

VOICES OF THE ENEMY:
ORATIO RECTA AND *ORATIO OBLIQUA*
IN CAESAR'S *DE BELLO GALLICO*

by

RANDY FIELDS

(Under the Direction of James C. Anderson, jr.)

ABSTRACT

According to his contemporaries and critics, Julius Caesar was an eminent orator. Despite the lack of any extant orations written by Caesar, however, one may gain insight into Caesar's rhetorical ability in his highly literary commentaries, especially the *De Bello Gallico*. Throughout this work, Caesar employs *oratio obliqua* (and less frequently *oratio recta*) to animate his characters and give them "voices." Moreover, the individuals to whom he most frequently assigns such vivid speeches are his opponents. By endowing his adversaries in his *Commentarii* with the power of speech (with exquisite rhetorical form, no less), Caesar develops consistent characterizations throughout the work. Consequently, the portrait of self-assured, unification-minded Gauls emerges. Serving as foils to Caesar's own character, these Gauls sharpen the contrast between themselves and Caesar and therefore serve to elevate Caesar's status in the minds of his reader.

INDEX WORDS: Caesar, rhetoric, oratory, *De Bello Gallico*, historiography, propaganda, opponent, *oratio obliqua*, *oratio recta*

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RANDY FIELDS

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RANDY FIELDS

Major Professor: James C. Anderson, jr.

Committee: Mario Erasmo
Robert I. Curtis

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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DEDICATION

To the memory of my father whose examples of generosity and selflessness manifest themselves to me every day.

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CHAPTER ONE:

CAESAR AS HISTORIAN AND ORATOR

To both the ancient and modern student of Classical oratory, the name of Cicero has come to be regarded as synonymous with eloquence. In fact, Quintilian, in his *Institutio Oratoria* (10.1.112) says as much:

Quare non inmerito ab hominibus aetatis suae regnare in iudiciis dictus est, apud posteros vero id consecutus ut Cicero iam non hominis nomen sed eloquentiae habeatur.

Wherefore not undeservedly has he been said to rule in trials by men of his own age, with the result that Cicero no longer is considered to be the name of a man, but of eloquence.

One often-neglected truth, however, is that Cicero's contemporary, Julius Caesar, in his own right, possessed the qualities of a first-rate public speaker.¹ Cicero himself, the one considered by many (himself not excluded) to be the greatest of all Roman orators, acknowledges, if not praises, Caesar's oratorical prowess (*Brutus* 252).

Sed tamen, Brute, inquit Atticus, de Caesare et ipse ita iudicio ed de hoc huius generis acerrumo existimatore saepissime audio, illum omnium fere oratorum Latine loqui elegantissime.

But however concerning Caesar, I myself judge, Brutus, said Atticus, and I very often hear even from this harshest critic of our kind that he of nearly all the orators speaks Latin most elegantly.

¹ Some ancient commentators do, in fact, acknowledge Caesar's ability; Tacitus (*Dial.* 34.7) comments on Caesar precocity as a distinguished orator: *Nono decimo aetatis anno L. Crassus C. Carbonem, uno et vicensimo Caesar Dolabellam, altero et vicensimo Asinius Pollio C. Catonem, non multum aetate antecedens Calvus Vatinius iis orationibus insecuti sunt quas hodie quoque cum admiratione legimus.* (In his nineteenth year of life, Lucius Crassus prosecuted Gaius Carbo, Caesar prosecuted Dolabella in his twenty-first year, Asinius Pollio prosecuted Cato in his twenty-first year, and Calvus, when not much younger, prosecuted Vatinius with those orations which we read with admiration even today). Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.6.1) also comments on Caesar's early entry into the law courts listing him among the other great orators—Demosthenes, Calvus and Pollio—who began their careers at an early age: *Neque ego annos definiam, cum Demosthenen puerum admodum actiones pupillares habuisse manifestum sit, Calvus, Caesar, Pollio multum ante quaestoriam omnes aetatem gravissima iudicia susceperint.* (I shall not place a limit on the minimum age, since it is clear that Demosthenes, as only a boy, delivered orations against his guardians, and Calvus, Caesar, and Pollio all undertook the most serious cases well before age of being qualified for the quaestorship). Valerius Maximus (8.9.3) likewise compliments Caesar's eloquence: *Divus quoque Iulius, quam caelestis numinis tam etiam humani ingenii perfectissimum columen, vim facundiae proprie expressit dicendo in accusatione Gn. Dolabellae.* (In addition, the divine Julius, as much the most perfect epitome of heavenly godhead as of human genius, suitably expressed the power of his eloquence by speaking in a case against Gnaeus Dolabella).

Because Caesar's prose style in his extant works—with its limited vocabulary, quick pace of reading, and clarity of expression—exhibits a greater simplicity than the more complex periodic style favored by Cicero, many commentators, since ancient times, have neglected to appreciate fully Caesar's oratorical ability.² Nevertheless Cicero, through the voice of Atticus, concedes Caesar's primacy among the orators.

Caesar in the Eyes of the Ancients

Central to the characterization of Caesar's style—both in the words of Atticus and other ancient commentators—is his *elegantia*.³ According to the author of the *Ad Herennium* (4.12.17), who names *elegantia* as one of the three constituent elements of *elocutio* (oratorical style), *elegantia* is what makes each passage seem to be spoken purely and clearly.⁴ He then goes on to characterize *elegantia* by dividing it into two parts—*Latinitas* and *explanatio*—which have meanings similar to each other and to *elegantia* itself.⁵ *Latinitas* is the feature of *elegantia* that preserves a pure manner of speaking that is removed from every fault.⁶ An orator would be

² For an almost “scientific” study of the simplicity of the Caesarian sentence structure (especially in contrast to the more periodic style of Cicero), see J.J. Schlicher, “The Development of Caesar's Narrative Style,” *CPh* 31 (1936): 212-224.

³ Several other ancient commentators cite *elegantia* as a distinct feature of Caesar's style. Suetonius (*Iul.* 55.2) echoes Cicero's sentiment: *Certe Cicero ad Brutum oratores enumerans negat se videre, cui debeat Caesar cedere, aitque eum elegantem, splendidam quoque atque etiam magnificam et generosam quodam modo rationem dicendi tenere* (Certainly Cicero, while citing orators in his *Brutus* says that he sees no one to whom Caesar ought to yield, and he says that he has a manner of speaking that is elegant, lucid and also grand and noble in some way). Similarly, in his Preface to Book 8 of *De Bello Gallico* (*Praef.* 7), Hirtius asserts that Caesar's *Commentarii* were composed *summa elegantia scribendi*.

⁴ *Elegantia est quae facit ut locus unus quisque pure et aperte dici videatur.*

⁵ John Gilbert Nordling, “Indirect Discourse and Rhetorical Strategies in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile*” (Ph.D. diss., The Univ. of Wisconsin Madison, 1991), 8.

⁶ *Latinitas est quae sermonem purum conservat ab omni vitio remotum.*

free from such fault (*vitio*) by avoiding mistakes in syntax or barbarisms.⁷ Indeed, it is precisely this feature for which Caesar is most often praised.⁸ *Explanatio*, on the other hand, is clarity of expression (*est quae reddit apertam et dilucidam orationem*) and is accomplished by using words that are *usitata*, common in everyday speech, or *propria*, fitting for the subject at hand in their basic literal sense.⁹ Undoubtedly Caesar would have approved of this characterization of his style as is indicated by an exhortation from his treatise *De Analogia* that is quoted in the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellus (1.10.4):

tamquam scopulum sic fugias inauditum atque insolens verbum

May you thus flee the unheard of and uncustomary word as if [you are fleeing] the rock.

Evidence for Caesar the Orator

Unfortunately, for the modern classicist, evidence for Caesar's oratorical *elegantia* is limited to a small collection of fragments and titles found in other ancient sources. Although collections of Caesar's speeches may once have existed,¹⁰ the extant fragments provide little clue as to Caesar's style of oratory.¹¹ Furthermore, the authenticity of the fragments that appear either in later biographies or in histories remains in dispute. We have little information whether these fragments were actually delivered, reconstructed from imperial archives, or completely

⁷ P.T. Eden, "Caesar's Style: Inheritance vs. Intelligence." *Glotta* 40 (1962): 95.

⁸ See, for example, Richard Goldhurst, "Style in *De Bello Civili*," *CJ* 49 (1954): 299, who states that "Caesar never makes a grammatical mistake, nor is his meaning ever vague. Without exception, his Latin is never complicated with Grecisms, or with new forms of syntax, or with provincialism, or with pedantry."

⁹ Eden, 95.

¹⁰ Nordling, 17.

¹¹ A thorough compendium of the extant fragments appears in Henrica Malcovati, ed., *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta Liberae Rei Publicae* (Aug. Taurinorum: In aedibus Io. Bapt. Paraviae et sociorum, 1955), 383-97. Included in this collection are references to fourteen different speeches that vary in topic and addressee from harangues to his soldiers to the orations delivered at the funerals of his wife, Cornelia, and his aunt, Iulia.

fabricated to suit the context of the work or the style of the times.¹² J. H. Collins, who addresses source problems in the histories and biographies dealing with Caesar, argues that Suetonius is the most valuable ancient source for Caesar's actual words since his sources date to the era before Augustus; he assigns little value to the speeches attributed to Caesar found in other historians however.¹³ Perhaps the longest extant fragment of a speech quoted in Suetonius' *Divus Iulius* is Caesar's *laudatio* of his aunt, Julia (6.1):

Amitae meae Iuliae maternum genus ab regibus ortum, paternum cum diis immortalibus coniunctum est. nam ab Anco Marcio sunt Marcii Reges, quo nomine fuit mater; a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra. est ergo in genere et sanctitas regum, qui plurimum inter homines pollent, et caerimonia deorum, quorum ipsi in potestate sunt reges.

The matrilineal line of my aunt Julia is descended from kings; the patrilineal line is joined with the immortal gods. For the Marcii Reges are from Ancus Marcius, from which name her mother was born; the Iulii, of which clan my family exists, are from Venus. There is in her family, therefore, both the sanctity of the kings, who have very much power among men, and the ceremonies of the gods, in the power of whom the kings themselves are.

Despite the limited extent of this fragment, its balanced and parallel nature (note the parallel perfect passive verbs which are governed by *maternum genus* and *paternum* respectively and the balanced, interrupted clauses in the final sentence) is consistent with ancient commentary on Caesar's style.

In addition to the few extant fragments of Caesar's speeches, we know from Suetonius the "titles" of three speeches (*Iul.* 55.2-4): *Pro Sardis*, *Pro Quinto Metello*, *Apud Milites in Hispania*.¹⁴ In his *Noctes Atticae*, Aulus Gellius provides two additional titles: *Pro Bithynis*

¹² G. H. Stevenson, "Ancient Historians and their Sources," *JPh* 35 (1920): 204-24, and R. E. Smith, "Plutarch's Biographical Sources in the Roman Lives," *CQ* 34 (1940): 1-10, both address the problems associated with sources in later historians.

¹³ John Collins, "Propaganda, Ethics, and Psychological Assumptions in Caesar's Writings" (Ph.D. diss., Frankfurt, 1952), 12-13.

¹⁴ Suetonius (*Iul.* 55.3-4) seems to question the authenticity of *Pro Quinto Metello* and *Apud Milites in Hispania*, however: *Orationes aliquas reliquit, inter quas temere quaedam feruntur. "Pro Quinto Metello" non immerito Augustus existimat magis ab actuariis exceptam male subsequentibus verba dicentis, quam ab ipso editam; nam in quibusdam exemplaribus invenio nex inscriptam quidem Pro Metello, sed "quam scripsit Metello," cum expersona Caearis sermo sit Metellum seque adversus communium obtrectatorum criminationis pergantis.*

(5.13.6) and *Qua Plautiam Rogationem Suasit* (13.3.5). In his *Dialogus de Oratoribus* (21.6), Tacitus names the *Pro Decio Samnite*. The title of one speech, corroborated in a variety of ancient sources, is the *In Dolabellam Actio* (Suet. *Iul.* 4.1 and 55.1; Gellius *N.A.* 4.16.8; Plutarch, *Caes.* 4.1-2). Often, however, “titles” are the only parts of Caesar’s oratory that remain. The citation of these speeches and the sundry fragments that survive, nevertheless, attest that Caesar was, in the mind of the ancients, an accomplished orator.

One of the prominent first person speeches of Caesar that does “survive” is the debate over the fate of the Catilinarian conspirators that appears in *Bellum Catilinae* (51) of Caesar’s contemporary Sallust. This speech, which is followed by a speech of nearly equal length by Caesar’s chief rival Cato (52.2-36), possesses the qualities of polished oratory. Indeed Sallust, by separating these two literary speeches by two sentences of merely twenty-one words, intended his reader to recognize the antithetical stance of two speakers.¹⁵ He further reinforces this with his qualification immediately following Cato’s speech (54.1)

Igitur eis genus, aetas, eloquentia, prope aequalia fuere.

The nature, the age, and the eloquence were almost equal.

“Apud milites” quoque “in Hispania” idem Augustus vix ipsius putat quae tamen duplex fertur: una quasi priore habita proelii, altera posterior, quo Asinius Pollio ne tempus quidem contionandi habuisse eum dicit subita hostium in cursione. (He left several speeches, including some which are attributed to him on insufficient evidence. Augustus had good reason to think that the speech “for Quintus Metellus” was rather taken down by shorthand writers who could not keep pace with his delivery than published by Caesar himself; for in some copies I find that even the title is not “For Metellus,” but, “Which he wrote for Metellus,” although the discourse purports to be from Caesar’s lips, defending Metellus and himself against the charges of their common detractors. Augustus also questions the authenticity of the address “To his Soldiers in Spain,” although there are two sections of it, one purporting to have been spoken at the first battle, the other at the second, when Asinius Pollio writes that because of the sudden onslaught of the enemy he actually did not have time to make an harangue.).

¹⁵ For comparisons of these two speeches, see W. Schmid, “Sallust, die Reden Caesars und Catos” *Gymnasium* 69 (1962): 336-50; and V. Poschl, “Die Reden Caesars und Catos in Sallusts ‘Catilina’” *Wege der Forschung* 94 (1970): 368-97.

Unfortunately, for the modern classicist, however, Sallust almost certainly fails to report what Caesar and Cato actually said¹⁶ so that this speech attributed to Caesar must be regarded as an elaboration that is used to suit the conventions of ancient historiography rather than to offer an authentic speech of Caesar.¹⁷

Similarly, Caesar's reproach of his mutinous soldiers at Placentia in Dio Cassius' *Historiae* (41.26-35) provides the modern scholar with a rather long speech in the style of Caesar, if not his exact words.¹⁸ Although another reconstruction of this speech also appears in Appian's *Bella Civilia* (2.47), the speech appears nowhere in the work of Caesar. The modern scholar, therefore, is left to assume that the speeches found in both Dio Cassius and Appian are literary amplifications designed to suit the genre of historiography. Nonetheless, the presence of Caesar's address to his soldiers in Dio Cassius, like his speech concerning the fate of the conspirators in Sallust, highlights the ancient fascination with the spoken word of Caesar, both general and statesman.

¹⁶ At the conclusion of Caesar's speech and prior to Cato's words (52.1), Sallust writes: *Postquam Caesar dicundi finem fecit, ceteri verbo alius alii adsentiebantur. At M. Porcius Cato rogatus sententiam huiusce modi orationem habuit.* (After Caesar made an end of speaking, the rest of the men were variously agreeing in word amongst themselves. But Marcus Porcius Cato, having been asked, delivered an oration *of this sort.*) The qualification of *huiusce modi* recalls Thucydides first-person "disclaimer" near the beginning of *The Peloponnesian War* (1.22.1) when he states: καὶ ὅσα μὲν λόγῳ εἶπον ἕκαστοι ἢ μέλλοντες πολεμήσειν ἢ ἐν αὐτῷ ἤδη ὄντες, χαλεπὸν τὴν ἀκρίβειαν αὐτὴν τῶν λεχθέντων διαμνημονεύσαι ἦν ἐμοί τε ὧν αὐτὸς ἤκουσα καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοθεν ποθεν ἐμοὶ ἀπαγγέλλουσιν: ὡς δ' ἂν ἐδόκουν ἐμοὶ ἕκαστοι περὶ τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων τὰ δέοντα μάλιστα εἰπεῖν, ἐχομένῳ ὅτι ἐγγύτατα τῆς ξυμπάσης γνώμης τῶν ἀληθῶς λεχθέντων, οὕτως εἴρηται. (Insofar as these facts involve what the various participants said both before and during the actual conflict, recalling the exact words was difficult for me regarding speeches I heard myself and for my informants about speeches made elsewhere; in the way I thought each would have said what was especially required in the given situation, I have stated accordingly, with the closest possible fidelity on my part to the overall sense of what was actually said.).

¹⁷ Nordling, 17.

¹⁸ Nordling, 18.

Oratory in the *Commentarii*

Perhaps the best place to uncover Caesar's style of oratory, however, is in his extant historical works the *De Bello Gallico* and the *De Bello Civili*. Although Caesar employs direct discourse to impart his own words only once within the two works, and then not until the last quarter of the final book of the *De Bello Civili* (3.85.4), the works are not without their share of speeches. These speeches, direct and indirect, dramatically present to the reader Caesar and his friends, as well as Caesar's Gallic and Roman enemies, envoys, and officers. Furthermore, they serve to characterize individuals, justify motivations for action, and highlight Rome's (or Caesar's) greatness.¹⁹

It is within the first two chapters of Book 1 of the *De Bello Gallico* (the earlier written of the two works)²⁰ that Caesar establishes his primary method for handling the "voice" of characters in his commentaries: the deep-rooted, annalistic tradition of *oratio obliqua*.²¹ In fact, within the first twenty chapters, the reader encounters *oratio obliqua* no fewer than seven times (and considerably more, if one counts every instance of indirect discourse presented in the accusative-cum-infinitive construction).²² Not yet, however, has the first instance of *oratio recta*

¹⁹ N.P. Miller, "Dramatic Speech in the Roman Historians," *G&R* 22 (1975): 50.

