Quapropter si dis immortalibus, si senatui, si **populo Romano**, si **cunctae Italiae**, si provinciis, si exteris nationibus, si vobismet ipsis, ...'. Earlier in the same speech he had already juxtaposed the two: *Dom.* 82: '... tamen ne eum tua voce violabis quem ... tot vides iudicii senatus, **populi Romani, Italiae totius** honestatum, ...?'; '... will you nevertheless by your voice violate someone whom you see to have been honoured by so many pronouncements of the senate, the Roman people, and the whole of Italy?'. Likewise in the *Post reditum* address to the Senate Cicero had declared that: 'Qua re, cum me vestra auctoritas accesserit, **populus Romanus** vocarit, *res publica* imploravit, **Italia cuncta** paene suis umeris reportavit, ...', 39; 'Therefore, since your authority summoned me, the Roman people called out for me, the *res publica* implored me, the whole of Italy carried me back almost on its shoulders, ...'. In *Pis.* 64, Cicero listed *senatus, equites, plebs* and Italia separately.

41 *Har. Resp.* 46: 'ecce isdem auctoribus, Pompeio principe, qui cupientem **Italiam**, flagitantis vos, **populum Romanum** desiderantem non auctoritate sua solum sed etiam precibus ad meam salutem excitavit, restituti sumus'.

42 *Mil.* 77: 'nunc enim quis est qui non probet, qui non laudet, qui non unum post hominum memoriam T. Annum plurimum rei publicae profuisse, maxima laetitia **populum Romanum cunctam Italiam** nationes omnes adfecisse et dicat et sentiat?'. Cf. *Prov. cons.* 43, from 56.

43 *Phil.* 3.32: 'non tempore oblato, ducibus paratis, animis militum incitatis, **populo Romano** conspirante, **Italia tota** ad libertatem recuperandam excitata, deorum immortalium beneficio utemini?'. Cf. *Phil.* 5.25: 'denique quamvis seuera legatis mandata dederimus, nomen ipsum legatorum hunc quem uidemus **populi Romani** restinguet ardorem, municipiorum atque **Italiae** franget animos'. Cf. 5.44.

describes the *populus Romanus* and Italy as two separate entities who are now politically acting in unison: ‘For there is no holding back among those who lament that, in the hope of recovering its ancient authority, the senate is reviving its spirit, that the Roman people is in alliance with this our order, that Italy is in agreement, that our armies are prepared, and our commanders ready.’<sup>44</sup> The distinction also occurs in Cicero’s private communications, suggesting it was more than just rhetorical amplification for public audiences. For example, in a letter to Cassius surveying the situation in February 43 he notes that ‘As for the people, they are magnificently firm and loyal, so is the whole of Italy.’<sup>45</sup> And in another dispatch sent shortly afterwards he reiterates that: ‘The unanimity of the Roman people and of all Italy is quite remarkable.’<sup>46</sup>

In constitutional terms these passages make little sense since the Italians at this stage formed part of the *populus Romanus* and had done so for over a generation. We might of course interpret them as – imprecise – references to urban and extra-urban Romans, but that is not what Cicero says.<sup>47</sup> In fact, the clear implication of his words is that Roman and Italian are not the same; while the Italians may have become citizens, they were not yet Romans. The casual references drawn from a wide range of sources and contexts suggest that the ‘us’ and ‘them’ perspective was alive and well, and probably would continue so as long as combatants from the war were still around.<sup>48</sup> They indicate that even towards the end of Cicero’s life the Italians were still not considered ‘real’ Romans, and most likely the Italians did not themselves feel particularly ‘Roman’ either.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, as

44 *Phil.* 7.1: ‘non enim se tenent ei qui senatum dolent ad auctoritatis pristinae spem reuirescere, coniunctum huic ordini **populum Romanum**, conspirantem **Italiam**, paratos exercitus, expeditos duces. Cf. *Phil.* 7.20: ‘eos consules habemus, eam **populi Romani** alacritatem, eum consensum **Italiae**, eos duces, eos exercitus, ut nullam calamitatem res publica accipere possit sine culpa senatus’.

45 *Fam.* 12.4.1 (SB 363): ‘**Populo** vero nihil fortius, nihil melius, **Italiaque** universa’.

46 *Fam.* 12.5.3 (SB 365): ‘**populi** vero **Romani** totiusque **Italiae** mira consensio est’.

47 Cicero does on occasion operate with a distinction between *urbs* and Italia, i. e. the *ager Romanus* that now comprised the whole peninsula, but these instances are relatively rare and, importantly, entirely unambiguous and logical, e. g. *Har. resp.* 28; *Sest.* 26; *Pis.* 98; *Planc.* 95; *Phil.* 5.25; 13.47; *Or.* 232. In *Dom.* 147 Cicero’s perspective is clearly geographic, zooming out from Rome to Italy, the provinces and further beyond. Still, he retains the distinction between *populus Romanus* and Italia, suggesting the latter was not just considered separate from (true) Romans but also occupied an intermediate position between the Roman centre and the provincial periphery.

48 A visual illustration of this separation as well their internal power relations comes from the famous ‘conciliatory’ coin, probably issued in 70, which shows Roma stretching her hand out to greet Italia, M. H. Crawford, *RRC* 403. Not only is Rome clearly the dominant party, garbed in military dress and with her right foot resting on a globe, but Roma and Italia are represented as two distinct entities despite the fact that they had been politically united for well over a decade; *pace* M. Pobjoy, ‘The first Italia’, in *The Emergence of State Identities in Italy in the first Millennium BC*, eds. E. Herring and K. Lomas (London 2000) 187–211, 205 f.

