

BOOK REVIEW

M. Tulli Ciceronis De re publica, De legibus, Cato Maior de senectute, Laelius de amicitia. Edited by J.G.F. POWELL. Oxford Classical Texts. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. lxxvi + 390. Cloth, \$35.00. ISBN 0-19-814669-8.

Different texts demand different qualities in an editor, and although the four texts in this volume are all by Cicero, they are not alike in their demands. *De senectute* and *De amicitia* are well preserved and solidly transmitted; *De legibus* is poorly transmitted in corrupt manuscripts; and *De re publica* exists only as three sorts of fragments, only one of which has any extended transmission at all: a palimpsest, a great many quotations and the *Somnium Scipionis*, one of the most copied of all Ciceronian texts. *Sen.* and *Am.* require judicious sorting of evidence; *Leg.* needs a bold conjectural critic as well as a careful reader of manuscripts; and the skills required by a fragmentary text are hard to define, but very different from either of the others. It is a mark of Jonathan Powell's versatility and skill as an editor that he has done a superb job at two of the three tasks and a highly respectable job at the third; and if I find his treatment of the fragments of *Rep.* not wholly satisfactory, his edition as a whole is a vast improvement over Ziegler's text. Not all the texts in this volume are new: nearly 20 years ago, P. published a full and well-received edition of *Sen.* (Cambridge, 1988), the text of which he repeats with slight changes and abridgment of the apparatus. He also previously published texts of *Am.* and the *Somnium* without apparatus (Warminster, 1990); the texts are essentially the same, while the apparatus is obviously new. The rest of *Rep.* and all of *Leg.* are entirely new editions, and it is on those that this review will concentrate.¹

To appreciate the variations in P.'s technique, one need only compare portions of *Leg.* and *Am.* with their equivalents in the previously standard editions. In *Am.* 1-32, there are only nine differences (in addition to correcting a typographical error and changes of orthography) from Simbeck, many of them minor; but the apparatus supporting the text is completely different and based on much better evidence. The greatest change, and a very valuable one, is in punctuation and paragraphing. In *Leg.* 2.1-33, on the other hand, there are more textual changes from Ziegler-Goerler in the first five chapters than in the whole sample of *Am.*, and there are as many of P.'s own

¹ For the purposes of this review I have not commented on the text of *Sen.*, which has been reviewed before: see, for example, Douglas, *JRS* 79 (1989) 198-9; Fantham, *CW* 83 (1989/90) 123-4; Fedeli, *Gnomon* 62 (1990) 689-92. I base my observations on a full collation against earlier standard editions of sample passages from the different texts: *Rep.* 1.1-59 and 3.1-32 against Ziegler (Leipzig, 1969); *Leg.* 2.1-33 against Ziegler (Freiburg-Würzburg,³ rev. by W. Goerler, 1979); *Am.* 1-32 against Simbeck (Leipzig, 1917, repr. 1961).

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conjectures as there are changes of any kind in the text of *Am.* In part, the changes stem from P.L. Schmidt's careful work on the manuscript tradition; in part, from P.'s reasonable belief that even an unfinished work of Cicero ought to be comprehensible.

Many of P.'s changes to *Leg.*, and some of his emendations, are for the better. The addition of *decet* at 2.27 is certainly needed, and that of *loue* at 2.7 is probably right; P.'s treatment of divine etymologies at 2.28–9 brings clarity, and it is worth noting that he restores good sense or good Latinity as often by returning to a manuscript reading (e.g., restoring *eius* at 2.14) as by adopting an emendation. His choices are not always convincing: the addition of *diuini diuina* at 2.22 clarifies, but may not be needed, as it repeats the content of 2.19.2. While P. is right to print Vahlen's *id est <ut>* at 2.5 and Gulielmus' *consessu* at 2.13, Lambinus' *etenim* for *ut enim* at 2.6 is still necessary. In selecting among manuscript variants, P.'s judgment is excellent; the one exception is that he tends to favor the 12th-century manuscript P more than is justified. For the most part, however, P.'s text is both plausible and intelligible, and where his emendations are not convincing, they generally point to a genuine problem.