²⁰ For scholarship regarding the writing and publication of the two works, see Max Radin, "The Date of Composition of Caesar's *Gallic War*," *CPh* 13 (1918): 283-300; Thure Hastrup, "On the Date of Caesar's Commentaries of the Gallic War," *C&M* 18 (1957): 59-74; J. H. Collins, "On the Date and Interpretation of the *Bellum Civile*," *AJPh* 80 (1959): 113-32; and, most recently, T. P. Wiseman, "The Publication of *De Bello Gallico*," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, eds. K. Welch & A. Powell (London: Duckworth, 1998), 1-9. For the purposes of this paper, the date of publication is unimportant. As will be addressed later in this chapter, critical to my thesis will be, however, the argument that the *Commentarii* were, in fact, intended for publication.

²¹ H.C. Gotoff, "Towards a Practical Criticism of Caesar's Prose Style," *Illinois Classical Studies* 9 (1984): 4.

²² At I.2, Orgetorix exhorts his fellow countrymen to leave Gaul; at I.13, Divico "reminds" Caesar of the bravery of the Helvetians; at I.14, Caesar replies to Divico; at I.16, the Aeduans stall in their collection of grain; at I.17, Liscus is induced humbly to explain the real situation; at I.18, in a private meeting, Liscus explains more freely; and at I.20, Diviciacus laments his brother's perfidy.

occurred. Given this frequent occurrence of *oratio obliqua*, the reader quickly slips into Caesar's narrative style and thus becomes intimate with the characters and their voices.

If Caesar's works are remarkable because of the frequent appearance of *oratio obliqua*, they are no less remarkable because of the lack of *oratio recta*. Of approximately 45,000 words that constitute the seven books of the *De Bello Gallico* written by Caesar, only 660 words (or roughly one and one-half per cent) appear in *oratio recta*.²³ Furthermore the first instance of *oratio recta* does not appear until the fourth book when the *aquilifer* of Caesar's esteemed Tenth Legion boldly leads his men into the waters of the English Channel and then onto the shore of Britain (*BG* 4.25). Dramatic direct address continues through the remaining books of the *De Bello Gallico*, however, culminating in the work's longest direct address by the Aeduan Critognatus. This increase in the use of *oratio recta* gives the impression that Caesar first cautiously experimented with the usual style of historiographic writing—with its customary inclusion of *oratio recta*—in the later books of the *De Bello Gallico* before committing to using it more frequently throughout the *De Bello Civili*.²⁴ In fact, *oratio recta* appears three times more frequently in the *De Bello Civili* than in the *De Bello Gallico*.²⁵

Caesar's *Commentarii* and their Genre

Despite the increase in use of *oratio recta* in the later writings of Caesar, *oratio obliqua* nevertheless remains his preferred manner of conveying the voice of his characters in both the

²³ The count here is my own (aided by the marvels of computer technology).

²⁴ Miller, 49.

²⁵ This calculation is based on a line count (unlike my previously mentioned word count) found in Miller, 49.

De Bello Gallico and the *De Bello Civili*.²⁶ The predominance of speeches recounted in *oratio obliqua* (and the corresponding lack of *oratio recta*), however, has often led scholars to exclude Caesar's writings from the genre of *historia* and instead to assign them to the genre of *commentarii*.²⁷ This designation of *commentarius* recalls the Greek word *hypomnema*, which has its origins in the times of Alexander the Great.²⁸ Works in this genre might comprise diaries of a general's campaign, bureaucratic records, or journals from Hellenistic monarchs, all documents that were not intended for publication.²⁹ Instead, they might be used as the *fundamenta* for other men of letters to embellish in the creation of true *historia*. Cicero, Caesar's contemporary, had written in Greek a commentary on his consulship that he sent to Poseidonius in order that he might embellish it in a manner befitting its content.³⁰ Having been rejected by Poseidonius, Cicero then endeavored to persuade Lucius Luceius to write a history on the same theme for which he would gladly provide a *commentarius*.³¹ From this description we may see that, in the eyes of Cicero, *commentarii* do not fall within the genre of true *historia* as they lack the "perfumes of Isocrates, the cosmetics of his pupils, and some of the other Aristotelian

²⁶ C. T. Murphy, "The Use of Speeches in Caesar's *Gallic War*," *CJ* 45 (1949): 120-21.

²⁷ See, for example, Murphy, 120, who, in his argument to the contrary, suggests that it was Caesar's choice to employ the indirect discourse in certain passages and direct discourse in other. Miller, 49, finds it remarkable that Caesar includes speeches in the *Commentarii* at all, especially at such a high percentage; thirty-two per cent of Book I consist of what he calls "dramatic *obliqua*."

²⁸ An excellent study of Alexander the Great's use of *commentarii* appears in C. A. Robinson, *The Ephemerides of Alexander's Expedition* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1932). For a thorough discussion of the literary form of Caesar's writings, see F. E. Adcock, *Caesar as a Man of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 6-18.

²⁹ Adcock, 6. For a discussion of the *commentaries* as an historiographic genre, see Gian Biagio Conte, *Latin Literature: A History*, trans. Joseph B. Solodow (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 226-227.

³⁰ *Att.* 2.1.1-2.

³¹ *Fam.* 5.12.10.

pigments.”³² Cicero, however, does not altogether neglect to compliment Caesar’s *Commentarii*.

In his *Brutus* (262), Cicero asserts:

Valde quidem inquam probandos; nudi enim sunt recti et venusti omni ornatu orationis tamquam veste detracta. Sed dum voluit alios habere parata unde sumerent qui vellent scribere historiam ineptis gratum fortasse fecit qui illa volent calamistreis inurere. sanos quidem homines a scribendo deterruit; nihil est enim in historia pura et illustri brevitate dulcius.

Indeed I say they [Caesar’s *Commentarii*] are to be approved very much: they are bare, upright, and charming, and with every ornamentation of speech removed as if like a garment removed. But while he wanted others to have things prepared from which those who might wish to write history could choose, he perhaps did a favor for those fools who would want to straighten them with curling irons. Indeed he discouraged sane men from writing; for in history there is nothing sweeter than a pure and lucid brevity.

Although Cicero’s comments on Caesar’s prose writings confirm the previously discussed notions that *commentarii* served to provide historians with the material to write an *historia*, he nevertheless acknowledges that Caesar’s work, in fact, achieves a level of *historia* in its own right (“for *in historia* there is nothing sweeter than a pure and lucid brevity”). Similarly, Caesar’s continuator, Hirtius, in his preface to Book VIII of *De Bello Gallico* echoes Cicero’s approbation of Caesar’s work (*BG* 8.4-5):

Constat enim inter omnes nihil tam operose ab aliis esse perfectum, quod non horum elegantia commentariorum superetur: qui sunt editi, ne scientia tantarum rerum scriptores deesset, adeoque probantur omnium iudicio ut praerepta, non praebita, facultas scriptoribus videatur.

For it is established among all that there is nothing so diligently completed by anyone else which is not surpassed by the elegance of these *commentarii*: they have been published, lest the writers be bereft of the knowledge of such great things, and they are approved to such an extent by the judgment of all that opportunity of writing seems to be taken away, not offered, to other authors.

Regardless of the genre to which we assign Caesar’s writings, the sentiments of both Cicero and Hirtius seem to assert that Caesar gets the better of the more elaborate historians by producing first-rate *historiae* himself.³³ Furthermore, that Caesar’s *commentarii* exceed the expectations of

³² Cicero (*Att.* 2.1), in criticizing the plain and unadorned history of his consulship Atticus had written, proclaims how elaborately wrought his own history was: *Meus autem liber totum Isocratis myrothecium atque omnes eius discipulorum arculas ac non nihil etiam Aristotelia pigmenta consumpsit.*

³³ Nordling, 33

standard *commentarii* is a notion often adopted by modern critics.³⁴ If, however, we assume that Caesar intended his work to impact his reader not as a typical general-in-the-field *commentarius*, but instead as work of higher literary merit, a new array of interpretative questions emerges.³⁵ Consequently, the ramifications of exploring Caesar's writings from a literary standpoint certainly extend to the consideration of the literary merit of Caesar's speeches as well. In fact, as George Kennedy argues, the fact that Caesar did not actually hear the speeches he gives in *oratio recta* is significant and he therefore suggests that Caesar consequently assumes the role of a literary historian rather than that of the author of a *commentarius*.³⁶

The Spectrum of *Orationes*

Because the speeches in the *De Bello Gallico* and the *De Bello Civili* provide dramatic characterizations of a broad spectrum of individuals, there is considerable potential for examining the literary impact of the speeches in these works. This array of speeches, appearing both in *oratio recta* and in *oratio obliqua* and coming from the mouths of both Roman and non-Roman speakers alike, thus requires a limiting focus. The intent of my thesis, therefore, is to draw on the approach of several modern scholars who have examined the portrayal of the "other"

³⁴ See, for example, Adcock, 6-18. Eden, 76, suggests that Caesar's "work contained material whose scope made it suitable as a *basis* for *historia*, but stylistically it was more distinguished than one had a right to expect from such material; it could serve as a *commentarius*, it was more than a *commentarius*." For a discussion of the use of indirect discourse as a "sign of underdeveloped historical style," see Nordling, 71-76.

³⁵ Galen Rowe, "Dramatic Structures in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*," *TAPhA* 98 (1967): 399-414, for example, has applied theories of narratology and structuralism to the *De Bello Civili* to argue that four major episodes in the work can be characterized by the dramatic structural stages of success, hybris and catastrophe. In the field of Greek Historiography, Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), exploiting new ideas from the field of anthropology in literary criticism, explores Herodotus' means of characterizing the non-Greek in the highly literary *Histories*.

³⁶ George Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972) 290-1.

in ancient literature³⁷ by examining the spectrum of *orationes* made by individuals who stand in opposition to Caesar, namely the Gallic chieftains in the *De Bello Gallico*. This focus, I believe, will be particularly fruitful, for, as Nordling notes, Caesar employs the spoken word to exert tremendous influence over other ‘minor characters’ of the *commentarii*.³⁸ Furthermore, through a careful examination of these individual speeches, this paper will attempt to demonstrate that Caesar, by placing in the mouths of his opponents speeches with consistent styles and themes, intends to construct a view of the enemy who serve as a worthy adversaries and thereby elevate his own reputation in the eyes of his reader.

One of the foremost difficulties in analyzing the *De Bello Gallico* from an oratorical perspective, however, is determining which passages in the text qualify as *orationes*. Even among scholars who recognize the rhetorical merit of the speeches in Caesar’s *Commentarii*, there is much debate as to what constitutes a speech in his works. Although the passages of *oratio recta* are relatively easy to identify,³⁹ the nebulous body of *oratio obliqua* provides greater difficulty. In his analysis of the structure of speeches in the *De Bello Gallico*, Murphy identifies twenty-nine passages of discourse—both in *oratio recta* and *oratio obliqua*—that he characterizes as speeches.⁴⁰ Furthermore, he divides these passages into four categories: deliberations, exhortations, ceremonial orations, or judicial speeches. Other scholars, however,

³⁷ See, for example, Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-definition Through Tragedy*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) and Francois Hertog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, two outstanding works of this sort.

³⁸ Nordling, Introduction, vii.

³⁹ Even in classifying *oratio recta*, however, there is some dispute. For example, Nordling, 96, notes that some instances of short, direct speech could qualify as either *oratio recta* or *oratio obliqua*. His example of the Gallic call “Ad Arma!” (*BG* 7.70.6) and the response of the *captivi* “Saburram” (*BC* 1.69.4), with their limited clues for the context of the discourse, highlight this dilemma. For the purposes of this paper, however, such short instances of *oratio* provide little opportunity for evaluation.

⁴⁰ Murphy, 122.

discern a significantly larger number of speeches in Caesar's works.⁴¹ In his analysis of the *Kurve* of direct speeches extending from the *De Bello Gallico* into the *De Bello Civili*, Rasmussen identifies twenty-one *orationes rectae* and 190 *orationes obliquae* throughout the two *commentarii*;⁴² and Hyart, in his study of the origin of indirect discourse and Caesar's use thereof, identifies 191 examples worthy of mention.⁴³ Siedler, however, who set out to identify rhetorical devices in the *De Bello Gallico*, cites a remarkable 546 separate instances of indirect discourse (including both indirect statements and indirect questions).⁴⁴ Nordling identifies a similarly large number of examples of discourse in both the *De Bello Gallico* and the *De Bello Civili*. Employing the ideas of Rasmussen that highlight the *Kurve* of direct speeches in Caesar's work, he proposed a "Discourse Continuum" in his deft organization of the myriad examples of indirect discourse in the *Commentarii*.⁴⁵ Creating his own framework into which he categorizes the broad spectrum of speeches, Nordling suggest that discourse fades from the narrative substructure by progressing from " 'Discourse' Ablative Absolutes" [*sic*] to the most sophisticated form of discourse, "Exhortations and Harangues."⁴⁶ By categorizing discourse in

⁴¹ One of the difficult tasks in interpreting scholarly work on this topic is determining what passages scholars are referencing. Miller, 50, indicates, for example, that thirty-two percent of Book 1 of *De Bello Gallico* consist of dramatic speech, yet he provides no citations of the passages he uses. He goes on to note that nearly eight per cent of Book 7 and thirteen per cent of Book 1 of *De Bello Civili* are dramatic *orationes*; again, however, he makes no citation of the passages he is using to determine this quantification.

⁴² Detlef Rasmussen, *Caesars Commentarii: Stil und Stilwandel am Beispiel der direkten Rede*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 15.

⁴³ Charles Hyart, *Les origines du style indirect latin et son emploi jusqu'à l'époque de César*, (Bruxelles, 1954), 171.

⁴⁴ Charles W. Siedler, "Rhetorical Devices in Caesar's Commentaries: Addenda," *CW* 50 (1956): 46.

⁴⁵ Nordling, 100ff.

⁴⁶ The five levels of discourse Nordling identifies are: (A) "Discourse" Ablatives Absolute; (B) Military Intelligence, Orders, Letters; (C) Legations; (D) Council Speeches; and (E) Exhortations and Harangues. He also cites seventy-six examples that belong to none of the five groupings listed above and places them into a Miscellaneous category. The appendix to his work, which catalogues the sundry examples of discourse in both works, lists examples only from Levels C, D, and E. The total of examples for these three categories is 249.

this way, Nordling argues that Caesar, despite attempts otherwise to create an impersonal and unbiased account of events in the two works, interjects his own voice—primarily through the indirect reporting of his own words—and thus portrays himself as the ideal imperator.⁴⁷

Although Nordling’s ultimate argument—that Caesar employs discourse for his own self-aggrandizement—parallels what I intend to argue in several ways, it differs in the fact that Nordling focuses on Caesar’s own indirect discourse, whereas my thesis focuses on the speech—both direct and indirect—of Caesar’s opponents.

⁴⁷ Nordling suggests that Caesar accomplishes this by highlighting his abilities as a “self-consistent thinker,” a “decisive commander,” a “diplomat,” and an “inspirer of men.”

CHAPTER TWO:
THE ENEMY SPEAKS (PART I)

Given the assumption that Caesar's *Commentarii* possess a refined, literary nature and, in turn, that the speeches therein play an important role as a vehicle for conveying the author's ideas and attitudes about the individuals who deliver them, it follows that Caesar would employ the speeches of his opponents to fashion a consistent depiction of his enemy. It becomes our task, then, to examine the speeches given by Caesar's adversaries in order to determine if Caesar, in the literary presentation of his *Commentarii*, colors his enemy's voice with recurring themes and representations.

Two stumbling blocks, however, impede our progress: identifying Caesar's opponent and determining precisely what constitutes his voice. What makes discerning Caesar's opponent challenging—especially in the *De Bello Gallico*—is the inconsistent nature of many of the Gauls, Germans, and Celts.⁴⁸ Jonathan Barlow, however, carefully catalogues Caesar's many opponents and this provides a basis for the identification and selection of those enemies of Caesar who are to be included.⁴⁹ The identification of *oratio obliqua*, and to some extent *oratio recta*, however, proves a more formidable undertaking.⁵⁰ It is therefore my intent to employ the

⁴⁸ Jane Gardner, "The 'Gallic Menace' in Caesar's Propaganda," *G&R* 30 (1983), 184*ff.*, in noting the instability of the Gallic character, observes that they are "impulsive, emotional, easily-swayed, fickle, loving change, credulous, prone to panic, [and] scatterbrained." Barlow, 157, confirms this assertion by highlighting that Caesar is "fluid in commenting . . . on whether Gallic leaders are pro- or anti-Roman."

⁴⁹ Barlow, 159-64, tabulates *all* the Gallic leaders, identifies them by their tribe and distinguishing features, and then catalogues them by their alliance in the work.

⁵⁰ See chapter 1, 13*ff.*, for discussion of the difficulty in determining which passages qualify as *orationes (obliquae or rectae)*.

work of Rasmussen and Nordling in order to determine the speeches that are worthy of examination.⁵¹ Through a cross reference of the works of Rasmussen and Nordling with the work of Barlow, a list of eight distinct Gallic enemies whose voices resonate in the *De Bello Gallico* emerges: Divico, Ariovistus, Ambiorix, the *principes Galliae*, Convictolitavis, Litaviccus, Critognatus, and Vercingetorix. In addition to the eight enemies determined through this process, the inclusion of two additional enemies, Orgetorix and Dumnorix, will prove, because of the impact of their speeches upon the narrative, particularly useful.