49 P. Herrmann, ‘Italiker und Römer in Sardeis. Überlegungen zu zwei inschriftlichen Zeugnissen’, in *Res publica reperta. Zur Verfassung und Gesellschaft der römischen Republik und des frühen Prinzipats. Festschrift für Jochen Bleicken zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. J. Spielvogel (Stuttgart 2002) 36–44, noted that Italian *negotiatores* in the East continued to call themselves *Italici* well into first century, the label only being replaced by *cives Romani* at the time of Caesar and the triumvirs.

late as the reign of Augustus Ovid could reminisce about the moment when his Paelignian ancestors had fought their final battle for freedom against Rome.<sup>50</sup>

The decades following the enfranchisement of the Italians involved fundamental re-adjustments on both sides. For the Italians the devastating defeat followed by profound political and cultural upheaval would have been little short of traumatic. For the Romans the broken treaties and the bloodshed inflicted during the revolt would not have been easily forgotten either. Nevertheless, the outcome also turned former enemies into fellow citizens, who had to be integrated and who gradually would also become a factor to be reckoned with in political circles, as Cicero's admonitions to Torquatus illustrate. During the transitional period the sensible stance was to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to the war. This was the line adopted by Cicero, in whose works the war, as we saw, remains virtually invisible.

Only twice in his surviving works did he comment, albeit in passing, on the aims of the insurgents. The two passages are separated by almost a whole generation and the picture he paints on the second occasion is strikingly different from the one he presented towards the beginning of his career. In the speeches published after his prosecution of Verres in 70 Cicero first noted that '... although there was war in Italy, so close to Sicily, and yet in Sicily there was none', before going on to explain that the cause of Sicily's remarkable peacefulness lay in the effective and beneficial structure of Rome's administration of the island.<sup>51</sup> Cicero then observes that: 'The result of these regulations for Sicily was that under C. Norbanus, even though all Italy was then ablaze with the flames of the War of the allies, that not very strenuous or valiant governor, was having a quiet time'; in sum: 'The activities of the Sicilians themselves are so organised that a state of peace is to their advantage, and they are so satisfied with the rule of the Roman people that they do not have the slightest wish to diminish or change it.'<sup>52</sup> In other words, because the Sicilians were satisfied with Roman rule, they felt no compulsion to join the Italian revolt. The implication is that the Social War was viewed as an expression of discontent and hostility towards Rome, as reflected in the insurgents' wish to diminish – 'imminui' – the *imperium populi Romani* and fundamentally reset – 'communitare' – their relationship with Rome.<sup>53</sup> The comment about the Social War is peripheral to Cicero's case against Verres, so while he may exaggerate the degree of satisfaction

50 *Am.* 3.15.8–10: 'Paelignae dicar gloria gentis ego, quam sua libertas ad honesta coegerat arma, cum timuit socias anxia Roma manus'.

51 *Verr.* 2.5.6: 'At cum esset in Italia **bellum** tam prope a Sicilia, tamen in Sicilia non fuit'.

52 *Verr.* 2.5.8: 'Ergo his institutis provinciae iam tum, cum **bello sociorum** tota Italia arderet, homo non acerrimus nec fortissimus, C. Norbanus, in summo otio fuit'. 'Et cum ipsi Siculi res suas ita constitutas habeant ut iis pacem expediat esse, imperium autem populi Romani sic diligant ut id imminui aut communitari minime velint'.

53 This view of the war ties in with that suggested by other contemporary sources, not least the insurgent coinage (A. Campana, *La monetazione degli insorti italici durante la guerra sociale (91–87 a. C.)*, (Soliera 1987), cf. M. H. Crawford, *Imagines Italicae. A Corpus of Italic Inscriptions* (London 2011: BICS Suppl. 110) 67–74). Similarly, the immediate reactions in Rome, cf. *Rhet. ad Her.* 4.13, and the description of the revolt in Diodorus, 37.1.6, 14, 22, and 37.2.11 (presumably based on Posidonius), as well as various features of the uprising itself and the course of the war, e. g. the new federal state *Italia*, Diod. 37.2.4–7; Strabo 5.4.2; Vell. 2.16.4; Florus 2.6.7, cf. Mouritsen (1998) 6 f., 139 f. (pace C. J. Dart, 'The 'Italian constitution' in the

felt by the Sicilians, there is no reason to assume he redefines the entire nature of the conflict; it is, after all, a rather trivial observation about the general blessings of Roman provincial administration, which Verres had undermined during his tenure. Most likely therefore, the passage echoes common perceptions of the war in the decades following immediately after.

Twenty-seven years later, in the twelfth Philippic oration, Cicero again touched upon the nature of the Social War, also mentioning his own personal role in it. This time, however, the message is very different, and his changing priorities mirror the historiographic process which transformed the Social War into the ‘fraternal’ conflict we encounter in the later imperial tradition.<sup>54</sup> Cicero’s comment on the Social War was made as part of his efforts to shore up opposition against Antony, with whom, he argued, no negotiation was possible. To put Antony’s lack of good faith into perspective Cicero evokes two historical examples showing fierce enemies who were nevertheless able to conduct negotiations in an atmosphere of relative trust and civility.

The first instance belongs to the Social War where Cicero describes a meeting he attended between the commander Pompeius Strabo and the Marsic general Vettius Scato in the following terms: ‘I remember parleys both with Rome’s bitterest foreign foes and with fellow countrymen in open revolt. The consul Cn. Pompeius, son of Sextus, conferred with P. Vettius Scato, the Marsic leader, between their two camps in my presence, when I was a recruit in Pompeius’ army. I remember that Sextus Pompeius, the consul’s brother, a man of learning and good sense, came down from Rome to take part in the parley. When Scato had greeted him, he added: “What am I to call you?” And the other replied: “‘Guest-friend’ by my choosing, ‘enemy’ by necessity.” There was fair play at that parley; no covert fear, no suspicion; even hostility was not extreme. Our allies, after all, were not seeking to take our citizenship/community away from us but to be admitted to it.’<sup>55</sup>

Social War: a re-assessment (91–88 BCE), *Historia* 58 (2009) 215–24, whose argument seems entirely circular).

54 The first consistent portrayal of the conflict as a civil war belongs to the early Empire, where Velleius, 2.15.2, stated that ‘Their fortune was as cruel as their cause was most just’ (*causa fuit iustissima*), since they were ‘seeking the *civitas*, whose *imperium* they were defending with their arms’ (*ut fortuna atrox, ita causa fuit iustissima; petebant enim eam civitatem, cuius imperium armis tuebantur*). The Romans, he claimed, had looked down upon ‘men of the same race and blood’ (*homines eiusdem et gentis et sanguinis*), as if they were foreigners and aliens. The themes of civil war and consanguinity reoccur in, for example, Florus who describes the Italian peoples as limbs of the same body, who rose against their ‘mother and parent city’, 2.6. And when we reach the time of Appian in the second century, the conflict was interpreted exclusively in terms of long-standing Italian wishes for Roman citizenship and the equality within the Roman state its extension would guarantee, *BC* 1.34–53.