In *Rep.*, although there are places where the text is obviously corrupt as well as incomplete, there is less need for radical change, and P. is accordingly less radical. Again, some of the changes from Ziegler's overly cautious Teubner edition are excellent: P. is right to follow Steinacker in transposing "*de qua modo dicebatur*" at 1.28, to accept Francken's *vicina* for *vitia* at 1.44 and to insert *ita* at 1.57. On the other hand, his transposition of "*cum ... queant*" at 1.9, while superficially attractive, leaves it unclear to whom *auxilium* is being brought. At 1.29 his conjecture *quapiam* is clumsy; the transmitted *quam* is problematic, but can be explained. At 1.48 the supplement *regna* (Moser) is wrong: the topic is oligarchy, not monarchy. P. similarly fails to understand the problem with *ciuitatum* at 1.51, where a reference is needed to citizens, not states; Kenney's *ciuium* (not reported in P.'s apparatus) or something similar is needed. At 1.30 P.'s *atqui* for *atque* and *possimus* for *possumus* are possible but unnecessary, while in the same paragraph he is unduly conservative in defending, with very awkward punctuation, the transmitted *si modo aliquid valent*. P.'s punctuation, indeed, deserves a separate review: at times it is excellent, and restores much sense to the text, but it frequently substitutes British academic style for German academic style, which is no improvement. There are places where the profusion of commas resembles nothing more than a plague of locusts. In this matter, less is better.

P.'s generally excellent judgment in editing coherent text, however, does not extend to the organization of fragments, particularly in *Rep.* Book 3. His single largest change to the familiar text is not an

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emendation, but the rearrangement of the later leaves of the palimpsest: what has traditionally been 5.6–7 has become 3.3, and 3.4–6 have been moved to follow 3.7. P. is right (see his discussion, vii–viii) that pages 199–200 of V cannot be securely located, but his arguments both textual and substantive for relocating it are unconvincing, and the preface of Book 3 as he prints it veers unhappily from broad cultural anthropology, to a fairly narrow description of the task of a Roman *rector rerum publicarum*, back to a statement of the prevalence of wise men in all states, and then to a broad distinction between practitioners of the contemplative and active life, ending with the combination of both in the protagonists of *Rep.* itself. Ziegler's version placed the description of the *rector* in Scipio's mouth in Book 5, which we know to have concerned the role of the statesman; the preface of Book 3 moved from cultural history, to the contemplative and active lives, to the presence of wise men in all states. The only virtue of P.'s revision is that the preface ends with reference to the protagonists, but that is not enough to justify his rearrangement.

P.'s other major reshuffling in Book 3 is equally unsatisfactory: in Philus' speech, he places pp. 1/2 and 11/12 of V earlier than Ziegler in the collection of fragments, on the ground that this order corresponds more closely with the summary in Lactantius *Inst.* 5.16. But as P. himself admits, a large portion of Philus' speech corresponds to nothing in Lactantius' summary, and it is arbitrary to use the silence of a tendentious Christian apologist as evidence for detailed reconstruction of Philus' speech: no critic that I know ignores the order given by Lactantius, but no one other than P. tries to press it so far. P. gives little credit to Ferrary's brilliant reconstructions of the speeches of Philus and Laelius, which make philosophical as well as philological sense.

In dealing with the fragments of *Rep.* preserved in quotations, P. prides himself on excluding from the text all words not by Cicero himself. That leaves the fragments in their naked incomprehensibility; and while Ziegler put too much in the text, P. relegates too much to an apparatus. Similarly, he deliberately does not (except in Philus' speech) try to place fragments in an order corresponding to any reasonable reconstruction: he groups them by subject and leaves any whose location is not absolutely secure in a group at the end of each book (or of the whole text). The arrangement draws attention to the precariousness of reconstruction—but it abandons the editor's responsibility to make the text as comprehensible as possible.