These ten enemies, due to their diversity, are instructive of how Caesar manipulates the voice of his opponent in the *De Bello Gallico*. They initiate and conclude Caesar's work: immediately following the brief ethno-geographic description in the opening lines of Book 1, Orgetorix initiates the action of the work when he offers his exhortation to migrate; then, as if to mirror Orgetorix' opening words to the Helvetii, Vercingetorix is granted "the last word" in the penultimate section of Book 7. They also range from the relatively unknown to the foremost of Gallic leaders: Critognatus is nowhere mentioned until he delivers his infamous oration at 7.77, and the *principes Galliae* of 7.1 are not even given individual names; on the other hand, *nobilissimus* Orgetorix, *principatus*-holding Dumnorix, and *rex* Vercingetorix rank among the celebrity of the barbarian elite. The length of the speeches allotted to these ten varies as well: Dumnorix offers a "sound-bite" of merely five words; Vercingetorix, however, dominates the "air-time" with no fewer than seven speeches of considerably greater length. And finally, as mentioned before, the voices of the enemy appear in both *oratio obliqua* and the less frequent *oratio recta*: seven of these enemies speak exclusively in *oratio obliqua*; Critognatus speaks a

⁵¹ Rasmussen catalogues nine *orationes rectae* in the *De Bello Gallico* (made by both pro- and anti-Roman individuals. Nordling, 87-88, provides an assortment of *orationes obliquae* (again, made by both pro- and anti-Roman individuals) which he characterizes as "major" speeches that "rival, if not surpass, the rhetorical quality and literary importance of the comparatively few *orationes rectae* Rasmussen elucidates."

single *oratio recta*; Vercingetorix alone employs both. Because of this diversity, these opponents merit our close attention.

Helvetius Orgetorix

As previously mentioned, Caesar's first use of *oratio obliqua* in his *Commentarii* occurs at *BG* 1.2 as Orgetorix informs his fellow Helvetians with what ease they might migrate from their boundaries (Caesar *BG*, 1.2.1-2).⁵²

Is, M. Messala et M. Pupio Pisone consulibus, regni cupiditate inductus coniurationem nobilitatis fecit, et civitati persuasit ut de finibus suis cum omnibus copiis exirent: perfacile esse, cum virtute omnibus praestarent, totius Galliae imperio potiri.

He [Orgetorix], with Marcus Messala and Marcus Pupius Piso as consuls, drawn in by a desire for kingly power, made a conspiracy of the nobility and persuaded his state to leave from their territory with all their provisions: [he said] it would be rather easy, since they surpassed everyone with respect to virtue, to get possession of the command of all Gaul.

In this passage, the reader is guided smoothly from Caesar's narration of Orgetorix' persuasive argument into Orgetorix' own rationale. Through a shift of verb form (from an indicative main verb through the subjunctive verb in indirect command to the infinitive of the *oratio obliqua*), Caesar brings the excessively confident words of Orgetorix to life. Although Orgetorix speaks only ten words, this short exhortation exhibits a form that is rhetorically Roman. Caesar balances the essence of Orgetorix' claim (*perfacile esse . . . totius Galliae imperio potiri*) with a subordinate clause (*cum virtute omnibus praestarent*). Furthermore, the alliterative *imperio potiri* punctuates Orgetorix' speech.

In addition to employing his customary method for handling speeches throughout his two *Commentarii* (the *oratio obliqua*), Caesar also manipulates this speech to provide a representation of his opponent that will recur throughout the *De Bello Gallico*. Closely related to

⁵² Unless otherwise noted, all further Latin citations in this chapter (and the next) will come from Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*.

the words that Orgetorix speaks is Caesar's initial stock characterization of the Gallic chieftain's "desire for kingly power." Orgetorix will prove to be the first in a line of Caesar's Gallic opponents whom Caesar portrays as possessing a passion for power.⁵³ Caesar reinforces this characterization through Orgetorix' words by highlighting Orgetorix' confidence in the ease of conquest (*perfacile esse*) and by reiterating his lust for total control (*totius Galliae imperio potiri*). Orgetorix' self-assured claim of the effortlessness of the Helvetian task (*perfacile esse*) is echoed two other times throughout the *Commentarii*, once when Orgetorix speaks again and once from the mouth of Vercingetorix.⁵⁴ Orgetorix' plans for Gallic unification further contribute to Caesar's portrayal of his enemy. Although Orgetorix was not the first Gallic leader to attempt unification (in Book 7, Caesar indicates that Vercingetorix' father, Celtillus, had held the *principatus*, but was later killed when he sought *regnum*⁵⁵), Caesar neglects to mention it and portrays Orgetorix as a truly revolutionary—and foolish—leader.⁵⁶

Caesar further highlights Orgetorix' overweening confidence through Orgetorix' claim of the Helvetians' preeminent position over all others (*cum virtute omnibus praestarent*).⁵⁷ In the opening ethnographic description of the Gallic tribes, Caesar, in his own voice (reinforced by his

⁵³ As Jonathan Barlow, 139-170, notes, the lust for kingly power is one of many *loci communes* that Caesar employs in his characterization of the enemy. For example, Dumnorix (at 1.9.3, 1.18.9, and 5.6.2) and Vercingetorix along with his father (at 7.4.1 and 7.20.2) both are eager to seize *regnum*. Furthermore, Barlow, 142, notes that Caesar employs the qualifier *rex* "overwhelmingly of [his] enemies in the *Bellum Gallicum*, despite the improbability that only kings opposed the Roman invasion."

⁵⁴ Catherine Torigian, "The Logos of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, eds. K. Wlech and A. Powell (London: Duckworth, 1998), 53, highlights this comparison. Orgetorix makes this claim at 1.3.6; Vercingetorix, at 7.64.2. The word *perfacile* appears nowhere in the *De Bello Civili*.

⁵⁵ 7.4.1.

⁵⁶ Torigian, 51.

⁵⁷ Torigian, 53.

use of *nostra* at 1.1.1) indicates that the Helvetii *reliquos Gallos praecedunt*.⁵⁸ Thus, in the mind of Caesar's Roman audience, Caesar recognizes the supremacy of the Helvetii. Orgetorix, however, through a verbal echo of Caesar's commentary, broadens this characterization and assures the Helvetii that they, in fact, surpass everyone (*omnibus*), Romans included. Consequently, the Roman audience "hears" Orgetorix' self-assurance, but falls victim to Caesar's verbal manipulation.

In this same clause Caesar also places in the mouth of his Gallic opponent the self-assured attribute of valor (*virtus*). Orgetorix claims for himself and for his people *virtus*—a typically Roman characterization—and thus highlights his excessively confident nature.⁵⁹ By assigning such a feature to Orgetorix, Caesar plants in the minds of his Roman audience the notion that his opponent possesses qualities similar to their own.

In the chapter that follows, the preparations for the Helvetian migration begin, and again Caesar endows Orgetorix with a brief, but instructive speech (1.3.3-7):

Ad eas res conficiendas Orgetorix deligitur. Is sibi legationem ad civitates suscipit. In eo itinere persuadet Castico Catamantaloedis filio Sequano, cuius pater regnum in Sequanis multos annos obtinuerat et a senatu populi Romani amicus appellatus erat, ut regnum in civitate sua occuparet quod pater ante habuerit; itemque Dumnorigi Aeduo fratri Diviciaci, qui eo tempore principatum in civitate obtinebat ac maxime plebi acceptus erat, ut idem conaretur persuadet, eique filiam suam in matrimonium dat. Perfacile factu esse illis probat conata perficere, propterea quod ipse suae civitatis imperium obtenturus esset; non esse dubium quin totius Galliae plurimum Helvetii possent; se suis copiis suoque exercitu illis regna conciliaturum confirmat. Hac oratione adducti inter se fidem et ius iurandum dant et regno occupato per tris potentissimos ac firmissimos populos totius Galliae sese potiri posse sperant.

For the completion of these things [i.e., the preparations for migration] Orgetorix is chosen. He undertakes for himself the delegation to the states. On this journey he persuades the Sequan Casticus, the son of Catamantaloedis, whose father had held the kingdom for many years among

⁵⁸ 1.1.4.

⁵⁹ L. R. Lind, "Concept, Action, and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness," *TAPhA* 103 (1972): 235-83, explores the concept of *virtus* in Roman historiography. According to Lind, 236, by the time of Cicero, *virtus* becomes clearly defined as the amalgam of all the virtues required for a true Roman *vir bonus*. See also, Gerhard Liebers, *Virtus bei Cicero* (Dresden: M. Dittert, 1942). Louis Rawlings, "Caesar's Portrayal of Gauls as Warriors," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, eds. K. Welch & A. Powell (London: Duckworth 1998), 171-192, likewise highlights Gallic *virtus*.

the Sequani and had been called by the senate a ‘friend of the Roman people,’ to seize command in his own state, because his father had held it before; and likewise he persuades the Aeduan Dumnorix, the brother of Diviciacus, who at that time was holding the principate in his state and had been especially welcomed by the plebs, to try the same thing and he gives to him his daughter in matrimony. He shows that it is a rather easy thing for them to do, to accomplish these attempts, especially because he himself would get possession of his own state: [he adds] that there is no doubt that the Helvetians could get possession of all Gaul; he confirms that he will by means of his troops and his army reconcile the command to him. Having been influenced by this oration they pledge allegiance among themselves and swear an oath and hope that, with the kingdom having been seized, through three very powerful and very strong people, they could get possession of all Gaul.

Although the use of indirect discourse in this passage moves the reader swiftly through the narrative, Caesar reinforces his intention—with the subsequent qualification *hac oratione adducti*—that the *oratio obliqua* here be heard as an actual speech.⁶⁰ And, just as in the oration assigned to Orgetorix in 1.2, Caesar’s preliminary characterization of Orgetorix and his kingly aspirations are closely linked with his call to action. The speech is framed by Orgetorix’ exhortation to assume supreme command (Caesar uses a form of the word *regnum* three times in the narrative surrounding Orgetorix’ speech), and immediately before the speech, the Helvetian king arranges the marriage of his daughter to Dumnorix, a political arrangement that undoubtedly recalled to Caesar’s audience the parallel *Roman* arrangement between Caesar and Pompey.⁶¹ Furthermore, in the narrative following the speech, the seductive words from Orgetorix’ *mouth* at 1.2.2 (*totius Galliae imperio potiri*) have entered the *minds* of the Helvetians at 1.3.7 (*totius Galliae sese potiri posse sperant*).

⁶⁰ John Dixon and Mollie Dixon, “The Significance of Emphasis in Latin—A Case Study from Caesar’s *Bellum Gallicum*,” *G&R* 39 (1992) 69.

⁶¹ Yves Gerhard, “Orgetorix l’Helvete et le *Bellum Gallicum* de Cesar,” *LEC* 59 (1991) 267-74, suggests that the political alliance formed by the Aedui and Sequani mirror those made by Caesar, Crassus, and Pompey. As evidence Gerhard cites the clandestine nature of the two arrangements, the simultaneity of the two events (60 BC), the politically expedient arranged marriages, the friction between the upper and lower classes in each case, and the ultimate failure of both alliances.

Equally important in the characterization of Orgetorix here is the way in which Caesar emphasizes the Gallic chieftain's speech.⁶² Caesar first highlights the significance of Orgetorix' rally by employing natural word order for the first two verbs in the first two clauses of the passage—*deligitur* and *suscepit*—followed by the deviant placement of Orgetorix' primary action of persuasion (*persuadet*).⁶³ By shifting this verb from the end of a clause (which would constitute a more standard Latin word order) to near the beginning of the clause, and by employing the present tense, active voice form of the verb, Caesar establishes his focus on Orgetorix' manipulative role in the affair. Orgetorix' words, however, will do the rest. Immediately, the repetition of *per-* in his words *perfacile* and *perficere*—in a “conspicuous *figura etymologica*”⁶⁴ no less—echoes the *persuadet* in the prose that precedes Orgetorix' call to arms and further highlights the chieftain's thoroughly confident claims. Furthermore, Caesar's use of the two superlatives *potentissimos* and *firmissimos* contribute to Orgetorix' bold assertions.⁶⁵ Finally, Caesar grabs his reader's attention through his manipulation of personal pronouns and possessive adjectives. Orgetorix' haughtiness is highlighted both through the juxtaposition of two pronoun/adjective pairs (*ipse/suae* and *se/suis*) and by the placement of the possessive adjective before the nouns they modify (*suae civitatis*, *suis copiis*, and *suo exercitu*).⁶⁶ In short, Caesar has carefully constructed this passage, the focus of which is Orgetorix' speech,

⁶² Dixon and Dixon, 66-71, employ this “chunk” in their study of the ways in which Latin authors mark passages out for emphasis in Latin. In their analysis they cite four ways in which Latin authors accomplish this: deviant word order, superlatives or adverbs of degree used to intensify, repetition, and emphatic or redundant pronouns.

⁶³ Dixon and Dixon, 68. For a discussion of violations of expected Latin word order, see Dirk G. J. Panhuis, *The Communicative Perspective in the Latin Sentence: A Study of Latin Word Order* (Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1982): 144-149.

⁶⁴ Dixon and Dixon, 68.

⁶⁵ Dixon and Dixon, 68.

⁶⁶ Dixon and Dixon, 67.

to alert his reader to the characterization he is developing. Consequently, Caesar directs his reader's attention to the overweening confidence of Rome's first major opponent in the Gallic Wars.⁶⁷

Divico, dux Helvetiorum

Just ten chapters later, a third, longer *oratio obliqua* begins as the aged chieftain Divico (formerly the *dux Helvetiorum* in a previous campaign against Cassius in 107 B.C.) heads an embassy to negotiate a peace with Caesar (1.13.3-7):

Is ita cum Caesare egit: si pacem populus Romanus cum Helvetiis faceret, in eam partem ituros atque ibi futuros Helvetios ubi eos Caesar constituisset atque esse voluisset; sin bello persequi perseveraret, reminisceretur et veteris incommodi populi Romani et pristinae virtutis Helvetiorum. Quod improvise unum pagum adortus esset, cum ii qui flumen transissent suis auxilium ferre non possent, ne ob eam rem aut suae magnopere virtuti tribueret aut ipsos despiceret. Se ita a patribus maioribusque suis didicisse, ut magis virtute quam dolo contenderent aut insidiis niterentur. Quare ne committeret ut is locus ubi constitissent ex calamitate populi Romani et interneccione exercitus nomen caperet aut memoriam proderet.

Thus he debated with Caesar: If the Roman people should make peace with the Helvetians, he would go into that place and would stay there where Caesar had decided and had wanted them to be; but if the Roman people continued to pursue with war, he [Caesar] should recall the previous misfortune of the Roman people and the ancient valor of the Helvetians. Because he had attacked one village unexpectedly, when they who had crossed the river were not able to bring help to their own men, he should neither, on account of this situation, chalk it up greatly to his own valor or look down on them. [He adds] that he had learned thus from his fathers and ancestors that they should contend more with virtue than rely on trickery or deceit. Wherefore, he should not entrust that this place where they had stopped would take the name from the calamity of the Roman people and the slaughter of the army or betray their memory.

Again Caesar grants to an enemy a speech of rhetorical merit. Divico begins each of his two haughty conditionals with plosive alliteration (*pacem populus* and *persequi perseveraret*) that he balances in perfect parallelism. And, as in the speech of Orgetorix eleven chapters earlier, Divico's "use" of the subjunctive is unerring. Caesar further imparts in the apodosis of Divico's first conditional a chiasmus of action and agent. The "going" (*ituros*) and "staying" (*futuros*) of

⁶⁷ Cf. Claudius Quadrigarius' characterization of the Gaul quoted in the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius (9.13). Whereas Quadrigarius presents a naked Gaul who mockingly sticks out his tongue at his Roman opponent, Caesar initiates a depiction of an enemy possessive of sophisticated rhetoric.

the Helvetians—expressed by irregular Latin verbs, no less—are reflected by Caesar’s “deciding” (*constituisset*) and “wanting” (*voluisset*). Finally, the apodosis of the second conditional possesses its own balance of structure: Caesar, through Divico’s voice, offers his audience the antithetical parallelism of Roman misfortune (*veteris incommodi populi Romani*) and Helvetian valor (*pristinæ virtutis Helvetiorum*), the two of which he further contrasts by employing different words for “former” (*veteris* and *pristinæ*).

Similar to Orgetorix’ speech, these stern admonitions by Divico highlight the assuredness of success on the part of Divico and further suggest his (traditionally Roman) characterization of *virtus*. In three separate instances, Caesar places an oblique form of the word *virtus* in the mouth of Divico, one of which contrasts Helvetian valor with Roman trickery.⁶⁸ By appropriating this mainstay of *Romanitas*, Divico (at the instigation of Caesar’s pen) elevates himself and the Helvetians to a plane equal to (if not surpassing) the Romans. In addition to his appropriation of Roman *virtus*, Divico also appropriates the notion of the *mos maiorum* (1.14.7):

Divico respondit: ita Helvetios a maioribus suis institutos esse uti obsides accipere, non dare, consuerint: eius rei populum Romanum esse testem.

Divico responded: the Helvetians had been established by their ancestors in such a way that they were accustomed to receive hostages, not to give them; of this the Roman people were a witness.

By appealing to the authority of his ancestors, Divico engages in a rhetorical ploy that Cicero describes as a feature essential to being a Roman orator.⁶⁹ Not infrequently did Cicero himself employ this strategy—with great success as well—in the presentation of his case. Although

⁶⁸ Compare the assertion by Caesar at 1.40 that they had, in fact, won by trickery. See also 2.15, 6.24, 7.53, 7.22, and 7.29.