55 *Phil.* 12.27: ‘Memini colloquia et cum acerrimis hostibus et cum gravissime dissidentibus civibus. Cn. Pompeius, Sexti filius, consul me praesente, cum essem tiro in eius exercitu, cum P. Vettio Scatone, duce Marsorum, inter bina castra collocutus est; quo quidem memini Sex. Pompeium, fratrem consulis, ad colloquium ipsum Roma venire, doctum virum atque sapientem. Quem cum Scato salutasset, ‘Quem te appellem?’ inquit. At ille: ‘Voluntate hospitem, necessitate hostem.’ Erat in illo colloquio aequitas; nullus timor, nulla suberat suspicio; mediocre etiam odium. Non enim ut eriperent nobis socii civitatem, sed ut in eam reciperentur, petebant’. Trans. Loeb, with modifications.

The passage forms a striking contrast to Cicero's description of the war in the Verines and comes much closer to the 'citizenship-version' of the war that would later come to prevail. And while some historians have taken it as confirmation that the uprising was indeed aimed at gaining Roman citizenship, a closer reading might suggest a more complex situation.<sup>56</sup> The story provides an exemplary counterpoint to the situation in 43 when Antony's criminality precluded meaningful negotiations and war, according to Cicero, remained the only option. However, the suggestion of relatively conciliatory negotiations in late 89 would probably have surprised Cicero's audience, and he therefore inserts the explanatory 'enim-clause' which plays on the double meaning of *civitas* – community and citizenship – and argues that allies did not attempt to take away the *civitas* of the Romans but wanted to be received into it. This piece of information is in itself irrelevant to his main point about faithful negotiations being possible between opponents and was presumably included in order to make the counter-intuitive argument of 'mediocre odium' existing between 'acerrimis hostibus' appear less paradoxical.

Cicero obviously did not invent the new 'conciliatory' version of the war for this particular anecdote, which merely serves to add rhetorical colour to his attack on Antony.<sup>57</sup> Presumably Cicero drew on an interpretation of the Social War that had already begun to circulate in Rome at the time. It appears to invoke a particular understanding of the conflict that may have become increasingly popular as a response to the radical changes to the political landscape outlined above. As it happened, this particular approach also suited the argument Cicero was pursuing in this part of his speech. However, the explicit reference to – and rejection of – the alternative version also signal that it had not yet become the only, let alone prevalent understanding of the war, which may still have been widely remembered as a straightforward attack on Rome by faithless allies who tried to overthrow Roman hegemony. Still, a revision was clearly under way and the shifting memories of the Social War during the first century BCE bring us to our second case study, which considers the historiography of the war. Its point of departure is an intriguing anecdote about the young Cato, which occupies a unique position in the historical record, since it dates to the very moment when a new generation of historians began to revisit the war.

56 E.g. Carlà-Uhink (2017) 332, whose reference to Sisenna *FRH* frg. 37 as further proof of this theory is rather baffling since the fragment makes no allusion to Roman citizenship nor indeed to the aims of the insurgents.

57 The suggestion in *FRH* III 383, 410, that some fragments of Sisenna, frg. 37 and 116, may refer to the meeting between Strabo and Scato illustrates the pitfalls involved in trying to connect the few disparate pieces of information we have for the Social War. This particular incident is recorded only in the Philippics where Cicero explicitly mentions that it is based on his own personal memory of an encounter at which he was present. We therefore have no reason to assume this was a significant or widely known event which must have featured in Sisenna's account of the war.

### Cato and the Italians: Luceius' lost history of the Social War

One of the most peculiar stories associated with the Social War records the dramatic meeting between Cato the Younger and the Marsic leader Poppaedi<sup>8</sup> Silo during the tribunate of Cato's uncle Livius Drusus in 91. It appears to have been widely known in antiquity, as indicated by the fact that it survives in two separate versions in addition to a shorter summary. The earliest version comes from Valerius Maximus' collection of *exempla* in the section *De indole*, 'On natural temper', illustrating early promise and strength of character. 'Neither was such spirit lacking from the boyhood of M. Cato. He was being brought up in the house of his uncle M. Drusus. To Drusus, who was Tribune of the Plebs, came Latins to discuss their demands for the franchise. Q. Poppaedi<sup>8</sup>, the leader of Latium and a guest of Drusus, asked Cato to put in a word for the allies with his uncle. Cato firmly replied that he would do no such thing, and when solicited a second and a third time, struck to his resolve. Then Poppaedi<sup>8</sup> took him up to a high part of the house and threatened to throw him down if he did not comply with what was asked. Even this could not move him from his determination. So these words were drawn from the man: 'We can thank our stars, Latins and allies, that this boy is so small, for if he were in the senate we could not even hope for the franchise.' So in his tender mind Cato assumed ahead of his time the gravity of the whole senate house and by his steadfastness rebuffed the Latins in their eagerness to lay hold of our citizen rights.'<sup>58</sup>

Later Plutarch included an even longer and more detailed version in his biography of Cato the Younger, relating that: 'While Cato was still a boy, the [Italian] allies of the Romans were making efforts to obtain Roman citizenship. One of their number, Poppaedi<sup>8</sup> [sc. Poppaedi<sup>8</sup>] Silo, a man of experience in war and of the highest position, was a friend of Drusus, and lodged at his house for several days. During this time he became familiar with the children, and said to them once: 'Come, beg your uncle to help us in our struggle for citizenship.' Caepio, accordingly, consented with a smile, but Cato made no reply and gazed fixedly and fiercely upon the strangers. Then Poppaedi<sup>8</sup> said: 'But you, young man, what do you say to us? Can't you take the part of the guests with your uncle, like your brother?' And when Cato said not a word, but by his silence and the look on his face seemed to refuse the request, Poppaedi<sup>8</sup> lifted him up through a window, as if he would cast him out, and ordered him to consent, or he would throw him down, at the same time making the tone of his voice harsher, and frequently shaking the boy as he held his body out at the window. But when Cato had endured this treatment