The treatment of fragments is not the only way in which P.'s edition is unhelpful: he fails to give references to the source (or other edition) of texts quoted (e.g., Ennius at 1.30 or Homer several times in *Leg.* 2); he often fails to set off quoted lines of poetry and gives an inadequate apparatus for the famous (and famously corrupt) verses

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from Ennius' *Iphigenia* at 1.30; he is inconsistent in telling the reader where to find fragments he has moved; and he breaks up testimonia in a manner that makes them almost impossible to comprehend as units (again, Ziegler went too far in the other direction). Ziegler got a great deal wrong in his reconstructions, particularly of Book 3; but at least he was generous in quoting testimonia and supplying adequate information about the fragments. P.'s is a bare-bones version, and is organized in a way that makes it difficult to find the evidence even when he has given it.

Other matters of presentation are equally problematic. At *Rep.* 1.30 (a passage cited earlier) P. prints *si modo aliquid, valent* where Ziegler printed Mueller's *si modo aliquid, <id> valent* and I printed Alanus' *si modo aliquid <valent, id> valent*, both at least plausible emendations. P.'s apparatus reveals nothing. Nor is his silence here unique: I note reasonable emendations in Book 1 not reported at 1.21, 22, 42, 50, 51 and 59. Indeed, throughout the volume P. seems grudging in reporting the work of other scholars: most emendations that are mentioned are those P. accepts, or at passages where he accepts another correction. That makes it difficult to tell, when his text disagrees with other editions and there is no note in the apparatus, which editor is in error or if something is simply missing. At *Am.* 4, Simbeck reads *fuisse* while P. (in both of his editions) reads *fuere*; in context, the former is more likely to be right. At *Rep.* 1.7, P. reads *conservandorum civium gratia*, Ziegler *conservandorum civium causa*; the latter is correct. At *Leg.* 2.22, P. reads *impium esto*, Ziegler–Goerler *impie commissum esto*; the former seems right, but neither text has any note in the apparatus. Irrelevant displays of learning appear in the apparatus from time to time: what is the point of the long note on *aequabilis* at *Rep.* 1.43, where there is no textual problem? And why, when earlier editors have got something right, does P. occasionally take the trouble to suggest that they were wrong? At *Am.* 9, he prints *Galum* (correctly) in the text and in the apparatus comments that “editors” have printed *Gallum*. True enough for Ziegler in *Rep.*, but not for Simbeck in the precise passage on which P. makes the comment. At *Am.* 16, printing *quae* in the text, P. wonders in the apparatus whether the transmitted reading was *quom*—again, Simbeck's reading in the text. But because P. is so concerned to harmonize spelling to its pasteurized early imperial form, he is reluctant to admit that a form like “*quom*” could be both transmitted and correct for Ciceronian Latin.

As a reviewer, one concentrates on problems, and there are not a few in P.'s text: above all, that he seems reluctant to give his reader any aid beyond the bare minimum. He even comments, in the preface (p. 1), that he would have preferred to leave out the (editorially supplied) indications of speaker in *Leg.*, but was persuaded that

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readers might be annoyed. Indeed they would, just as they should be at the unnecessarily stingy information given about the fragments of *Rep.* and various other user-unfriendly elements of this edition. But despite these carpings, and despite the fact that for *Rep.* and *Leg.* this edition supplements but does not replace the older standard texts, P. deserves our profound thanks. His careful and thorough work on the manuscripts, his thoughtful text and intelligent selection of readings and his massive improvement of punctuation and paragraphing in all the texts are of greater value than the weaknesses of presentation and (occasionally) judgment. This volume is both valuable and necessary for any student of Cicero.²

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² I note also that in at least three places (*Rep.* 1.25, 43, 47) the press has printed a line without dividing the words. A corrected reprint is needed.