⁶⁹ *Brut.* 322. In lamenting the state of oratory, Cicero enumerates the qualities absent in other, less capable contemporary orators (and qualities, therefore, common to his own): *nemo qui memoriam rerum Romanarum teneret, ex qua, si quando opus esset, ab inferis locupletissimos testes excitaret* (there is no one who holds the memory of Roman affairs, from which, if there should be a need, he might arouse the most trustworthy witnesses from the dead).

Cicero's orations might often appeal to specific ancestors,⁷⁰ he often made general appeals to the authority of his—and his audience's—*maiores*.⁷¹ By allowing Divico a similar appeal, Caesar "Romanizes" his opponent and establishes further Roman characteristics for him.⁷² Ultimately, however, Divico leaves the stage of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* as quickly as he entered.

Although the speeches of Divico and Orgetorix do not surpass many other speeches by Caesar's Gallic opponents either in length or in the prominence of their speakers, they nevertheless quickly bring the reader to expect the use of *oratio obliqua* in the place of direct quotation throughout the narrative. Moreover, each of these speeches, despite consisting of only a few words, possesses the rhetorical quality one expects from a master orator.

Ariovistus, rex Germanorum

As Caesar continues his narrative in Book I, *oratio obliqua* also thrives,⁷³ culminating near the end of the book with an interchange between Caesar and Ariovistus, *rex Germanorum* and former *amicus populi Romani*. As a precursor to the dialogue between the great general and the German king, however, Caesar, in the mouth of the Aeduan Diviciacus, presents a caricature of Ariovistus as a proud and cruel barbarian whose migration from Germany has resulted in the

⁷⁰ For example, Cicero appealed to Marcus Cato (*Verr.* 2.5.180-1), to Marcus Manlius (*Dom.* 101), and perhaps most famously in the exemplary prosopopoeia of Appius Claudius Caecus (*Pro Caelio* 34).

⁷¹ Clarke, M. L., "Ciceronian Oratory," *G&R* 14 (1945): 77.

⁷² In a somewhat parallel aside, R. Sklenar, in "La République des Signes: Caesar, Cato, and the Language of Sallustian Morality," *TAPhA* 128 (1998): 208ff., argues that Caesar's appeal to his ancestors comprises the core of his argument in advocating *clementia* towards the Catilinarian conspirators in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*.

⁷³ In 1.31, Diviciacus explains why he has come to Caesar; at 1.34, Ariovistus replies to Caesar; at 1.36 Ariovistus replies to Caesar's demands; in 1.40, Caesar gives a lengthy speech of encouragement (*parainesis*) to his men; and at 1.43, Caesar reminds Ariovistus of his relationship with Rome.

seizure of the best of all Gallic land.⁷⁴ In a petition to Caesar (1.31.5), Diviciacus laments the invasion of the *homines feri ac barbari*, the destruction of the entire Aeduan *nobilitas*, *senatus*, and *equitatus*, and Ariovistus' seizure of *obsides*. Diviciacus then appeals to Caesar to intervene on the grounds of Aeduan *virtus* and *amicitia* with the Romans. By distinguishing Diviciacus and the Aedui from the barbarian Germans and by assigning Roman institutions and customs to the Aedui, Caesar exaggerates the cultural divide first between the Aedui and Ariovistus, and then, by extension, between the Romans and the haughty German king.⁷⁵ Through this polarization, Caesar establishes in the minds of his Roman audience a seemingly objective view of Ariovistus that will color the judgment of his words to come.

In addition to the cruel and haughty characterization coming from the mouth of Diviciacus, Caesar, in a highly literary style, frames Ariovistus' speech by preceding it with a speech of his own (1.43.4-9).⁷⁶ By placing this speech directly before Ariovistus', Caesar creates a foil for Ariovistus' imminent oration. Caesar's speech possesses a structure that is typically Roman.⁷⁷ In contrast, Ariovistus omits a formal *exordium* and opens immediately by answering Caesar's charges (1.44.1-13):

⁷⁴ As Barlow, 144ff., notes, the language Caesar uses in his initial characterization of Ariovistus is "select." The adverb *superbe* (1.31.12) appears in the *De Bello Gallico* only in this instance and *crudeliter* makes its way into the work again only in the description of Litavicus' massacre of Roman citizens at 7.38.9. Ariovistus' *crudelitas* at 1.32.4 appears again only once in what Caesar calls (7.77.2) the *singularem et nefariam crudelitatem* of Critognatus' recommendation for cannibalism.

⁷⁵ Collins, John H., "Caesar as Political Propagandist," *ANRW* 1,3 (1972), 931, asserts that it is "not legal justification, but the emotional slogan *debellare superbos* [that] is the essential message of Chapters 33-37. It is the message of a Roman to Romans."

⁷⁶ Collins 1972, 930.

⁷⁷ Murphy, 122, asserts "Caesar opens with a statement of past benefits which he has conferred on Ariovistus—a good topic for an *exordium*. He then turns to his *propositio*: the Romans are bound to support the Aedui. This position is supported by arguments drawn from the long-standing friendship of the Romans and Aedui; the acknowledged leadership of the Aedui in Gaul; and the Roman tradition of maintaining their friends in power. He closes by repeating his former demands: Ariovistus must not make war on the Aedui; he must restore their hostages; and he must not allow any more Germans to cross the Rhine."

Ariovistus ad postulata Caesaris pauca respondit, de suis virtutibus multa praedicavit: transisse Rhenum sese non sua sponte sed rogatum et accersitum a Gallis; non sine magna spe magnisque praemiis domum propinquosque reliquisse; sedes habere in Gallia ab ipsis concessas, obsides ipsorum voluntate datos; stipendium capere iure belli quod victores victis imponere consuerint. Non sese Gallis sed Gallos sibi bellum intulisse; omnes Galliae civitates ad se oppugnandum venisse ac contra se castra habuisse; eas omnis copias a se uno proelio pulsas ac superatas esse. Si iterum experiri velint, se iterum paratum esse decertare; si pace uti velint, iniquum esse de stipendio recusare quod sua voluntate ad id tempus pependerit. Amicitiam populi Romani sibi ornamento et praesidio, non detrimento esse oportere, atque se hac spe petisse. Si per populum Romanum stipendium remittatur et dediticii subtrahantur, non minus libenter sese recusaturum populi Romani amicitiam quam appetierit. Quod multitudinem Germanorum in Galliam traducat, id se sui muniendi, non Galliae impugnandae causa facere: eius rei testimonium esse quod nisi rogatus non venerit, et quod bellum non intulerit sed defenderit. Se prius in Galliam venisse quam populum Romanum. Numquam ante hoc tempus exercitum populi Romani Galliae provinciae finibus egressum. Quid sibi vellet, cur in suas possessiones veniret? Provinciam suam hanc esse Galliam, sicut illam nostram. Ut ipsi concedi non oporteret, si in nostros finis impetum faceret, sic item nos esse iniquos quod in suo iure se interpellaremus. Quod fratres Aeduos appellatos diceret, non se tam barbarum neque tam imperitum esse rerum ut non sciret neque bello Allobrogum proximo Aeduos Romanis auxilium tulisse neque ipsos in eis contentionibus quas Aedui secum et cum Sequanis habuissent auxilio populi Romani usos esse. Debere se suspicari simulata Caesarem amicitia, quod exercitum in Gallia habeat, sui opprimendi causa habere. Qui nisi decedat atque exercitum deducat ex his regionibus, sese illum non pro amico sed hoste habiturum. Quod si eum interfecerit, multis sese nobilibus principibusque populi Romani gratum esse facturum: id se ab ipsis per eorum nuntios compertum habere, quorum omnium gratiam atque amicitiam eius morte redimere posset. Quod si discessisset et liberam possessionem Galliae sibi tradidisset, magno se illum praemio remuneraturum et quaecumque bella geri vellet sine ullo eius labore et periculo confecturum.

Ariovistus responded a few things to Caesar's demands, about his own virtues, he spoke many things: [he indicated that] he had crossed the Rhine not of his own accord, but having been asked and summoned by the Gauls; he had left his home and neighbors not without a great hope and great rewards; he had homes in Gaul that had been given by the Gauls themselves and hostages had been given by their own will; he was exacting a tribute by right of war, which conquerors were accustomed to impose on their conquered. It was not he who had brought war on the Gauls, but the Gauls on him; all the states of Gaul had come to attack him and had set up their camps against him; all these troops had been driven back and had been defeated by him in one battle. If they wanted to make a trial again, he was prepared to fight again; if they wanted to take advantage of peace, it was wrong to refuse the tribute that up to that time they had paid of their own accord. The friendship of the Roman people ought to have been an honor and protection for him, not a detriment and he had sought it with such a hope. If, according to the Roman people, the tribute should be sent back and hostages be withdrawn, he would refuse the friendship of the Roman people no less willingly than he had sought it. As for the fact that he was leading a host of Germans into Gaul, he was doing it for the purpose of protecting himself, not for attacking Gaul; of this fact there was proof because he did not come except upon request and because he did not bring war, but defended them. He had come into Gaul before the Roman people. Never before this time had an army of the Roman people departed from the boundaries of the province of Gaul. What did Caesar want from him as to why he would come into his holdings? This Gaul was his province, just as that one was Roman. As it was not right for it to be yielded to him, if he were to make an attack on Roman territory, thus likewise were the Romans wrong because they were obstructing him in his jurisdiction. As for the fact that Caesar said that the Aedui were called "brothers," he was not so barbaric nor so ignorant of affairs that he did not know that neither in the last war of the Allobroges had the Aedui brought aid to the Romans nor that in these disputes, which the Aedui had with him and the Sequani, had they enjoyed the aid of the Roman people. He ought to suspect that Caesar, despite a simulated friendship, because he held an army in Gaul, had it for the sake of crushing him. Unless Caesar departed and led away his army from these regions, he would consider him not as a friend, but as an enemy. But if he should kill him, he would

accomplish a thing pleasing to many nobles and leaders of the Roman people: he had discovered this through the messengers from the very men, all of whose favor and friendship he could purchase by Caesar's death. But if Caesar had departed and handed over the free possession of Gaul to him, he would repay him with a great reward and would, without any effort or danger on Caesar's part complete whatever wars he wanted to be waged.

In this, the longest speech given by one of Caesar's adversaries in Book 1, Caesar reaches deep into his bag of rhetorical tricks.⁷⁸ Immediately noticeable in this "*refutatio* of sorts" are the alliteratively hissing *s*'s that continue throughout the passage and highlight Ariovistus' hostility. Also noteworthy in the opening lines is a polypoton (*victores victis*) as well as an antithetical chiasmus (*Non sese Gallis sed Gallos sibi Bellum intulisse*). By placing these auditorially pleasing turns of phrases in the mouth of his enemy, Caesar endows his opponent with Roman, and therefore civilized, characteristics. As the passage continues, Caesar elevates Ariovistus' rhetorical status through the use of clever word positioning. First, Ariovistus distances himself from Caesar by placing himself as far from the Roman people as possible (*Se prius in Galliam venisse quam populum Romanum*), thereby suggesting the earlier territorial relationship enjoyed by the two opponents. In the next line, however, Ariovistus' juxtaposition of *Romani* and *Galliae* intimates the collision of cultures that has resulted from the Romans people's departure from "The Province." The speech continues with an anaphora (*non se tam barbarum neque tam imperitum*) as Ariovistus suggests that he is in alliance with other Roman nobles and concludes with another anaphora in a pair of haughty conditions (*Quod si . . . Quod si . . .*).

The speech Caesar places in the mouth of Ariovistus is more than a series of well-constructed *anaphorae* and *antitheses*, however. To contrast Ariovistus' reluctance to address Caesar's demands with the plethora of comments regarding his own virtue, Caesar highlights the

⁷⁸ An exhaustive list of rhetorical devices here would be tedious. I have chosen, instead, to include a few of the more interesting ones.

German's boastful manner by introducing it with a sardonic joke.⁷⁹ Noting Ariovistus' claim of *virtus*, Caesar further emphasizes the fact that Ariovistus believes himself to be a "player" in the game of Roman politics who equates himself and his German troops with a Roman proconsul and the *populus Romanus* itself.⁸⁰ Similarly, Ariovistus boasts of the *amicitia* he possesses with the Roman people⁸¹ and then suggests that he is so intimate with the *nobiles* and *principes* of Rome that he knows how welcome the news of Caesar's death would be to them. Then in an expression of both arrogance and abject naïveté, Ariovistus offers to reward Caesar for a free hand in Gaul.⁸² Moreover, no fewer than twenty-three instances of the reflexive pronoun *se* intensify Ariovistus' egomaniacal conceit, and his denial of his barbarian nature contrasts sharply with the caricature presented in the chapters that lead up to his speech. In short, Caesar presents Ariovistus as an astute orator who fancies himself a "contender" in the world of Roman politics.

Aedius Dumnorix

Another of Caesar's opponents who debuts in Book 1 is the Aeduan Dumnorix. Although Dumnorix first enters the stage of the *De Bello Gallico* early in Book 1, it is not until the beginning of Book 5 that his voice is heard, and then, only moments before his exit. As with Ariovistus, Caesar takes great measure to establish a characterization of the Aeduan chieftain.

⁷⁹ Murphy, 122.

⁸⁰ Nordling, 164, further cites Ariovistus' refusal of the summons of the Roman proconsul (1.34.2) and his arrogant assertion that the "*populus Romanus* should not presume to tell Ariovistus how he should exercise the *ius belli*" (1.36.2).

⁸¹ For an interesting discussion on Roman *amicitia*—both pragmatic and affective—see Sandra Marchetti Citroni, "I Could Not Love Caesar More: Roman Friendship and the Beginning of the Principate," *CJ* 99 (2004): 281-300.

⁸² Murphy, 122.

Caesar first remarks that Dumnorix holds the principate (*principatum in civitate obtinebat*) and is well liked by the people (*maxime plebi acceptus erat*).⁸³ Directing his reader's attention to Dumnorix' popularity with the plebs, Caesar then presents a catalogue of the chieftains' self-serving motives.⁸⁴ Caesar characterizes Dumnorix as one who is spurred by a desire for kingly power (*cupiditate regni adductus*), anxious for revolution (*novis rebus studebat*), and eager to maintain many states in his sway (*quam plurimas civitates suo beneficio habere obstrictas volebat*).⁸⁵ Then, from the mouth of Dumnorix' fellow Aeduan, Liscus, Caesar intimates that Dumnorix was coercing the Aeduan people with seditious and insolent talk (*seditiosa et improba oratione*).⁸⁶ Rounding out his characterization of Dumnorix, Caesar describes him as a man of the greatest audacity (*summa audacia*), popular because of his generosity (*magna apud plebem propter liberalitatem gratia*), desirous of revolution (*cupidum rerum novarum*), and hopeful that he would become king (*summam in spem regni obtinendi venire*).⁸⁷

In the chapters that follow, Dumnorix is captured and placed under guard for conspiring to sway the Aedui to undermine Roman operations against the Helvetii. And then, four books later, the recalcitrant Dumnorix attempts to flee from the Roman army. At this point, Caesar reiterates his characterization of Dumnorix by reasserting his desire for revolution (*cupidum*

⁸³ 1.3.5. Barlow, 142, suggests that Dumnorix may have held the chief magistracy as Vergobret in 60 BC. For a discussion of this possibility, see T. Rice Holmes, *C. Iuli Caesaris Commentarii Rerum In Gallia Gestarum VII A. Hirti Commentarius VIII*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1914), 4-5. An examination of Caesar's avoidance of foreign words when describing Celtic institutions and customs appears in B. M. Bell, "The Contribution of Julius Caesar to the Vocabulary of Ethnography," *Latomus* 54 (1995): 753-767.

⁸⁴ Barlow, 142.

⁸⁵ 1.9.3.

⁸⁶ 1.17.2

⁸⁷ 1.18.3. Although *liberalitas* was once deemed a Roman virtue, by the time of Sulla, it was considered with pejorative connotations. For a full discussion of *liberalitas* and its many associations, see C. E. Manning, "Liberalitas—The Decline and Rehabilitation of a Virtue," *G&R* 32 (1985): 73-83.

rerum novarum), his lust for command (*cupidum imperi*), and his authority among the Gauls (*magnae inter Gallos auctoritatis*).⁸⁸ Shortly thereafter, Dumnorix gives his audience his final laconic lament (5.7.8):

liberum se liberaeque esse civitatis

I am a free man of a free country

In what amounts to an *oratio obliqua* of only five words, Caesar reinforces Dumnorix' remonstrance with both alliteration (note again the frequency of hissing sounds) and a polyptoton (through the variation of the word *liber*). Dumnorix' cry for liberty, however, has already been devalued by Caesar's previous characterization, and Dumnorix, having made his final stand against Caesar's men, exits the stage and paves the way for the entrance of Caesar's next, and more formidable, opponent, Ambiorix.⁸⁹

Ambiorix, rex Eburonum

Unlike the majority of Caesar's aforementioned foes, Ambiorix appears with comparatively little commentary from the author. The first mention of his name passes in a matter-of-fact description of the lands into which Caesar has dispatched his legions during the winter of 54 B.C. (5.24.4):

Unam legionem, quam proxime trans Padum conscripserat, et cohortis V in Eburones, quorum pars maxima est inter Mosam ac Rhenum, qui sub imperio Ambiorigis et Catuvolci erant, misit.

He sent one legion, which he had enlisted most recently across the Po, and five cohorts into the land of the Eburones, of whom the largest part is between the Meuse and the Rhine, [and] who were under the control of Ambiorix and Catuvolcus.