58 Val. Max. 3.1.2: 'Hic spiritus ne M. quidem Catonis pueritiae defuit: nam cum in domo M. Drusi avunculi sui educaretur, et ad eum tribunum pl. Latini de ciuitate impetranda convenissent, a Q. Poppedio, Latii principe, Drusi autem hospite, rogatus ut socios apud avuncululum adiuuaret, constanti vultu non facturum se respondit. iterum deinde ac saepius interpellatus in proposito perstitit. tunc Poppedi<sup>8</sup> in excelsam aedium partem levatum abiecturum inde se, nisi precibus obtemperaret, minatus est: nec hac re ab incepto moveri potuit. expressa est itaque illa vox homini: 'gratulemur nobis, Latini et socii, hunc esse tam parvum, quo senatore ne sperare quidem nobis ciuitatem licuisset'. tenero ergo animo Cato totius curiae gravitatem percepit perseverantiaque sua Latinos iura nostrae civitatis apprehendere cupientes reppulit'. Trans. Shackleton Bailey (Loeb) with modifications.

for a long time without showing fright or fear, Pompaedius put him down, saying quietly to his friends: ‘What a piece of good fortune it is for Italy that he is a boy; for if he were a man, I do not think we could get a single vote among the people.’<sup>59</sup>

Finally in late antiquity the story was included in the anonymous work known as the *De viris illustribus* which relied extensively on Livy. The author informs us that: ‘When Cato, the former praetor and great-grandson of Cato the censor, was brought up in the house of his uncle Drusus, Q. Popedius Silo [sc. Poppaedius], the leader of the Marsi, could not bring him to say he supported the cause of the allies neither by the use of reward nor threats.’<sup>60</sup>

The fact that the story appears in both Valerius Maximus, who drew many of his *exempla* from the *Ab urbe condita*, and in the *De viris illustribus* strongly suggests that it featured in Livy, who is therefore the most likely common source for these two versions. We may, however, have an even earlier reference to the story in one of Cicero’s letters. In 46 Cicero wrote to Tiro regarding the revision of his lost pamphlet *Cato*, into which he wished an additional passage to be inserted: ‘If the copyists up there cannot make out my handwriting, you will put them right. There is a rather difficult insert which I do not find easy to read myself, the story about Cato as a four-year-old.’<sup>61</sup> Since the younger Cato cannot have been born earlier than April 95 that is the age he would have had during Drusus’ tribunate in 91, when the anecdote is set. It is therefore generally assumed that Cicero alludes to this particular story. Following this conjecture, the anecdote has been interpreted as part of the biographic tradition that sprang up after Cato’s martyr death in 46, when his *vita* became the subject of intense public interest and used politically by both friends and foes. Apart from Cicero’s *Cato*, which provoked Caesar to write his ‘Anti-Cato’ in response, it included the works of Cato’s nephew Brutus and his close friend Munatius Rufus.<sup>62</sup> Later, under the empire the biographies of Cremutius Cordus and Thræsea Paetus continued the panegyric tradition, and Plutarch may have drawn particularly on the latter for his life of Cato.<sup>63</sup>

59 Plut. *Cato Min.* 2.1–4: ‘δὲ παιδὸς τοῦ Κάτωνος ὄντος ἐπραττον οἱ σύμμαχοι τῶν Ῥωμαίων ὅπως μεθέξουσι τῆς ἐν Ῥώμῃ πολιτείας: καί τις Πομπαιδῖος Σίλλων, ἀνὴρ πολεμικὸς καὶ μέγιστον ἔχων ἀξίωμα, τοῦ δὲ Δρούσου φίλος, κατέλυσε παρ’ αὐτῷ πλείονας ἡμέρας, ἐν αἷς γεγονῶς τοῖς παιδίοις συνήθης, ‘ἄγε,’ εἶπεν, ‘ὅπως ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν δεήσεσθε τοῦ θεοῦ συναγωνίσασθαι περὶ τῆς πολιτείας.’ ὁ μὲν οὖν Καίπιων διαμειδιάσας ἐπένευσε, τοῦ δὲ Κάτωνος οὐδὲν ἀποκριναμένου καὶ βλέποντος εἰς τοὺς ξένους ἀτενὲς καὶ βλοσυρόν, ὁ Πομπαιδῖος, ‘σὺ δέ,’ εἶπεν, ‘ἡμῖν, ὦ νεανία, τί λέγεις; οὐχ οἶος εἶ τοῖς ξένοις συλλαβάνεσθαι πρὸς τὸν θεόν,’ ὥσπερ ὁ ἀδελφός;’ μὴ φθειρομένου δὲ τοῦ Κάτωνος, ἀλλὰ τῇ σιωπῇ καὶ τῷ προσώπῳ δοκοῦντος ἀπολέγεσθαι τὴν δέησιν, ἀράμενος αὐτὸν ὁ Πομπαιδῖος ὑπὲρ θυρίδος ὡς ἀφήσων ὁμολογεῖν ἐκέλευεν ἢ ρίψειν ἔφασκεν, ἅμα τῇ τε φωνῇ τραχυτέρᾳ χρώμενος καὶ ταῖς χερσὶν ἀπηρητημένον τὸ σῶμα πολλὰκις ὑπὲρ τῆς θυρίδος κραδαίων. ἐπεὶ δὲ πολὺν χρόνον οὕτω διεκαρτέρησεν ὁ Κάτων ἀνέκπληκτος καὶ ἀδείης, καταθέμενος αὐτὸν Πομπαιδῖος ἡσυχῇ πρὸς τοὺς φίλους εἶπεν: ‘ὄσον εὐτύχημα τῆς Ἰταλίας ὅτι παῖς οὗτός ἐστιν: εἰ δὲ ἀνὴρ ἦν, μίαν οὐκ ἂν οἶμα ψήφον ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ δήμῳ γινέσθαι.’ Trans. Loeb.

60 *De vir. ill.* 80.1: ‘Cato praetorius Catonis censorii pronepos cum in domo auunculi Drusi educaretur, nec pretio nec minis potuit adduci a Q. Popedio Silone Marsorum principe, ut fauere se causae sociorum diceret.’