In addition to the straightforward ethno-geographic account in which Ambiorix is first depicted, the division of command between Ambiorix and Catuvolcus stands out as a noteworthy

⁸⁸ 5.6.1.

⁸⁹ Barlow, 142.

component of his introduction. Unlike Caesar's other barbarian enemies (such as Orgetorix and Ariovistus) Ambiorix is represented sharing his power without the lust for supreme command common to Caesar's previous opponents.⁹⁰ As the narrative progresses, Caesar tells how Ambiorix and Catuvolcus were compelled (*impulsi*) to incite a revolt (*defectio*) and eventually attacked Roman detachments gathering wood.⁹¹ Significant in this description is the passive role that Ambiorix and Catuvolcus are assigned. Caesar's initial presentation of Ambiorix lacks both the animosity and aggression that characterize our first impressions of Caesar's other adversaries.

Within merely three chapters of introducing Ambiorix, however, Caesar fashions for him his first words (5.27.1-11):

apud quos Ambiorix ad hunc modum locutus est: sese pro Caesaris in se beneficiis plurimum ei confiteri debere, quod eius opera stipendio liberatus esset quod Aduatucis finitimis suis pendere consuesset, quodque ei et filius et fratris filius ab Caesare remissi essent, quos Aduatuci obsidum numero missos apud se in servitute et catenis tenuissent; neque id quod fecerit de oppugnatione castrorum aut iudicio aut voluntate sua fecisse sed coactu civitatis, suaque esse eiusmodi imperia ut non minus haberet iuris in se multitudo quam ipse in multitudinem. Civitati porro hanc fuisse belli causam, quod repentinae Gallorum coniurationi resistere non potuerit. Id se facile ex humilitate sua probare posse, quod non adeo sit imperitus rerum ut suis copiis populum Romanum superari posse confidat. Sed esse Galliae commune consilium: omnibus hibernis Caesaris oppugnandis hunc esse dictum diem, ne qua legio alterae legioni subsidio venire posset. Non facile Gallos Gallis negare potuisse, praesertim cum de recipienda communi libertate consilium initum videretur. Quibus quoniam pro pietate satisfecerit, habere nunc se rationem officii pro beneficiis Caesaris: monere, orare Titurium pro hospitio ut suae ac militum saluti consulat. Magnam manum Germanorum conductam Rhenum transisse: hanc adfore biduo. Ipsorum esse consilium, velintne priusquam finitimi sentiant eductos ex hibernis milites aut ad Ciceronem aut ad Labienum deducere, quorum alter milia passuum circiter quinquaginta, alter paulo amplius ab eis absit. Illud se polliceri et iureiurando confirmare, tutum iter per finis daturum. Quod cum faciat, et civitati sese consulere, quod hibernis levetur, et Caesari pro eius meritis gratiam referre. Hac oratione habita discedit Ambiorix.

Among these [Arpineius and Iunius] Ambiorix spoke to this measure: [He said that] he confessed that he was very much in debt to Caesar for the kindnesses shown toward him, because by the aid of Caesar he had been freed from paying tribute, which he had been accustomed to pay to the Aduatuci, his neighbors, and because his son and his nephew, whom the Aduatuci had held among their number of hostages sent among them in slavery and bondage, had been sent back to him by Caesar; he had done what he had done concerning the attack of the camp neither because of

⁹⁰ Barlow, 167, however, notes that Ambiorix is the main protagonist with Catuvolcus fading into the background until his suicide a book later at 6.31.5.

⁹¹ 5.26.2.

judgment or of his own will, but by the coercion of the citizenry, and that his commands were of the sort that the multitude had no less authority over him than he himself had over the multitude. This certainly had been the cause of war for the state, because it could not resist the sudden conspiracy of the Gauls. He could easily prove it by his low position, because he was not so ignorant of affairs that he was confident that the Roman people could be overcome by his troops. But there was a common plan for Gaul: this day was appointed for attacking all the winter quarters of Caesar lest any legion might come as a help to another legion. Not easily could Gauls have refused Gauls, especially since the plan seemed to have been begun for the purpose of recovering their common liberty. He now had regard of his duty for the kindnesses of Caesar, since he had done his duty for them out of piety: he warned, he prayed Titurius, according to his duty, that he look out for his own and his soldiers' safety. A great band of Germans has been hired and had crossed the Rhine; it would arrive in two days. It was the decision of the Romans themselves whether they wanted to take either to Labienus or Cicero their soldiers having been brought out from their winter quarters before their neighbors might know of it, of whom one was about fifty miles away from them, the other, a little bit further. He promised and confirmed with an oath that he would give them safe passage through his borders. Since he was doing this, he would look out for his state, because it would be relieved of its winter quarters, and he was doing a favor for Caesar on behalf of his merits. With his speech having been delivered, Ambiorix departed.

From the very outset of this *oratio*, Ambiorix delivers a speech that is wholly Roman; its structure adheres nicely to the format given by Cicero in his *De Inventione Rhetorica*.⁹² By recalling past services that Caesar performed for Ambiorix, the *exordium* (*sese . . . tenuisset*) functions precisely as Cicero dictates: it serves to make its audience—both within and outside of the text—*benevolum, attentum, et docilem*.⁹³ Similarly, its peroration, or *conclusio* (*illud . . . referre*), contains several of the components outlined by Cicero.⁹⁴ Ambiorix arouses action by reiterating his recommended plan of action, the benefits he hopes to achieve by such a request, and finally gives his compliments to Arpineius and Iunius' commander, Julius Caesar.

Unlike previous speeches given by Caesar's adversaries, moreover, Ambiorix' speech lacks a haughty and aggressive tone. Missing from this speech are the conceited conditionals, the aggressive alliterations, and the terse vehemence of its predecessors. In their place Caesar

⁹² *Inv. rhet.* 1.19.4.

⁹³ *Inv. rhet.* 1.20.1. As Murphy, 124, points out, one way in which an orator may accomplish this is by "a judicious use of flattery." No doubt Caesar, Murphy adds, would have been familiar with Cicero's contemporary works on oratory.

⁹⁴ *Inv. rhet.* 1.98-109, names three components, each with its own sundry characteristics: *enumeratio*, *indignatio*, and *conquestio*.

has inserted the consonant and humble repetition of *m*'s (occasionally punctuated with alliterative *c*'s).⁹⁵ Ambiorix, in essence, all but offers an apology for his foolhardy attack on the Roman legionaries: he brands the *defectio* a conspiracy of the Gauls (*Gallorum coniuratio*), cites the coercion applied by his fellow countrymen, and finally, in abjectly self-deprecating tones, asserts his impotence in the face of Caesar's powerful forces. Furthermore, he concludes his speech by confirming his intentions with an oath of loyalty to Caesar.

Of course, the stark divergence from Caesar's previous method for handling the voice of the enemy is necessitated by the outcome of the battles to come. Although Caesar's audience knows otherwise, there is no reason to suspect—from a narratological perspective—that Ambiorix' words will initiate a duplicitous betrayal. In fact, Caesar's arrangement and presentation of these events serves to justify the loss of a legion and four cohorts. Ambiorix invokes the Roman virtues of *beneficium*, *hospitium*, and *fides* in the name of common liberty, when in reality he will employ treacherous perfidy.⁹⁶ Consequently, the words of Ambiorix only later become devalued, not by a prior vilification as occurs with Ariovistus or Dumnorix, but by the events that follow.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Note, especially, the predominance of *m*'s when Ambiorix informs Caesar's legionaries of the impending arrival of hordes of Germans. The most dreadful of events is mitigated by the temperate repetition of *m*'s.

⁹⁶ Barlow, 149.

⁹⁷ Barlow, 149-50, notes that "the portrait of Ambiorix in Book 5 must be read with that of Sabinus because of the political imperative to explain the loss of a Roman legion and cohorts at the end of an undistinguished campaigning season."

CHAPTER THREE:
THE ENEMY SPEAKS (PART II)

As the final book of the *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, Book 7 holds a critical position in its author's *opus*. Regardless of how one views the manner of its publication—whether it was offered to the Roman people *seriatim* or *in toto*—the success of Caesar's work depended greatly upon the success of his final book:⁹⁸ the narrative of Book 7 gives its reader the final impression of its protagonist and perhaps attempts, through its account of Caesar's ultimate military success, to absolve its author from prosecution.⁹⁹ It is therefore not surprising that Book 7 should stand apart, both in function and in form, from the previous six books; a close examination reveals this to be true. With respect to its function, Book 7 witnesses an ostensible unification of Gaul—an aim of the Gallic people iterated throughout the narrative and in the speeches of the first six books—that stands in direct contrast to Caesar's initial presentation of the disjointed tribes of Gaul in the opening of Book 1.¹⁰⁰ Near the midpoint of Book 7,¹⁰¹ the Aedui, longtime allies of

⁹⁸ By employing the term "success," there is the implication that Caesar's agenda is clear. C. E. Stevens, "The *Bellum Gallicum* as a Work of Propaganda," *Latomus* 11 (1952): 3ff., argues that it is not possible to view Caesar's work as a piece of propaganda unless one takes a stand on the date of its publication. I have chosen to align my view about the nature of Caesar's propaganda with Gardner, 188, who argues that—regardless of the date of publication—the work has the important agenda of bringing Caesar before the Roman people in the best possible light.

⁹⁹For a thorough discussion of the view that the *De Bello Gallico* was an attempt by Caesar to avoid prosecution related to the *lex Cornelia*, see Collins 1972, 923ff. and J. P. V. D. Balsdon, "The Veracity of Caesar," *G&R* 4 (1957): 25-26.

¹⁰⁰ Throughout the speeches of his opponent, Caesar portends the threat of Gallic unification: 1.2; 1.3.6, 1.3.7; 1.44.3; 7.20.7 & 7.21.1; 7.29.6; 7.37.3, 7.38.8; 7.77.4, 7.77.7, 7.77.9; 7.89.1.

¹⁰¹ 7.39.

Caesar in his crusade in Gaul, have abandoned his cause and joined their Gallic neighbors.¹⁰² Thus, Caesar suggests to his reader that the tribes of Gaul slowly crept towards unification. Caesar further depicts Gallic consensus later in Book 7 as Vercingetorix sends for reinforcements from the neighboring tribes and states.¹⁰³ In fact, Caesar devotes nearly two full chapters to the notion of Gallic unity in his catalogue of the eight thousand cavalry and two hundred and fifty thousand infantry that come to aid Vercingetorix and the Gauls trapped in Alesia.¹⁰⁴ Caesar's need to represent Gallic unity as a threat to Roman stability drives the narrative in Book 7; without a doubt, Caesar succeeds in this endeavor.

Just as Book 7 functions differently from Books 1-6 with respect to its presentation of a unified Gallic enemy, Book 7 differs significantly from the previous six with respect to its form. The first noticeable difference between this book and its predecessors is its length. It is longer than any of its first six books and nearly twice as long as its closest rival, the first book of the *Commentarii*. In addition to its unusual length, the presence of speeches from the very start establishes Book 7 as a unique component of the entire work.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, the fact that Caesar "breaks his usual rule"¹⁰⁶ by embedding two significant enemy speeches in *oratio recta* also contributes to the book's uniqueness.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Although Caesar presents the defection of the Aedui as a result of the machinations of the mutineer Litaviccus, Stevens, 16, argues that his failure at Gergovia was, in fact, the cause of the rebellion of the Aedui.

¹⁰³ 7.71.

¹⁰⁴ 7.75-76

¹⁰⁵ The action of Book 7 opens with a council of Gallic chieftains arranging future plans for a military confrontation with Caesar.

¹⁰⁶ Murphy, 125.

¹⁰⁷ Although Caesar employs *oratio obliqua* extensively with many characters in the *De Bello Gallico*, *oratio recta* comes from the mouths of only ten, and then only in the last half of his work. Furthermore, although representing only four of the ten speakers of *oratio recta*, the enemy speaks roughly five-sixths of the words.

Principes Galliae

The year, of course, is 52 B.C. Against the backdrop of Caesar’s tribunals in Italy and the murder of Clodius in Rome, the councils of the Gallic chiefs in remote, sylvan locations provide a stark contrast. The form of this Gallic meeting and the speech highlighted therein, however, maintain a close parallel with what one might expect in the Roman Forum. So close, in fact, is the speech at the beginning of Book 7 to what one might encounter from a Roman orator that we may see a speech’s formal structure (as outlined by rhetorical handbooks) to emerge.¹⁰⁸ The speech begins with an *exordium* that endeavors to arouse sympathy among the Gallic chiefs (7.1.4-5):

Indictis inter se principes Galliae conciliis silvestribus ac remotis locis queruntur de Acconis morte; posse hunc casum ad ipsos recidere demonstrant: miserantur communem Galliae fortunam.

With meetings having been called among themselves, the leaders of Gaul, in woody and remote meetingplaces, bemoan the death of Acco. They show that this misfortune is falling back upon themselves. They lament the common fortune of Gaul.

By calling attention to the death of Acco, this passage uses the miserable fate of a fellow countryman to keep its listeners—both inside and outside the narrative—“*attentos*.”¹⁰⁹ In addition to this primary function, however, the *exordium* delivered by the *principes Galliae* here initiates the thematic development of Gallic unification by highlighting the involvement of all of Gaul in this shared fate (*communem fortunam*).

¹⁰⁸ Murphy, 125-126, employs the content of the *Ad Herennium* and Cicero’s *De Inventione Rhetorica* in conjunction with this speech to show “Caesar’s method [of exhibiting formal rhetorical structure] at its best.” The description of the structure of this speech that follows, therefore, is his.

¹⁰⁹ Murphy, 127, keenly notes how in this passage Caesar accomplishes what Cicero, *Inv. rhet.* 1.23.1, urges the author of an *exordium* to do: to keep the attention of the audience by stating that the subject at hand “ad summam rei publicae pertinere.”

As expected from a characteristically Roman speech, a *propositio* follows. Containing a clear plan of action, this part of the speech exerts an additional emotional appeal (7.1.5):¹¹⁰

Omnibus pollicitationibus ac praemiis deposcunt qui belli initium faciant et sui capitis periculo Galliam in libertatem vindicent.

With all kinds of promises and rewards they seek those who would make a start of the war and, at the risk of danger of their own head, to vindicate Gaul into liberty.

The alliterative *pollicitationibus* and *praemiis* accentuate—and sweeten—the indirect command that follows. Furthermore, the goal of Gallic liberty—a *locus communis* in the speeches of Caesar’s Gallic opponents¹¹¹—heightens the emotional appeal central to a *propositio*.

The *propositio* then flows seamlessly into the *confirmatio*, the part in which the advocate argues that the course of action is “just, lawful, expedient, honorable, and easy.”¹¹² Here, the Gallic chiefs employ yet another *locus communis*—namely, the ease of the task—to strengthen in the minds of their listeners the importance of their undertakings (7.1.6-7):

In primis rationem esse habendam dicunt, priusquam eorum clandestina consilia efferantur, ut Caesar ab exercitu intercludatur. Id esse facile, quod neque legiones audeant absente imperatore ex hibernis egredi, neque imperator sine praesidio ad legiones pervenire possit.

First and foremost they say that a plan must be adopted (before their secret plans are revealed) to shut off Caesar from his army. [They say] that this is easy because neither would the legions dare, with their general absent, to go out from their winter-quarters, nor would the general be able to reach the legions without protection.

Furthermore, in order to rouse their men to quick action, the chieftains cite two justifications arranged in a chiasmus of legions and commander (*legiones . . . imperatore . . . imperator . . . legiones*) as if to suggest a physical ensnarement of Caesar and the desired separation of the

¹¹⁰ Cicero, *Inv. rhet.* 1.27-33.

¹¹¹ The theme of *libertas* first appears in a speech of Ambiorix (5.27.6); it resumes twice in this oration of the *principes Galliae* (7.1.5 and 7.1.8); Convictolitavis employs it when he persuades Litaviccus to join his cause (7.37.4); Vercingetorix appeals to the cause of liberty three times, each occurring after the battle of Gergovia (7.64.3, 7.66.4, and 7.89.1); finally Critognatus, in his infamous *oratio recta*, appeals for *libertas* (7.77.14) and denounces its opposite, *servitus* (7.77.20).

¹¹² Aristotle, [*Rh. Al.*] 1.1.

general from his legion. Finally, the *propositio* comes to an end with the plosive punctuation of *pervenire possit*.

The entire speech of the chieftains then concludes with a stirring *peroratio* that, not unlike many of the speeches delivered by Caesar's Gallic enemy in the other chapters,¹¹³ employs the rhetorical trope of *libertas* to summon their Gallic men to action (7.1.8):

Postremo in acie praestare interfici quam non veterem belli gloriam libertatemque quam a maioribus acceperint recipere.

Finally, [they argue] that it is better to be killed in battle than not to recover the former glory of war and liberty which they have inherited from their ancestors.

Caesar further emphasizes the Gallic quest for *libertas* by including a reference to the *maiores*. By mentioning this connection, Caesar uses a rhetorical trope common to Roman speeches and thus further "Romanizes" his Gallic enemy.¹¹⁴ With the conclusion of this deliberative speech, Caesar sets the stage for the events of Book 7. Although the *principes Galliae* who initiate the series of speeches in this book remain unnamed, they pave the way for Caesar's other, more formidable opponents.

Vercingetorix (part I)

The driving force¹¹⁵ in Book 7 is Vercingetorix, an Arvernian youth of supreme command, whose father, Celtillus, had held the *principatus* of Gaul but was killed for seeking kingship.¹¹⁶ Caesar describes how Vercingetorix, having been cast from the town of Gergovia by his uncle, Gobannitio, assembled a group of beggars and outcasts and then persuaded the

¹¹³ See note 111 above.