61 *Fam.* 16.22.1 (SB 185): ‘Tu istic, si quid librarii mea manu non intelligent, monstrabis. una omnino interpositio difficilior est, quam ne ipse quidem facile legere soleo, de quadrimo Catone.’

62 On Munatius Rufus see now *FRH I* 358–60.

63 Although see J. Geiger, ‘Munatius Rufus and Thræsea Paetus on Cato the Younger’, *Ath.* 57 1979 48–72.

To modern scholars the identification of Cicero as the original source of the story has confirmed its authenticity, on the assumption, firstly, that he was familiar with Cato's personal circle and thus had access to information about his early life and, secondly, that he would not have included anything of dubious factuality.<sup>64</sup> The argument does, however, overlook some fundamental issues, most obviously the age of the protagonist. As the historical context implies, Cato can only just have turned four when he displayed such remarkable political principle and personal courage. This simple fact would seem to render the story manifestly implausible.<sup>65</sup> The narrative premise of the story also becomes nonsensical, since it implies a scenario of a powerful foreign leader pleading with a barely four-year old child to intercede with his uncle in order to extract concessions which would, if implemented, transform the political structure of Italy. The notion that a small child, however precocious, holding this kind of influence is of course improbable. It is therefore not surprising that none of the surviving versions mentions Cato's actual age, presumably because that would have stretched the readers' credulity too far. In this context we should not forget that due to the nature of Roman chronology it would not have been immediately obvious to the readers how old Cato was in 91, especially if encountering the story in a context that was not directly concerned with the life of Cato, such as a general historical narrative or a collection of *exempla*.

The treatment of the critical issue of Cato's age might point to the existence of two separate traditions, a historical and a biographical, each with their own distinct priorities; for although the two versions share the omission of Cato's age, they clearly indicate a child at different stages of development. In the 'Livian' version Cato is merely described as being in his *pueritia* and nothing in the account points to him being a small toddler; it is in fact easily compatible with a boy just below puberty. By contrast, in Plutarch's *vita Poppaedi* physically lifts Cato up, holds him out of the window and shakes his body while threatening him verbally, an important twist missing from Valerius Maximus' version. It would therefore seem that while the 'Livian' version was concerned with maintaining a degree of historical plausibility, the biographical tradition, with its focus firmly placed on Cato's personality, may have seen his tender age as a means of highlighting his unusual steadfastness.

64 I. Haug, 'Der römische Bundesgenossenkrieg 91–88 v. Chr. bei Titus Livius', *WJA* 2 (1947) 100–149, 201–58. 136, suggested the anecdote comes from a eulogising biography. She also argued that it cannot predate Cato's death and ultimately must derive from Cicero. R. Fehrlé, *Cato Uticensis* (Darmstadt 1983), 11 f., insisted it must be genuine, since Cicero, who had contact with Cato's circle, included it in his pamphlet, although in its current form he suggested it is the result of a later tradition, either Munatius Rufus or, in the case of Plutarch, Thræsea Paetus. A. Bancalari Molina, 'Gli interventi degli italici nella lotta politica romana durante il tribunato di Livio Druso (91 A. C.)', *SCO* 37 (1987) 407–37, 408; C. J. Dart, 'Quintus Poppaedi Silo: *dux et auctor* of the Social War', *Ath.* 98 (2010) 111–126, 114 f., cf. 116, 121, 124–6, and F. C. Tweedie, 'The *lex Licinia Mucia* and the *bellum italicum*', in *Processes of Integration and Identity Formation in the Roman Republic* ed. S. T. Roselaar (Leiden 2012) 123–39, 137 f. n. 46, all accept the story as authentic.

65 For Cato's date of birth see L. Renders, 'La date de naissance de Caton d'Utique et l'âge legal de la questure au dernier siècle de la république', *Ant. Class.* 8 (1939) 111–25, who demonstrated that it cannot be placed earlier than April 95.

The divergences between the two versions take us back to the question of the original source and to the hypothesis that the story derives from the ‘hagiographic’ tradition that sprang up after Cato’s death. The theory raises a number of questions. Broadly speaking, stories about the early childhood of famous men were not particularly common and often associated with omens or other supernatural events presaging future greatness.<sup>66</sup> Accounts of actual infant behaviour are largely absent from the biographical genre. Tellingly, Valerius Maximus’ next anecdote about Cato relates to the time of Sulla when he was already in his teens, suggesting that our anecdote may have been somewhat isolated from the rest of the narrative of Cato’s life.<sup>67</sup>

The picture presented of the infant Cato is also more ambiguous than one would have expected if it had been invented for a posthumous encomium. The image of Cato as a stubborn child is in some respects less than flattering; certainly, the degree of composure displayed by a child that age might strike some readers as more disconcerting than admirable. And if the notion of a toddler with strong political principles was not baffling enough in itself, the story becomes even more peculiar when we consider the nature of these convictions; for the clear political message of the anecdote is that Cato was a staunch and inflexible opponent of the Italian allies, who – in this highly ‘conciliatory’ version – were merely seeking Roman citizenship. Viewed from that perspective it would seem to be the young Cato who emerges as the more unreasonable party in the dispute. Indeed, the exasperated response attributed to Poppaediū raises the question whom we are supposed to sympathise with in this story – the obstinate boy or Rome’s long-standing ally who asked to be admitted to the Roman *civitas*?

The politics of the anecdote make it an unlikely product of the hagiographic tradition created after Cato’s death. At that point the Italians had long been part of the Roman state and generally were courted by the political establishment as respectable pillars of society. The story as we have it evidently serves as an *exemplum* demonstrating Cato’s strength of character, apparent already in childhood. Still, it would make little sense after 46 to emphasise the young Cato’s hostility to what had by then become a valued section of the citizen body, even the majority, as Cicero observed. If the aim was to demonstrate his personal bravery, why did those inventing the story give it such an overtly political aspect?

At the heart of the story lies Poppaediū Silo’s visit to Drusus’s house with all its implications of friendship and familiarity. Poppaediū’s presence in the story is intriguing, since he was to become one of the chief commanders on the insurgent side and the object of several more or less fantastical tales. Most notoriously he is credited with killing Drusus’ opponent Servilius Caepio, the father of Cato’s half-brother who features in Plutarch’s version of the story.<sup>68</sup> Any intimation of links between Drusus and

66 E. g. the snake appearing at the cradle of Scipio and the various miraculous occurrences during Augustus’ early years, *De vir. ill.* 49; *Suet. Aug.* 94.6 f.