¹¹⁴ See Chapter 2, pages 22-24.

¹¹⁵ Rasmussen, 36ff.

¹¹⁶ 7.4.1.

members of his state to take up arms for the cause of their common liberty.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, as Caesar asserts, Vercingetorix' men addressed him with the title *rex*. Indeed Caesar's initial description of Vercingetorix includes a detailed characterization of the attention he paid to his army and the punishments he exacted from those who committed offenses against his cause.¹¹⁸

Despite his early appearance in Book 7, however, the first words of formal speech Caesar assigns to Vercingetorix come ten chapters later after the Gauls have experienced three successive reverses at Vellaunodum, Cenabum, and Noviodunum. Fearing that his support might be waning and in need of a new strategy, Vercingetorix addresses his men in an assembly (7.14.2-10):

Docet longe alia ratione esse bellum gerendum atque antea gestum sit. Omnibus modis huic rei studendum, ut pabulatione et commeatu Romani prohibeantur. Id esse facile, quod equitatu ipsi abundant et quod anni tempore subleventur. Pabulum secari non posse; necessario dispersos hostes ex aedificiis petere: hos omnes cotidie ab equitibus deligi posse. Praeterea salutis causa rei familiaris commoda neglegenda: vicos atque aedificia incendi oportere hoc spatio ab via quoque versus, quo pabulandi causa adire posse videantur. Harum ipsis rerum copiam suppetere, quod, quorum in finibus bellum geratur, eorum opibus subleventur: Romanos aut inopiam non laturos aut magno periculo longius ab castris processuros; neque interesse, ipsosne interficiant, impedimentisne exuant, quibus amissis bellum geri non possit. Praeterea oppida incendi oportere, quae non munitione et loci natura ab omni sint periculo tuta, neu suis sint ad detractandam militiam receptacula neu Romanis proposita ad copiam commeatus praedamque tollendam. Haec si gravia aut acerba videantur, multo illa gravius aestimare, liberos, coniuges in servitutem abstrahi, ipsos interfici; quae sit necesse accidere victis.

He shows that the war must be waged with a far different plan than it has been before. [He adds that] by all means they must pursue this situation, in order that the Romans might be kept from food and provisions. [He says that] it is easy because they themselves are plenty in cavalry and

¹¹⁷ J. N. Bremmer and N. M. Horsfall, *Roman Myth and Mythography*, London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1987, 40-41, compare Vercingetorix' early-adult experiences with those of Romulus as a part of ritualistic coming-of-age: both experience a relegation to a place at the margin of society before joining a group of other marginals and ultimately acquiring a position of leadership. Barlow, 168, n. 49, keenly notes how the words *egens* and *perditus* (used here to describe the men collected by Vercingetorix, are "emphatic words used by conservatives of the revolutionary forces in Republican politics; e.g. Sall. *Cat* 18.4, 33.1; Cic *Cat.* 4.17; *Mil* 22, 25; *Dom.* 116."

¹¹⁸ Caesar, 7.4.9-10, describes the severity of the punishment: Summae diligentiae summam imperi severitatem addit; magnitudine supplicii dubitantes cogit. Nam amiore commisso elicto igni atque omnibus tormentis necat, levior de cause auribus desectis aut singulis effossis oculis domum remittit, ut sint reliquis documento et magnituden poenae perterreant alios "To the supreme care he adds supreme harshness of command; he compels the waverers with the magnitude of punishment. For with a greater offense having been committed he puts to death with fire and all sorts of tortures, for a lesser charge he sends a man home with his ears having been cut off or with one of his eyes gouged out, so that they may be an example to the rest and may thereby frighten the others with the magnitude of the punishment."

because they are eased by the time of year. [He asserts that] the food must not be cut, [that] the enemy, having been scattered from their homes by necessity, will seek it: these all could be picked out (and killed) by the horsemen. In addition, for the sake of safety the interests of private property must be ignored. The villages and building ought to be burned in the space away from the road as the enemy seemed to be able to approach for the sake of getting food. They should seek a supply of these things for themselves because they would be helped by the resources of those in whose territory the war was being waged. Either the Romans would not endure lack, or would proceed further from their camp at great danger: It doesn't matter whether they should kill them or strip them of their baggage, with which having been lost the war could not be waged. In addition the towns which are safe from all danger because of the fortification and the nature of the place, ought to be burned, that these should neither be places of refuge for their own people for drawing down the army, nor convenient for the Romans for bringing a supply of provisions and loot. If these things seemed either harsh or bitter, they should value much more seriously the other, that their children, wives be dragged into slavery, [and] themselves killed: which was required to happen to the conquered.

Immediately noticeable in this lengthy *oratio obliqua* are the terse, Caesar-esque explanations of what has to be done.¹¹⁹ In explicating his plan, Vercingetorix reinforces his expectations with a rationale for his motivations. As a result, Caesar presents the character of Vercingetorix as one who is guided by reason (*ratione*).¹²⁰ At the same time, however, Caesar is careful to maintain for Vercingetorix the characterization he employs for other Gauls. Coming from the mouth of Vercingetorix—yet hidden amid the logical persuasion—is the confident assertion that their success will be easy (*id esse facile*).¹²¹ Unlike the previous uses of this *locus communis* in which Orgetorix claims with what ease the Helvetians might migrate from their boundaries, however, is Vercingetorix' careful clarification of why it is so. As a result, Vercingetorix' collected demeanor serves as a foil to the impetuous nature of Orgetorix and thus makes Caesar's final opponent more formidable. Caesar also introduces here in Vercingetorix' first address a new theme that will echo in his speeches yet to come: a concern for common safety.¹²² The

¹¹⁹ Cf. 2.20.1, where Caesar reports his memorable *Caesari omnia uno tempore erant agenda* ("Everything had to be done by Caesar at one time."). What then follows is his laundry list of items to accomplish.

¹²⁰ Rasmussen, 38*ff.*, suggests that Caesar employs deliberative *oratio obliqua*, such as this one here, to offer reason or motivation for action.

¹²¹ Cf. 1.2.2 and 1.3.6.

¹²² Cf. 7.20.7, 7.29.7, and 7.66.5.

conclusion of the passage, however, stands in stark contrast to the reason-driven explications of the scorched-earth policy that precede it. Having won over his audience by logical persuasion, Vercingetorix then appeals to the Gauls' most pressing fears: the possibility of enslavement and death.

Stylistically, the passage is replete with rhetorical flourishes. As is common in speeches penned by Caesar, short, emphatic instructions, accentuated with a plosive alliteration of *p*'s, punctuate Vercingetorix' parallel wishes (*Pabulum . . . posse . . . dispersos . . . petere . . . posse*). Furthermore, the coordination of his argument with conjunctions (*quod . . . quod; aut . . . aut; -ne . . . -ne;*¹²³ *neu . . . neu*) also adds force to his proposition, as each point he makes has two items to support it. The repetition of conjunctions serves another function, however: It helps to highlight the *lack* of conjunctions in the last, grisly admonition of the final sentence. First, the children and women join seamlessly and without distinction as they are dragged into slavery. Second, by avoiding the use of a conjunction between the clauses containing the verbs *abstrahi* and *interfici*, Vercingetorix asserts the inevitable consequence and rapidity of the two actions: abduction and murder. Then Caesar engages in one last stylistic ploy in his final sentence. By reserving the word *victis* for the last word in the sentence (in a violation of expected Latin word order), Vercingetorix, through the pen of Caesar, exacerbates the fears of his audience members who are left with the possibility of being conquered ringing in their ears. Thus Caesar, by means of a highly stylized piece of oratory, first presents his opponent as the leader of a unified Gaul.

Six chapters later, after recounting the repositioning of his camp near that of Vercingetorix outside the town of Avaricum, Caesar again endows Vercingetorix with a lengthy, intriguing speech. Vercingetorix' words here represent a defense of his previous actions, which

¹²³ As E.C. Kennedy, *Caesar: De Bello Gallico* 7, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959) 118, n. 8 notes, Caesar introduces "an unusual variant" of *utrum . . . an* or *-ne . . . an* with the coordinators *-ne . . . -ne*.

have brought the Roman and Gallic armies into close proximity. His Gallic followers, concerned with the dangerous position in which they now find themselves, accuse Vercingetorix of a quest for the kingship of Gaul by a concession on the part of Caesar rather than by their own favor.¹²⁴

His refutation of these charges begins first in *oratio obliqua* and, after a brief shift to a previously arranged speech by some “Roman soldiers,” shifts seamlessly into *oratio recta*. The elegance of this speech lies in the unfolding of its three parts, each of which equates to Vercingetorix’ own words: The first part, conveyed in *oratio obliqua*, meticulously details Vercingetorix’ self-defense (7.20.3-7):

tali modo accusatus ad haec repondit: Quod castra movisset, factum inopia pabuli etiam ipsis hortantibus; quod propius Romanos accessisset, persuasum loci opportunitate, qui se ipsum munitione defenderet: equitum vero operam neque in loco palustri desiderari debuisse et illic fuisse utilem, quo sint profecti. Summam imperi se consulto nulli discedentem tradidisse, ne is multitudinis studio ad dimicandum impelleretur; cui rei propter animi mollitiem studere omnes videret, quod diutius laborem ferre non possent. Romani si casu intervenerint, fortunae, si alicuius indicio vocati, huic habendam gratiam, quod et paucitatem eorum ex loco superiore cognoscere et virtutem despicere potuerint, qui dimicare non ausi turpiter se in castra receperint. Imperium se ab Caesare per prodicionem nullum desiderare, quod habere victoria posset, quae iam esset sibi atque omnibus Gallis explorata: quin etiam ipsis remittere, si sibi magis honorem tribuere, quam ab se salutem accipere videantur.

Having been accused in this way, he responded to these charges: As for the fact that he had moved the camp, it had been done [he responded] out of a lack of food and with them encouraging; as for the fact that he had moved closer to the Romans, he had been persuaded by the advantage of the place which would defend him by its fortification: The service of the cavalry ought not to have been required in the location of the swamp and it had been useful in the place to which they had set out. [He said that it was] by his plan that he while departing had handed over the main part of command to no one lest he might be compelled to engage in battle by the zeal of the majority, on account of which softness of mind he saw that all were eager because they could not endure the toil any longer. If the Romans, by chance should arrive, the Gauls should be grateful to fortune, but if [they came] having been called because of the testimony of somebody, they should be grateful to him because they could recognize their scarcity from a higher place and look down on the courage, who having dared not to fight retreated shamefully into camp. [He added] that he desired no command granted through treachery by Caesar which he could have by victory which was assured now to him and all Gauls: nay, he would remit it to them, if they seemed to assign honor to him more than to receive safety from him.

¹²⁴ Caesar, 7.20.1, emphasizes Vercingetorix’ actions through the use of the word *regnum*: *regnum illum Galliae malle Caesaris concessu quam ipsorum habere beneficio* (he preferred to have that kingship of Gaul by a grant of Caesar rather than by the favor of them”).

As with the speech Caesar assigns to Vercingetorix in 7.14, a rational, logic-driven argument pervades the *oratio obliqua*.¹²⁵ Caesar further employs the initial component of this extended speech, however, to develop, in a rather subtle manner, a characterization of the power-greedy Gaul.¹²⁶ Embedded in Vercingetorix' logical *refutatio* of the charges is his bold assertion that he can acquire the *regnum* of Gaul through a victory over the Romans and not by means of a special concession on the part of Caesar. Thus Caesar—as author—acknowledges Vercingetorix' quest for *imperium* and establishes in the mind of his reader both the Gallic temperament and Vercingetorix' motivation. At the conclusion of the *oratio obliqua*, Caesar places in the mouth of Vercingetorix a pointed accusation of the Arvernian's Gallic tribesmen that recalls an earlier characterization established by Caesar: Vercingetorix rebuts that his motivation for action is *their* common safety.

After this initial part of the speech, Caesar pens for Vercingetorix a brief *oratio recta* that segues into the emotionally charged corroboration supplied by slaves acting as Roman soldiers.

(7.20.8-11):

"Haec ut intellegatis," inquit, "a me sincere pronuntiari, audite Romanos milites." Producit servos, quos in pabulatione paucis ante diebus exceperat et fame vinculisque excruciverat. Hi iam ante edocti quae interrogati pronuntiarent, milites se esse legionarios dicunt; fame et inopia adductos clam ex castris exisse, si quid frumenti aut pecoris in agris reperire possent: simili omnem exercitum inopia premi, nec iam vires sufficere cuiusquam nec ferre operis laborem posse: itaque statuisset imperatorem, si nihil in oppugnatione oppidi profecissent, triduo exercitum deducere.

“So that you may understand that these things are being said by me sincerely, listen to these Roman soldiers.” He produces some slaves whom he had captured during a forage expedition a few days before and whom he had tortured with hunger and chains. These, having been instructed previously already what they should say when interrogated say they are legionary soldiers; that they, having been induced by hunger and want, went out secretly from the camp to see if they might discover anything of grain or cattle in the fields: the entire army was being checked by a similar want, and that now neither was the strength of any sufficient nor could they endure the labor of the task: and so the commander had decided if nothing could be accomplished in the attack of the town, to withdraw the army in three days.

¹²⁵See note 119 above.

¹²⁶Rasmussen, 39.

This second component, although delivered in *oratio obliqua* by the slaves *qua* soldiers, in fact reproduces the words Vercingetorix has previously instructed them to say. It therefore represents a more complicated continuation of the speech delivered by Vercingetorix.¹²⁷ These puppets in the hand of Vercingetorix¹²⁸ thus provide, in the tradition of Roman law courts, an apparently objective “testimony” that corroborates Vercingetorix’ argument and therefore constitutes an integral component of his *oratio*. In addition to apparent corroboration, however, this brief interruption, despite offering little for stylistic evaluation, serves to enlarge Vercingetorix’ initial *oratio obliqua* and sets the stage for the *oratio recta*.¹²⁹

In resuming Vercingetorix’ address, Caesar repeats the word *haec* to connect Vercingetorix’ previous words and thereby begins the third component of the set piece, the *oratio recta* (7.20.12):¹³⁰

"Haec," inquit, "a me," Vercingetorix, "beneficia habetis, quem prodicionis insimulatis; cuius opera sine vestro sanguine tantum exercitum victorem fame consumptum videtis; quem turpiter se ex fuga recipientem ne qua civitas suis finibus recipiat a me provisum est."

“These are there benefits you have from me, whom you accuse of treachery, by whose effort, without *your* blood, you see such a great and victorious army consumed with hunger; [it is an army against] which, retreating disgracefully in flight, measures have been taken by me lest any state receive into its borders.”

Although consisting of only thirty-five words, this speech, not unlike Vercingetorix’ previous speech composed in *oratio obliqua*, contains a variety of rhetorical flourishes that add impact to its message. As mentioned above, its first words (*Haec . . . a me*) appear in anaphora-like

¹²⁷ Regarding this scene, Rasmussen, 37, emphatically asserts in the concluding sentence of his discussion of the slaves’ corroboration, “Sie ist ein Teil der *oratio recta*.”

¹²⁸ The strong imagery of the “Roman soldiers” as puppets, developed by Rasmussen, 37, shows just how much these words are, in fact, coming from the mouth of Vercingetorix.

¹²⁹ Rasmussen, 37.

¹³⁰ Incidentally, Vercingetorix’ speech here at 7.20.8-12, despite being part of the book with the most frequent use of *oratio recta*, is the only opportunity Caesar takes to present his most formidable opponent of Book 7 in direct speech. The remaining Gallic opponents of Caesar whose voice appears in *oratio recta* are Litaviccus and Critognatus who will be addressed later in the chapter.

parallelism with the address he delivers prior to the interruption by the Roman slaves (*Haec ut intellegatis a me . . .*) and thus provide continuity. Additionally, the repetition of *s*'s, by which Vercingetorix accosts his fellow Gauls with apparent incredulity, adds a critical force to his message. It is not enough that Vercingetorix finds their accusations unbelievable; he turns the tables on them and with subtle alliteration shames them for their lack of confidence in him. Furthermore, in a clever manipulation of the verb *recipere*, the final sentence presents a polyptoton that contrasts the retreating Roman army (*recipientem*) with the state that might receive it into its borders (*recipiat*). This balanced turn of a phrase sets the stage for Vercingetorix' final words in this lengthy speech: *a me provisum est*. Despite his previous active, accusatory charges, the final punctuation of Vercingetorix' speech is a humble, impersonally passive defense that reconciles his audience, both inside and outside the narrative, to his position.

The three components of Vercingetorix' speech here harmoniously combine to create a single persuasive delivery: the initial *oratio obliqua* establishes Vercingetorix' defense of his position; the interruption by the Roman slaves adds emotional appeal to Vercingetorix' argument; and finally, Vercingetorix' rhetorically charged *oratio recta* serves to reinforce the oratorical nature of the passage and punctuate the entire set piece. Furthermore, through a series of refined, effective transitions, the speech gradually shifts in tense from the perfect tense *respondit* to the present tense forms following *habetis* in the final part and gently prepares the reader to "hear" Vercingetorix' words as if a member of his audience.¹³¹ It is the lines that follow, however, that remind the reader of the ultimate effectiveness of the speech (7.21.1):

¹³¹ Hans Opperman, "Stil," *Neue Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Jugendbildung* 7 (1931): 111.

Conclamat omnis multitudo et suo more armis concrepat, quod facere in eo consuerunt cuius orationem approbant: summum esse Vercingetorigem ducem nec de eius fide dubitandum nec maiore ratione bellum administrari posse.

The whole host cried together and made a crash with their arms in their fashion which they were accustomed to do for him whose speech they approve: that Vercingetorix is a consummate leader and that neither should there be doubt concerning his loyalty nor that the war could be handled by a better rationale.