67 Plutarch includes one more anecdote from Cato’s early life, 2.5, but that too must relate to the Sullan period, again underlining the anomalous position of the Poppaediū story.

68 In Diodorus, 37.13, we find the peculiar tale of Poppaediū leading a band of ten thousand armed men who ‘feared judicial investigation’ on a march on Rome to demand citizenship but was met by one Domitius

the infamous rebel leader would have been highly discrediting for the tribune, implying as it does that he consorted with Rome's enemies. Such allegations lay at the core of the so-called *quaestiones Variarum* which prosecuted prominent supporters of Drusus on trumped up charges of having aided and abetted the insurgents against Rome.<sup>69</sup> Given Cicero's consistently positive portrayal of Drusus as the champion of the senate's cause, it is not obvious why he would have created a story that directly linked Drusus to this notorious adversary of Rome. The incriminating nature of Poppaedius' visit rather suggests this element originally belonged to a more hostile tradition, perhaps going back to the Varian trials, which Cicero generally ignored when referring to Drusus' life and legacy.

If Cicero did not invent the anecdote in the wake of Cato's death, the question is where it comes from. There are indications that it originally may have been part of a historical account of the war, rather than a *vita Catonis*. Thus, the story is set at a very particular juncture in the flow of events during Drusus' tribunate. Chronologically it takes place precisely at the moment when the Italians supposedly were pressing for citizenship, but Drusus – as late as the summer of 91 – did not yet support their demand. The later tradition, Appian above all, made Italian enfranchisement the central plank of Drusus' programme from the outset, but in this version Drusus only gradually and relatively late in his tribunate becomes the 'champion of the allies'. An echo of this narrative can perhaps be found in Velleius' early imperial history where Drusus turned to the Italians only when difficulties were mounting for his other reforms.<sup>70</sup>

The Social War received little attention from Roman historians during the first century BCE, perhaps unsurprisingly given the political sensitivities surrounding the conflict. The earliest account of the Social War was probably composed by Sulla as part of his memoirs, which were followed shortly afterwards by the three histories composed by Sisenna, Lucullus and Hortensius.<sup>71</sup> None of these works would have had any reason to discuss the views and behaviour of Drusus' nephew, who at the time of writing was still an unknown quantity in public life. It is therefore safe to say that the story cannot predate the period before Cato became a significant political player in the late 60s and a leading voice in the senate during the 50s.

Although the Social War appears to have remained largely untouched by historians during the remainder of the republic, there is one notable exception. In his famous letter to Lucceius from 56 Cicero briefly alludes to the latter's history of the Social and Civil

who persuaded him to turn around. The story is accepted as historical by e.g. Bancalari Molina (1987) 422–30, and Dart (2010) 117. The story of Poppaedius' capture of Caepio also has a remarkable twist since he, according to Appian, approached Caepio with the promise of surrender and presenting him with two children as hostages, who he claimed were his own but in reality were slaves. There is, in other words, a striking amount of folklore surrounding this figure, on several occasions involving children being used and abused.

69 E. S. Gruen, 'The *Lex Varia*', *JRS* 55 (1965) 59–73; Badian (1969).

70 2.14.1 'Tum conversus Drusi animus, quando bene incepta male cedebant, ad dandam civitatem Italiae.'

71 Plut. *Luc.* 1.7 f., describes how the three decided each to write their own account of the war, Lucullus apparently in Greek. The assumption that Hortensius' *annales* were in verse is unlikely given that Velleius later used him as a source, 2.16.3. Cf. *FRH* I 282–6, 287, 305–19, 338–40.

Wars, noting that it is now almost finished.<sup>72</sup> Nothing has survived of this work, and we can therefore only speculate as to its scale, structure, style and tendency. The project itself is intriguing, however. Histories were typically written to fill gaps, starting where previous accounts left off. But in this case there already existed a well-known 'standard' history of the period, namely that of Sisenna. The question is therefore why Lucceius decided to devote his retirement to covering the same material again.

Lucceius' motives may of course have been purely literary, attracted to the rich dramatic potential of the subject, but we should also bear in mind that it was precisely around this time that the Roman perspective on the Social War would have begun to evolve. Although the Italians may not yet have been regarded as fully Roman, as hinted at by Cicero's usage, a generation had now passed, during which period the Italians had slowly been transformed from defeated foes into fellow citizens.

The earliest accounts of the war, now lost or preserved only in fragments, were presumably conventional celebrations of Roman victory over a faithless enemy (cf. Cic. *Font.* 41). The works of Sisenna, Lucullus and Hortensius probably differed little in tone or tendency from that of Sulla, himself a leading commander in the war. Sisenna is on record as being biased in favour of Sulla, while the other two are well-known members of his circle. All three authors had served in the Social War and thus come face-to-face with the Italians on the battle field, an experience that can hardly have failed to colour their approach.<sup>73</sup> It is therefore unlikely that the later 'pro-Italian' version, stressing allied requests for Roman citizenship, can be traced back to these early accounts; indeed, the surviving fragments of Sisenna suggest a straightforward war narrative focused on Roman military exploits while consistently describing the Italians as *hostes*.<sup>74</sup> However, with the political settlement that followed the Italian defeat and the incorporation of the former allies into Rome, the traditional narrative became less and less acceptable, calling for a more conciliatory version of the conflict, one that shifted the emphasis away from Italian attempts 'imperium populi Romani ... imminui' (*Verr.* 2.5.8) onto a supposed demand for inclusion. As Cicero's Twelfth Philippic implies, it was precisely this interpretation that was now being aired in public.

Lucceius' own background and affiliations are significant too, for what defined Lucceius politically was above all his close association with Pompey. In 60 it was agreed he would run for the consulship together with Caesar, whom he even supported financially. But while Caesar succeeded, Lucceius lost out because of the campaign orchestrated by Cato to secure the other consulship for his father-in-law Bibulus. After his defeat Luc-

72 Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.2 (SB 22), 'Sed quia videbam Italici belli et civilis historiam iam a te paene perfectam, ...'. Cf. *FRH* I 335–7.