Vercingetorix has successfully won over his audience. It is through this description of events that Caesar highlights Vercingetorix' ability as both a speaker and a leader and thus establishes Vercingetorix as a character who is nearly as important as Caesar.¹³²

The final time Caesar endows Vercingetorix with a speech *prior* to the Roman setback at Gergovia immediately follows a Gallic defeat at Avaricum. The Gallic forces, having been trapped inside the city walls, have been annihilated by Caesar's men. Caesar states that only eight hundred men of forty thousand join Vercingetorix' troops nearby. Vercingetorix' address on the following day appears in *oratio obliqua* and serves to reassure those who have survived (7.29.1-7):

Postero die concilio convocato consolatus cohortatusque est ne se admodum animo demitterent, ne perturbarentur incommodo. Non virtute neque in acie vicisse Romanos, sed artificio quodam et scientia oppugnationis, cuius rei fuerint ipsi imperiti. Errare, si qui in bello omnes secundos rerum proventus expectent. Sibi numquam placuisse Avaricum defendi, cuius rei testes ipsos haberet; sed factum imprudentia Biturigum et nimia obsequentia reliquorum uti hoc incommodum acciperetur. Id tamen se celeriter maioribus commodis sanaturum. Nam quae ab reliquis Gallis civitates dissentirent, has sua diligentia adiuncturum atque unum consilium totius Galliae effecturum, cuius consensui ne orbis quidem terrarum possit obsistere; idque se prope iam effectum habere. Interea aequum esse ab eis communis salutis causa impetrari ut castra munire instituerent, quo facilius repentinos hostium impetus sustinerent.

On the following day, with an assembly having been called, he consoled and encouraged them not to lose heart too much, not to be bothered by the setback. [He argued that] the Romans had won not on account of virtue nor in a drawn battle, but by a certain stratagem and by a knowledge of siege engines, of which thing they themselves were unskilled. It was wrong if any of them should expect in war all outcomes of affairs [to be] favorable. It had never pleased him that Avaricum be defended, of which event he had them as witnesses; but it had happened on account of the imprudence of the Bituriges and by the excessive complaisance of the rest that this setback was received. He, however, would quickly rectify it by greater advantages. For, as to the states that

¹³² Rasmussen, 36ff., argues that the entire force of Caesar's propagandistic message in Book 7, and in fact, the entire *De Bello Gallico*, depends on the success of this speech. In order to accomplish his literary purpose, Caesar must establish Vercingetorix as the driving strength and prominent head of this last, though unsuccessful, rebellion.

felt differently from the rest of the Gauls, he would join these by his diligence and would develop one plan for all Gaul whose consensus not even the world could resist. He had nearly made it happen now. Meanwhile, it was right of them for their common safety's sake that he be granted by them that they should continue to fortify the camp in order to resist sudden attacks of the enemy more easily.

Similar to the *orationes obliquae* fashioned for Vercingetorix by Caesar earlier in Book 7, Vercingetorix' words here follow a pattern of logic and reason. With an alliterative antithesis, Vercingetorix explains away the Roman success, removes blame from the Gauls, and wins them over to his position. As in previous speeches delivered by Caesar's opponents, present are the *loci communes* of Vercingetorix' desire for a united Gaul (*unum consilium totius Galliae*) and his concern for the common weal (*communis salutis causa*). Moreover, as we learn from the lines which immediately follow, Vercingetorix' words again meet with success:

Fuit haec oratio non ingrata Gallis. . . . primumque eo tempore Galli castra munire instituerunt et sic sunt animo confirmati, homines insueti laboris, ut omnia quae imperarentur sibi patienda existimarent.

This speech was not displeasing to the Gauls and at that time the Gauls decided to fortify the camp and were strengthened in mind in such a way that, despite being men unaccustomed to labor, they thought they must endure everything which was asked of them.

Altogether, this speech, although less significant than the speech Caesar pens previously for Vercingetorix in *oratio recta*, maintains the characterization of his chief opponent and develops in the mind of the reader the idea that Caesar's opponent is both formidable and worthy of development at a character.

Convictolitavis and Litavicus

Shortly before the battle at Gergovia, Caesar introduces two characters whom he empowers with short, persuasive speeches. The first, an Aeduan youth to whom a magistracy had been recently adjudged by Caesar, is Convictolitavis whom Caesar at first describes as

“florens et illustris adulescens.”¹³³ The second is the chief Litaviccus, a young man born from an “amplissima familia.”¹³⁴ Convictolitavis, having been induced by a bribe from the Arverni, meets with Litaviccus and his brothers and in turn bribes them to join him in his machinations against Caesar and the Romans (7.37.2-5):

Cum his praemium communicat hortaturque, ut se liberos et imperio natos meminerint. Unam esse Aeduorum civitatem, quae certissimam Galliae victoriam detineat; eius auctoritate reliquas contineri; qua traducta locum consistendi Romanis in Gallia non fore. Esse nonnullum se Caesaris beneficio adfectum, sic tamen, ut iustissimam apud eum causam obtinuerit; sed plus communi libertati tribuere. Cur enim potius Aedui de suo iure et de legibus ad Caesarem disceptatorem, quam Romani ad Aeduos veniant?

With these [viz. Litaviccus and his brothers] he [Convictolitavis] mentions a reward and urges that they remember that they were born free and for command. [He asserts] that the state of the Aedui was the one which might attain a most certain victory for Gaul; [that] by its influence the remaining states would be contained; [and that] with it having been led over there would no place in Gaul for the Romans to stand. [He acknowledges] that he had been treated by some kindness of Caesar, thus, however, that he had won a most just case with him; but he assigned more value to their common liberty. For why should the Aedui come to Caesar as an arbitrator concerning their own right and laws rather than the Romans to the Aedui?

Convictolitavis’ persuasive words, which easily win over Litaviccus and his brothers, employ themes common to the preceding speeches in the *De Bello Gallico* while at the same time possessing rhetorical forms prescribed by the handbooks on oratory. As is standard in Gallic speech, Convictolitavis appeals to their sense of freedom, first with the reminder of their freeborn status in Gaul (*liberos*), and later by an assertion that his loyalties lie not with Caesar, but in their common liberty (*plus communi libertati*).¹³⁵ He further asserts, through his use of the superlative (*certissimam*), the ease with which they will accomplish their mission. The double use of the superlative (*certissimam* and *iustissimam*) combines with other words (*e.g.*, *esse*, *se*, and *Caesaris*) to imbue the passage with a sinister alliteration. Finally, the abrupt conclusion

¹³³ 7.32.4.

¹³⁴ 7.37.1.

¹³⁵ Barlow, 154, however notes that Convictolitavis’ invocation of liberty is “undermined by the suggestion that money has brought about a relinquent of sentiments (*pecunia* and *praemium* twice).”

with a rhetorical question, which antithetically contrasts the Romans and the Aeduans, punctuates the passage and seems to serve as the factor that tips the scales for Litaviccus and his brothers.

Litaviccus, having been thus persuaded, puts into action the plan agreed upon by himself and Convictolitavis. As he leads his men on their dissembled ride to join Caesar and his army, he halts and imploringly addresses his men (7.38.1-3):

Litaviccus . . . convocatis subito militibus lacrimans, "Quo proficiscimur," inquit, "milites? Omnis noster equitatus, omnis nobilitas interiit; principes civitatis, Eporedorix et Viridomarus, insimulati proditionis ab Romanis indicta causa interfecti sunt. Haec ab ipsis cognoscite, qui ex ipsa caede fugerunt: nam ego fratribus atque omnibus meis propinquis interfectis dolore prohibeor, quae gesta sunt, pronuntiare."

Litaviccus, with his soldiers having been suddenly called together, crying, asked, "To where are we heading, soldiers? Our entire cavalry, our entire nobility has perished; the leaders of the state, Eporedorix and Viridomarus, charged of treason by the Romans have been killed with their case unheard. Learn these things from these very men who have fled from the slaughter itself: for, with my brothers and all my relatives having been killed, I am prevented by grief from announcing the things that were accomplished."

The rhetorical question with which Litaviccus begins his speech increases the emotional appeal already begun with *lacrimans*. Furthermore the anaphoric asyndeton found in *Omnis noster, omnis nobilitas interiit* amplifies his pathetic plea. He then produces a group of men who, in a very brief *oratio obliqua*, provide pre-arranged corroboration of what he has just charged (7.38.4-6):

Producuntur hi quos ille edocuerat quae dici vellet, atque eadem, quae Litaviccus pronuntiaverat, multitudini exponunt: multos equites Aeduorum interfectos, quod collocuti cum Arvernibus dicerentur; ipsos se inter multitudinem militum occultasse atque ex media caede fugisse. Conclamant Aedui et Litaviccum obsecrant ut sibi consulat.

These are produced whom he had instructed what he wished to be said. They put forth to the crowd the very same things which Litaviccus had prepared: That many cavalymen of the Aedui had been killed because they were being said to have conversed with the Aedui; that they themselves had hidden among a crowd of soldiers and had fled from the middle of slaughter. The Aedui cry out together and beseech Litaviccus to help them.

Litaviccus begins again and, with a bit of misinformed logic, concludes what will be the just path for them to take (7.38.7-8):

Quasi vero," inquit ille, "consili sit res, ac non necesse sit nobis Gergoviam contendere et cum Arvernis nosmet coniungere. An dubitamus quin nefario facinore admisso Romani iam ad nos interficiendos concurrant? Proinde, si quid in nobis animi est, persequamur eorum mortem qui indignissime interierunt, atque hos latrones interficiamus."

“As if,” he says, “it is a matter of debate, and not necessary for us to hasten to Gergovia and to join ourselves with the Arverni. Or, can we doubt that the Romans, with this abominable crime having been committed, already are rushing to kill us? Wherefore, if there is any courage in us, let us avenge the death of those who have so very shamefully died, and kill these brigands!”

The speech of Litaviccus here, in conjunction with Convictolitavis’ speech immediately preceding it, combines to form a second, improved version of Vercingetorix’ speech seventeen chapters earlier.¹³⁶ To highlight the similarities between the two, Caesar sets a similar scene: both speeches occur with their speakers addressing a crowd of their Gallic followers. Furthermore, Caesar employs a formulaic structure for the two: both begin with speakers in *oratio obliqua*, briefly move into *oratio recta* interrupted by prearranged *orationes obliquae* of Romans, and finally conclude with emotional *orationes rectae*. As with *oratio obliqua* given by the Roman slaves, the Roman soldiers in Litaviccus’ care—again mere puppets in the hand of the speaker—provide a rhetorical repetition that serves the puppet master’s purpose. The two speeches likewise begin their respective *orationes rectae* in a similar fashion: where Vercingetorix’ two components employ the anaphoric words *haec . . . haec* to provide continuity between them, Litaviccus’ speech has a similar *quo . . . quasi*.¹³⁷ And finally, each speech reveals that its purpose has been achieved through the use of the verb *conclamare*.

It is what distinguishes the two speeches, however, that offers the greatest insight into Caesar’s purpose in creating two set pieces so similar. Immediately noticeable is the power of the speech given by Convictolitavis and Litaviccus. Although Vercingetorix’ speech achieves its purpose (the Gauls are easily resigned to Vercingetorix’ plan), it is not until the end of the speech

¹³⁶ Rasmussen, 40.

¹³⁷ Rasmussen, 42.

that Caesar indicates the Gauls' consensus. The speech assigned to Litaviccus, however, has gained approval even before Litaviccus completes his *oratio recta*. The emotional appeal of this set of speeches increases its power: Litaviccus' expression of grief permeates the passage and wins its audience to its side. What contributes the most by far to the set piece, however, is the cruel cunning that characterizes the speech. The fictitious charges of the murder of the Gallic *principes* bring the deceit in Litaviccus' speech to a new level. Furthermore, the consequential retribution for such a heinous act, the on-the-spot murder of the corroborating Romans, highlights Gallic perfidy. Reservation of the verb *interficiamus* for the end of the sentence is likewise no mere coincidence. Caesar punctuates Gallic cruelty to both his internal and external audiences by postponing the mention of murder until the final word. In presenting comparatively more shocking parallels in the set piece with less significant characters, Caesar blurs in the mind of his reader the lines between Convictolitavis, Litaviccus, and Vercingetorix and thus conflates all three.¹³⁸ Litaviccus and Vercingetorix become indistinguishable characters and an implied characterization of Vercingetorix emerges. Thus, without directly charging Vercingetorix with such treachery, Caesar diminishes Vercingetorix' status as a person without diminishing his status as an opponent.

Critognatus

Another function of the cruel and cunning characterization of Litaviccus in the set piece from 7.37 is anticipation of the cruelty depicted in a speech forty chapters later.¹³⁹ Its speaker is the noble Aeduan, Critognatus, an otherwise unknown Gaul. The element that immediately

¹³⁸ Rasmussen, 43.

¹³⁹ Rasmussen, 43.

distinguishes his speech from the others delivered in *oratio recta* is its length. Not only is it longer than every other direct speech (Roman or otherwise), it falls six words short of equaling the sum of all previous direct speeches combined. The speech emerges near the very end of the *De Bello Gallico* at a point where the outcome of the siege of Alesia appears to be a foregone conclusion. All of the supplies in the town have been consumed and the expected auxiliary forces have not arrived. A meeting is called to determine the next course of action. Critognatus, an Aeduan characterized by *magna auctoritas*, addresses his Gallic audience (7.77.3-20):

"Nihil," inquit, "de eorum sententia dicturus sum, qui turpissimam servitutem deditionis nomine appellant, neque hos habendos civium loco neque ad concilium adhibendos censeo. Cum his mihi res sit, qui eruptionem probant; quorum in consilio omnium vestrum consensu pristinae residere virtutis memoria videtur. Animi est ista mollitia, non virtus, paulisper inopiam ferre non posse. Qui se ultro morti offerant facilius reperiuntur quam qui dolorem patienter ferant. Atque ego hanc sententiam probarem (tantum apud me dignitas potest), si nullam praeterquam vitae nostrae iacturam fieri viderem: sed in consilio capiendo omnem Galliam respiciamus, quam ad nostrum auxilium concitavimus. Quid hominum milibus LXXX uno loco interfectis propinquis consanguineisque nostris animi fore existimatis, si paene in ipsis cadaveribus proelio decertare cogentur? Nolite hos vestro auxilio exspoliare, qui vestrae salutis causa suum periculum neglexerunt, nec stultitia ac temeritate vestra aut animi imbecillitate omnem Galliam prosternere et perpetuae servituti subicere. An, quod ad diem non venerunt, de eorum fide constantiaque dubitatis? Quid ergo? Romanos in illis ulterioribus munitionibus animine causa cotidie exerceri putatis? Si illorum nuntiis confirmari non potestis omni aditu praesaepito, his utimini testibus appropinquare eorum adventum; cuius rei timore exterriti diem noctemque in opere versantur. Quid ergo mei consili est? Facere, quod nostri maiores nequaquam pari bello Cimbrorum Teutonumque fecerunt; qui in oppida compulsi ac simili inopia subacti eorum corporibus qui aetate ad bellum inutiles videbantur vitam toleraverunt neque se hostibus tradiderunt. Cuius rei si exemplum non haberemus, tamen libertatis causa institui et posteris prodi pulcherrimum iudicarem. Nam quid illi simile bello fuit? Depopulata Gallia Cimbri magnaue illata calamitate finibus quidem nostris aliquando excesserunt atque alias terras petierunt; iura, leges, agros, libertatem nobis reliquerunt. Romani vero quid petunt aliud aut quid volunt, nisi invidia adducti, quos fama nobiles potentesque bello cognoverunt, horum in agris civitatibusque considerare atque his aeternam iniungere servitutem? Neque enim ulla alia condicione bella gesserunt. Quod si ea quae in longinquis nationibus geruntur ignoratis, respicite finitimam Galliam, quae in provinciam redacta iure et legibus commutatis securibus subiecta perpetua premitur servitute."

I am going to say nothing about the opinion of those who address the basest slavery in the name of surrender, I feel that these neither must be held in the place of citizens nor invited to the meeting. Let the matter be for me with these who are in favor of an escape; in the plan of these by agreement of all you there seems to reside the memory of your former virtue. That is softness of mind, not virtue to be unable to endure want for a little while. Those who would of their own accord offer themselves to death are more easily found than those who would patiently endure grief. And I would approve of this notion (the dignity has weight with me so much), if I were to see nothing to happen other than loss of life: but let us regard all Gaul in adopting our plan, whom we have aroused to our aid. What do you think there would be of spirit for our friends and relatives with eighty thousand men killed in one place, if they will be forced to fight in a battle almost over the very bodies? Refuse to strip of your aid these, who have neglected their own danger for the sake of your safety, nor lay low all Gaul by your foolishness, rashness our weakness

of mind and subject her to perpetual slavery. Or do you doubt their faithfulness and constancy because they have not arrived on time? What then? Do you think that the Romans are engaged daily in those outer trenches for the sake of amusement? If you are not able to be strengthened by the messages of those people, with every approach having been blocked, use these here as witnesses that the arrival of them is approaching; frightened by the fear of which thing, they are occupied day and night in labor. What, then, is my advice? To do what our ancestors did in the war of the Cimbri and Teutones, which was by no means equal to this one. They, having been driven together into towns and forced by a similar want sustained life on the bodies of those who, because of age seemed useless for war and so did not surrender themselves to the enemy. And if we were not to have the example of this situation, I would nevertheless judge it a most beautiful thing to be established for the sake of liberty and to be handed down to posterity. For what was there in that war that is similar to this war? With Gaul having been devastated and a great disaster having been brought the Cimbri departed from our borders indeed and sought other lands; they left us their laws, rights, fields and liberty. What else do the Romans really seek or really want except having been motivated by envy to settle in the fields and lands of those whom they have found to be noble in fame and powerful in war and to join these to eternal slavery? For indeed, in no other way have they waged wars. But if you are unaware of the things that are being done in distant nations, look now at the neighboring Gaul which, having been made provinces and, with their laws changed, having been crushed under the axes is pressed by perpetual slavery.