73 E. Rawson, 'L. Cornelius Sisenna and the Early First Century B. C.', *CQ* 29 1979 327–46, tried to trace an 'Italian viewpoint' and sympathy for the allies in Sisenna's work, suggesting he may have anticipated the later imperial version and presented it as a civil war. The theory seems inherently unlikely and lacks evidential support. Rawson even doubted Sisenna's links to Sulla, although his closeness to prominent Sullani like Hortensius and Lucullus suggests he was part of their circle, cf. E. Badian, 'Waiting for Sulla', *JRS* 52 (1962) 47–61, 50. His partiality towards Sulla was criticised by Sallust *Jug.* 95.2, and is apparent in *FRH* frg. 135.

74 *FRH* frg. 7, 28, 44, 64, 69, 97.

ceius retired from politics and turned to the writing of history. It is probably not too far-fetched to assume that Cato's efforts to derail Lucceius' career as well as his persistent attempts to obstruct Pompey during this period would have left little sympathy between the two men. Therefore, the only historian known to have composed a new history of the Social War after the final incorporation of the Italians in 70 happens to be a politician who had good reasons to bear a personal grudge against Cato.

The political conditions not only allowed for a very different account of the war to be written; Lucceius was also closely associated with the man who had been instrumental in admitting the Italians to full citizenship. By restoring the censorship in 70, Pompey had enabled the first comprehensive registration of Italians in *tribus*. In addition, Pompey seems to have maintained close contact with the local elites of Italy, as indicated e.g. by his ability to call them up for Cicero's restoration in 58 and by the widespread expressions of concern from Italian communities when he fell ill in 50.<sup>75</sup> Although the enfranchisement of the former allies had now been settled, citizenship grants stayed on the political agenda throughout the 60s and 50s, as various politicians tried to align themselves with the cause of the Transpadani, who were still without the franchise. Caesar's interest in the matter is well documented. He had first raised the issue of Transpadane enfranchisement in 69–8 and would eventually implement the reform in 49.<sup>76</sup> In 59 the *lex Vatinia* had also authorised him to found citizen colonies there (Suet. *Iul.* 28.3). The proposed enfranchisement of the Transpadani led to a dispute between Crassus and Catulus during their censorship in 65 (Dio 37.9.3–4), causing an open split which made them both stand down. Erich Gruen plausibly suggests that the former sought to increase his clientela while the latter opposed it.<sup>77</sup> It seems unlikely that neither Pompey nor Cato would have had a stake in this long-running issue. Cato remained closely aligned with Catulus on most matters, and if Gruen is right in his assumption that Catulus opposed it vehemently, Cato's position was probably equally negative. Pompey, on the other hand, may have perceived a strategic as well as personal interest in Cisalpine Gaul; it was, after all, his father, Pompeius Strabo, who had overseen the enfranchisement of the Cispadani in 88, and the territories north of the river Po offered rich opportunities for extending his patronage even further.

To summarise, a number of features might point to Lucceius' history of the Social War as the possible source of the anecdote about the young Cato: 1) Lucceius wrote soon after Cato had crushed his political ambitions and during a period when Cato continued to make life difficult for his friend Pompey; 2) Cicero had read Lucceius' history and would therefore have been able to draw on its content for his *Cato*; 3) The anecdote portrays the young Cato in a dubious light as implacably opposed to the Italians, a stance which retained its political resonance in the ongoing dispute about the Trans-

75 E. g. Cic. *Har. resp.* 43; *Pis.* 80; *Prov. cons.* 43. On Italian responses to Pompey's illness, e.g. Cic. *Att.* 8.16.1; 9.5.3; Vell. 2.48.2; Plut. *Pomp.* 57.1–3.

76 Suet. *Iul.* 8. Cf. Cael. *ap. Cic. Fam.* 8.1–2; *Att.* 5.2.3; Hirt. *BG* 8.50, 52.

77 E. S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley 1974) 410. He also places the *lex Papia* on usurpation of citizenship in this context, Dio 37.9.5.

padani; 4) The Italians are presented as seeking nothing more than access to the Roman franchise, a request which in the 50s, with the benefit of hindsight, would have seemed neither unreasonable nor particularly threatening to Rome, as the enfranchisement of Italy in the end brought no fundamental changes to her internal power structures.

If Lucceius is indeed our source it would explain also why someone would attempt to exploit the tenuous connection between the Younger Cato and the Social War, which for obvious chronological reasons were entirely unrelated. Seizing on the incidental fact that Cato had been brought up in Drusus' house and possibly also the – hostile – rumours of allied leaders visiting the tribune, the story of the infant opponent of – perfectly sensible – Italians would have served to discredit Cato personally and politically while also adapting the Social War to current circumstances by signalling support for the Italians, an increasingly important constituency. Moreover, read as a commentary on contemporary politics the picture of the obstinate child becomes a parody of Cato's stance towards Pompey and the triumvirs, poking fun of his notorious rigidity and refusal to compromise.

According to this hypothesis, Lucceius may have invented an unflattering story about the infant Cato, presenting him as hostile to the – by now eminently respectable – Italians, a story which Cicero, having read his work in the 50s, inserted into his revised pamphlet about the late Cato. Although adapted to a new context and function, some of its original bias survived in Cicero's version, and his letter to Tiro suggests it was added as an afterthought, perhaps after some hesitation about its implications.<sup>78</sup> Eventually these doubts were overcome, probably because Cato's alleged hostility to the Italians now mattered little and the story for all its ambiguities still provided a colourful illustration of precocious strength of character.<sup>79</sup> It was as an exemplar of these qualities that the anecdote was adopted by later biographers, for whom the political slant of the story – and indeed its general plausibility – became less and less of a concern. The story and its transmission may thus illustrate the dynamic and malleable nature of historical *exempla*, which could be turned around and reused for purposes very different from those for which they had first been invented. In this case the strange story of a stubborn child, originally conceived to discredit a leading politician, could after his heroic refusal to submit to tyranny be reinterpreted as a display of early *constantia*.

As noted above, there are traces of two strands in the later reception of the story, a biographical one probably derived from Cicero's *Cato*, and a historiographic for which Livy may have been the main conduit. The latter seems to have shown greater concern

78 Despite Caesar's angry response, the possibility remains that Cicero's pamphlet may not have been straightforwardly hagiographic, as also suggested by Brutus' decision to compose his own encomium, cf. C. P. Jones, 'Cicero's Cato', *RhM* 113 (1970) 188–96. In *Aff.* 12.21.1 (SB 260), Cicero criticises Brutus' *Cato* for its historical inaccuracies and exaggeration of Cato's role in the events of 63. On Cicero's *Cato* see also K. Kumaniecki, 'Cicero's Cato', in *Forschungen zur römischen Literatur. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von K. Büchner*, ed. W. Wimmel (Wiesbaden 1970) 168–88; W. Kierdorf, 'Ciceros 'Cato'. Überlegungen zu einer verlorene Schrift Ciceros', *RhM* 121 (1978) 167–84.

79 Overall emphasis was probably placed on Cato's personality rather than his politics; in a letter to Atticus Cicero describes his concerns writing the pamphlet, noting that even if he just focused on Cato's *gravitas* and *constantia* it would still offend the Caesarians, *Aff.* 12.4.2 (SB 240).

about the plausibility of the story and avoided drawing attention to Cato's age. But there are also other differences, above all in the conclusion and Poppaedi's final exclamation. While Plutarch ascribes to Poppaedi a relatively vague statement to the effect that if Cato had been a grown man the Italians would not get any popular votes, Valerius Maximus takes the opportunity to emphasise Cato's role as leader, even embodiment, of the senate and repeats his hostility to the allied demand. It seems improbable that Cicero would have placed such emphasis on the senate's role in opposing the allies, a point far more suited to Lucceius' agenda, and Livy's version may therefore derive directly from Lucceius' lost history, which *prima facie* would also seem a more likely source for the historian than a biographical pamphlet.

During the 50s the Italians were still in many ways regarded as foreigners (as Cicero's distinction between the *populus Romanus* and *Italia* implies), but it was also a period when painful memories started to fade along with the passing of the war generation itself. People could now begin to rethink the conflict and the new political realities made a revision both possible and opportune.<sup>80</sup> The events of 91 had been bewildering and chaotic, even to contemporary observers, and lent themselves to a multiplicity of competing narratives (as the conspiracy theories underlying the *quaestiones Variarum* illustrate). A range of different versions were probably in circulation already during the Republic, and while Cicero remained almost silent about the war and its causes, one historian, Lucceius, decided to compose a new account, presumably adjusted to the changing political climate and its exigencies. Thus, we cannot exclude the possibility that his work may have been more influential than previously assumed, helping to transform the Social War from an external war into the domestic conflict we find portrayed in the imperial period.<sup>81</sup>

80 A new history of the Social and Civil Wars would have offered Lucceius rich opportunities for settling old scores and taking swipes at contemporary political figures. And it is perhaps telling that when Cicero approached Lucceius with the suggestion he compose a history of his consulship, he openly asked him to embellish the facts, famously suggesting that he: 'Waive the laws of history for this once' (*leges historiae neglegas*) and urging him to 'concede to the affection between us just a little more even than the truth will licence' (*ne aspernere amorem nostro plusculum etiam quam concedet veritas largiare*), *Fam.* 5.12.3 (SB 22). This rather blunt request was probably based on Cicero's familiarity with Lucceius' previous work, which may have suggested that he was not averse to taking liberties with his material.

81 Badian (1962) 50, argued that we have no evidence that anyone apart from Cicero and Atticus ever read Lucceius' work. But while its impact can only be conjectured, the fact that later writers do not mention Lucceius does not allow us to conclude that his work was not circulated and read – he was, after all, eminently well connected. Cicero's eagerness for Lucceius to compose a history of his consulship also implies high regard for the quality of his writing, suggesting his history would have had little difficulty finding an audience. The weakness of the *e silentio* argument is underlined by the fact that had it not been for a passing comment in Velleius, 2.16.3, we would have had no idea that Hortensius' little-known history of the Social War was still being consulted during the early Empire.

## Summary

The two studies have from different perspectives explored the memory of the Social War during the course of the first century BCE. The conflict emerges as a highly sensitive and contested topic in Roman public discourse, subject to ongoing revision in response to contemporary needs and contingencies. In itself that is hardly unique to the Social War; after all, historical events are continuously revisited in light of current concerns and changing outlooks. But there are aspects of this conflict that may have made memories of it particularly unstable and diverse; for while the war itself was quite conventional – an allied uprising against a neighbouring hegemonic power – the aftermath was exceptional in the way it transformed the background for the war politically as well as culturally, to such an extent that it rendered the world of pre-war Italy almost unrecognisable to later observers.

Cicero's carefully measured references to the war – and his telling silences – hint at the tensions which continued to surround the conflict as well as the unease felt by those who had been personally involved and now found themselves adjusting to new political circumstances. This renegotiation also led to a search for a more inclusive and conciliatory narrative of the war, and the story of Cato and Poppaedi, with its sympathetic portrayal of Italians seeking citizenship and integration, may have been part of the first concerted effort to address this need. Over time the new version would become the only one that made sense to contemporary audiences, explaining its almost complete dominance in the historiography of the Empire.

This situation reminds us that when trying to reconstruct the Social War, its background and events, the dynamic and layered nature of the historiographic tradition must be taken into account. The implication is that any attempt to create a single 'master-narrative', accommodating all our evidence irrespective of date and context, is likely to result in a 'hybrid' version of the war, made up of heterogeneous elements belonging to different strands and stages of the reception process.<sup>82</sup> The evidence of Cicero illustrates the remarkable speed with which this process unfolded; as his comments in the *Verrines* and the *Philippics* show, the public image of the war was effectively transformed within his own lifetime. Moreover, the anecdote about the young Cato highlights the striking amount of fiction which the historiographic genre could accommodate, giving those who wished to revise the past ample scope for doing so. Ultimately, the two studies have sought to draw attention to the risks involved in combining historically contingent – and essentially incompatible – ancient narratives that reflect the unusually dynamic memory formation of the Social war, which managed within a single generation to turn *hostes acerrimi* into upstanding *homines nobilissimi*.

82 For a recent example of this approach see Carla-Uhink (2017) 330–87.

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