Although Caesar asserts that his motivation for including this speech is its exceptional cruelty, its rhetorical exquisiteness belies this claim. The speech, in fact, does possess an element of incomparable cruelty in the suggestion of cannibalism; it is Caesar's mastery of rhetoric, however, that also makes this speech stand out and justifies its inclusion in the work. Praeterition (*Nihil . . . dicturus*) and alliteration (note again the hissing *s*'s and the crackling of *c*'s) mark the speech's opening. Closely following is a polyptotic chiasmus (*neque hos habendos civium loco neque ad concilium adhibendos*) that anticipates the hard line Critognatus' speech will take. Furthermore, Caesar balances a number of antitheses¹⁴⁰ and polyptota¹⁴¹ to embellish the passage. One particularly striking picture Caesar paints in Critognatus' speech is the chiasmic anticipation of the death of 80,000 Gauls lying in one place. Through the juxtaposition of the numerals *milibus LXXX* and *uno*, Critognatus, through the pen of Caesar, has offered to his audience (and thus to the Roman audience) a truly macabre picture.

¹⁴⁰ Anthitheses appear at 7.77.5 (*ista mollitia, non virtus* and *Qui . . . ferant*), at 7.77.7 (*omnem Galliam . . . nostrum auxilium*), and at 7.77.9 (*vestrae . . . periculum*).

¹⁴¹ Various polyptota leap out at 7.77.5 (*offerant . . . ferant*), at 7.77.9 (*vestro . . . vestrae*), and at 7.77.12 (*Facere . . . fecerunt*).

It is not until two-thirds of the way through the speech, however, that Critognatus arrives at the point that has compelled Caesar (as Caesar says) to record the speech: Critognatus advocates the *crudelitas* of sustaining life by eating the bodies of the weak or old. Caesar builds anticipation of this point through a series of effective *ornamenta orationis*:¹⁴² a tricolon heightens the tension (*exspoliare . . . prosternere . . . addicere*); the frequent use of first and second person pronouns (*nostrae, nostrum, nostris; vestro, vestrae, vestra*) personalizes the bleak forecast; three rhetorical questions (*An . . . dubitatis?; Quid ergo?; Romanos . . . putatis?*) enlarge the passage and lead to the one interrogative whose answer is the suggestion of cannibalism (*Quid ergo mei consili est?*). Caesar then punctuates this heinous suggestion through an alliteration of *p*'s (*posteris prodi pulcherrimum*). Altogether, the speech maintains its oratorical mastery until the end. In relating the previous struggle of the Cimbri (to which Critognatus compares the Gauls' current situation), Caesar paints a word picture in which the Cimbri are isolated by two ablatives absolute which detail the destruction in Gaul (*Depopulata Gallia Cimbri magnaue illata calamitate*). Finally, Caesar employs *p*'s, *s*'s, and *t*'s to conclude Critognatus' overture with indignation at the thought of being oppressed by servitude (*securibus subiecta perpetua premitur servitute*).

The focus on the possibility of perpetual enslavement also serves to undermine Caesar's claim that the extreme cruelty of cannibalism has motivated him to include this speech in the *De Bello Gallico*. First and foremost, this speech is about the quest for *libertas* and rejection of *servitus*.¹⁴³ In fact, Caesar's periphrasis through which Critognatus suggests cannibalism (*qui in oppida compulsi ac simili inopia subacti eorum corporibus qui aetate ad bellum inutiles*

¹⁴² Rasmussen, 49.

¹⁴³ Rasmussen, 50.

videbantur vitam toleraverunt), despite its gruesome possibility, pales in comparison to the emphasis placed on the various forms of the word *servitus* that permeate the passage. Four times in the speech Caesar employs this theme to highlight the Gallic mindset. It occupies a central position by figuring prominently in Critognatus' accusation in the first sentence. Furthermore, it occupies the most prominent position as the last word Critognatus speaks. As a result, the rejection of everlasting enslavement rings in the ears of the reader after the speech has concluded at least as much as the idea of cannibalism. Furthermore, by focusing on the Gallic quest for *libertas* and their willingness to go to extremes to defend it, Caesar further develops his characterization of the Gauls. Critognatus is an insignificant obstacle in Caesar's conquest of Gaul.¹⁴⁴ He is, however, not unlike Caesar's chief opponent at this point in the narrative. Vercingetorix, similar to Caesar's other adversaries throughout the *De Bello Gallico*, is likewise motivated by a rejection of *servitus*. Caesar, therefore, includes Critognatus in this passage not because he poses a veritable threat to Caesar, but because he reminds Caesar's Roman reader of what does threaten Roman security.¹⁴⁵

Vercingetorix (Part II)

Despite Vercingetorix' role as Caesar's chief opponent in Book 7, Caesar gives comparatively little voice to Vercingetorix after the Roman army's setback at Gergovia. In the latter half of Book 7, Vercingetorix speaks only three times, and then only in *oratio obliqua*. Vercingetorix first addresses his men after receiving the command (*imperium*) over the entirety

¹⁴⁴ Rasmussen, 52, suggests that Caesar highlights Critognatus' insignificance by reserving only the oblique cases to mention him: *oratio Critognati* and *Critognati sententiam*.

¹⁴⁵ Rasmussen, 52.

of the Gallic forces.¹⁴⁶ His assumption of control is marked by clear, concise indirect commands (7.61.1-3):

Ipse imperat reliquis civitatibus obsides diemque ei rei constituit. Omnes equites, quindecim milia numero, celeriter convenire iubet; peditatu quem antea habuerit se fore contentum dicit, neque fortunam temptaturum aut in acie dimicaturum, sed, quoniam abundet equitatu, perfacile esse factu frumentationibus pabulationibusque Romanos prohibere, aequo modo animo sua ipsi frumenta corrumpant aedificiaque incendant, qua rei familiaris iactura perpetuum imperium libertatemque se consequi videant.

He demands hostages from the remaining states and he established a day for this affair. He orders the entire cavalry, fifteen thousand in number, to convene quickly. He says that he will be content with the infantry which he had before, and that he will not tempt fortune or fight in a pitched battle, but, since he was overflowing with cavalry, it was an easy thing to accomplish to keep the Romans from collecting grain and food. With an even mind they themselves must destroy their grains and burn their buildings by which loss of property, they would see themselves pursue perpetual power and liberty.

As in the previous speeches with which Caesar endows his Gallic opponent, Vercingetorix again appeals to his Gallic comrades with the promise of an easy task (*perfacile esse factu*) and perpetual control and liberty (*perpetuum imperium libertatemque*), two themes that have permeated his speeches in the past. And like the others, an element of sound judgment emerges; Vercingetorix, moreover, expects the same from his men (*aequo animo*).

Vercingetorix' remarks at 7.64 differ very little from what he says to a council of cavalry two chapters later (7.66.3-6):

. . . convocatisque ad concilium praefectis equitum venisse tempus victoriae demonstrat. Fugere in provinciam Romanos Galliaque excedere. Id sibi ad praesentem obtinendam libertatem satis esse; ad reliqui temporis pacem atque otium parum profici: maioribus enim coactis copiis reversuros neque finem bellandi facturos. Proinde agmine impeditos adorirantur. Si pedites suis auxilium ferant atque in eo morentur, iter facere non posse; si, id quod magis futurum confidat, relictis impedimentis suae saluti consulant, et usu rerum necessariarum et dignitate spoliatum iri. Nam de equitibus hostium, quin nemo eorum progredi modo extra agmen audeat, et ipsos quidem non debere dubitare, et quo maiore faciant animo, copias se omnes pro castris habiturum et terrori hostibus futurum.

And with the leaders of the cavalry having been called to a council, he shows that the time for victory had come. The Romans were fleeing to the Province and were leaving Gaul. This was for him enough for acquiring a present liberty; [but] too little was being accomplished for peace and leisure in the future: for [the Romans] would return with greater troops having been collected and would not make an end to waging war. The Gauls should therefore attack them encumbered in

¹⁴⁶ Caesar, 7.63.6, states *ad unum omnes Vercingetorigem probant imperatorem*. (“to a man, all approve Vercingetorix as the commander”).

their battle line. If the foot soldiers should bring help to their men and delayed in doing so, the Romans would not be able to march; if they should consider their own safety with the baggage having been left behind, a thing which he was confident would more likely happen, the Romans would be deprived both of the use of their necessary equipment and their dignity. As for the cavalry of the enemy, they themselves ought not doubt that not a man of them would dare to advance even beyond his battle line, and so that they might act with greater spirit, he would have all his troops in front of the camp and be an object of terror to the enemy.

In addressing his men in this *parainesis*, Caesar endows Vercingetorix with another well-crafted piece of rhetoric. Vercingetorix' confidence in his men is apparent from the start, and the juxtaposition of the Romans (*Romanos*) and Gaul (*Galliaque*) in the speech's opening lines heightens the tension for its audience. Alliterations of *p*'s (*pacem . . . parum profici*), of *s*'s (*Si pedites suis . . . non posse*), and of *d*'s (*quidem non debere dubitare*) provide auditory interest and increase the speech's realism. A zeugmatic alignment of *usu* and *dignitate* by the rarely encountered future passive infinitive *spoliatum iri* endows Vercingetorix with an elevated mastery of Latin oratorical artistry. As with several of Vercingetorix' previous speeches, Caesar indicates that Vercingetorix' plans meet with overwhelming approval:

Conclamant equites sanctissimo iureiurando confirmari oportere, ne tecto recipiatur, ne ad liberos, ne ad parentes, ad uxorem aditum habeat, qui non bis per agmen hostium perequitasset.

The cavalry cries together that it ought to be confirmed in a most holy oath that anyone who had not twice ridden his horse through the battle line of the enemy should not gain entrance to his children nor to his parents, nor to his wife.

By mentioning the continued consensus of the Gallic forces, Caesar reminds his audience of the formidableness of his opponent. Rome is competing against not only Vercingetorix; she has as her opponent an energized force of Gallic warriors. Thus Vercingetorix' speech sets the stage for the events to follow: the exhausting siege of Alesia, Critognatus' gruesome advocacy of cannibalism, and the Gallic army's ultimate defeat.

Despite his comparatively limited voice in the climactic events of Book 7, Vercingetorix does, in fact, get the "last word" in the penultimate chapter of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*. It

comes shortly after the Gallic forces have met defeat. Vercingetorix again summons a council to discuss matters of surrender (7.89.1-2):

Postero die Vercingetorix concilio convocato id bellum se suscepisse non suarum necessitatum, sed communis libertatis causa demonstrat, et quoniam sit fortunae cedendum, ad utramque rem se illis offerre, seu morte sua Romanis satisfacere seu vivum tradere velint.

On the following day, with a meeting having been called, Vercingetorix shows that he had undertaken this war not for his own advantage, but for the cause of their common liberty, and since he must give way to fortune, he is offering himself to them for either fate, whether they wished to satisfy the Romans with his death or to hand him over alive.

Even in defeat, Vercingetorix' brief *oratio obliqua* carries an air of haughty disdain. The alliteration of *s*'s (*passim*) conveys Vercingetorix' arrogant antithesis and strengthens the passage's rhetorical quality. Again Vercingetorix invokes the theme of liberty while relegating his defeat to the whims of fortune. By placing in the mouth of his enemy the notion that the outcome of the entire war with Gaul has resulted from the caprice of *fortuna*, Caesar self-deprecatingly diminishes his own arrogance in the affair. The narrative of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* ends a little more than one hundred words later with Vercingetorix' defeated, defiant reproach still ringing in the readers' ears.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Despite a lack of extant speeches to provide insight into Caesar's ability as an orator, an abundance of evidence exists to conclude that Caesar was in fact a first-rate rhetorician. His contemporary, Cicero, both recognized and praised his ability. Moreover, his literary successors bear witness to his primacy. And although he may be remembered for his matchless capacity as a general and statesman, his contributions as an author and leading Latin grammarian¹⁴⁷ make him an individual truly worthy of study. The *Commentarii De Bello Gallico*, for all their standard, straightforward prose elements, nevertheless achieve a level of sophistication—albeit pure and simple in style—that qualify them to be ranked among the works of true *historia*. Cicero accurately reflects this sentiment when he remarks that Caesar foiled those who might foolishly be tempted to embellish them.¹⁴⁸ As histories, Caesar's *Commentarii* possess a distinct literary quality and therefore deserve to be viewed through the lens applied to works of *historia*. By doing this, one must examine the speeches contained therein, since speeches, in part, serve to define this genre.¹⁴⁹ They provide diversity of style, portray individuals, heighten tension, and demonstrate the author's rhetorical skill.¹⁵⁰ The speeches found in Caesar's *Commentarii*—whether delivered in *oratio recta* or the more frequent *oratio obliqua*—are no exception. What

¹⁴⁷ For scholarship on Caesar's ability as a grammarian, see G. L. Hendrickson, "The *De Analogia* of Julius Caesar; its Occasion, Nature, and Date, with Additional Fragments," *CPh* 1 (1906) 97-120 and W. A. Oldfather and Gladys Bloom, "Caesar's Grammatical Theories and his own Practise," *CJ* 22 (1926-7) 584-602.

¹⁴⁸ *Brut.* 262.

¹⁴⁹ Murphy, 121.

¹⁵⁰ Miller, 45ff.

further makes the speeches of the *De Bello Gallico* notable, however, are the characters to whom Caesar chooses to assign them. Not infrequently do his opponents dominate the “air time,” and often they deliver speeches that possess consistent themes, formal structure, and a polished rhetorical style. Other times, they offer brief glimpses into the motivations of their speakers.

Caesar’s Rhetorical Dexterity

One of the most remarkable aspects regarding the speeches of Caesar’s opponents—especially all of those which appear in Book 7—is the fact that Caesar would not have been in a position to hear them.¹⁵¹ His information for these speeches, therefore, must derive from other sources, presumably either from prisoners or deserters.¹⁵² As a historian, however, Caesar may also be looking to Thucydides for an example of how to handle such speeches. In the preface to *The Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides asserts that he endows his speakers with a voice (1.22.1):

ὡς δ' ἂν ἐδόκουν ἑμοὶ ἕκαστοι περὶ τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων τὰ δέοντα μάλιστα εἰπεῖν

in the way I thought each would have said what was especially required in the given situation.

Given the circumstances of his writing (*i.e.*, after the fact and removed from the situations in which the speeches were delivered), Caesar takes the liberties afforded to him as the author of the *Commentarii*. As a result, the speeches that emerge suit the situations in which they were delivered. Furthermore, Caesar may seize the opportunity to embellish these speeches with his distinctly elegant style. If the situation demands—as for the speeches of Ariovistus, Ambiorix, or the *principes Galliae*—Caesar fashions his speeches with the structure outlined by handbooks on rhetoric. Through the arrangement of the speeches in a rhetorically effective way (or through

¹⁵¹ Of course, Caesar would have been privy to the exchanges he made with Divico, Ariovistus, and the duplicitous Ambiorix.

¹⁵² Murphy, 125.

dispositio as the ancients called it) Caesar demonstrates a mastery of oratorical form. If, however, a formal structure is not required—as with Dumnorix, for example—Caesar is free to use other means to convey his enemy’s voice. The other methods Caesar employs to demonstrate his ability as an orator include manipulating a variety of stylistic devices, or through *elocutio*. Despite possessing a simple *elegantia*, Caesar’s writing is by no means void of rhetorical flourish. Instead, Caesar carefully selects and arranges his Latin—which lie at the root of *elegantia*—to convey his message in an artistic fashion and demonstrate his rhetorical dexterity. Through an avoidance of the elaborate and ornate style preferred by Cicero, Caesar casts the speeches his opponents deliver with several recurring rhetorical features: the alliteration of *s*’s to highlight hostility or arrogance; the alliteration of *p*’s to punctuate a passage; antithesis to contrast his position with that of his adversary; or even clever word positioning to achieve a particular effect. Through careful word choice and placement, Caesar demonstrates precisely why his *elegantia* merits the praise of his contemporaries. As a result, one function of the speeches in the *De Bello Gallico*—especially speeches cast in the mouth of his opponents—is to demonstrate Caesar’s ability as an orator.

The Enlargement of the Enemy

In his introduction to the *Commentarii De Bello Gallico*, Caesar painstakingly describes the diverse aspects of the Gallic people and offers his first characterization of their disorganized nature, a characterization that, in part, is resolved in Book 7 when Vercingetorix unites roughly 300,000 Gauls before the final battle at Alesia. In painting this initial picture of his opponent, Caesar names the three distinct ways in which the Gauls vary (1.1.2):

Hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt.

These all differ among themselves with respect to language, institutions, and laws.

First noted in this succession is the diversity of languages that permeate the Gallic culture, even though the *De Bello Gallico* preserves no examples of the languages spoken by Gauls and even avoids the use of foreign words when describing Gallic institutions and customs.¹⁵³ That Caesar highlights this diversity while rendering the voice of the Gauls in highly uniform, rhetorical Latin seems to stand in contradiction. Of course, one would not expect Caesar, as a Roman historian, to report the speeches of his Gallic opponents in their original tongue. The rhetorically savvy Gauls must possess an additional function, then, other than to provide Caesar the opportunity to demonstrate his oratorical prowess. It is my belief that Caesar, by endowing his adversaries with well-crafted rhetoric, minimizes their barbaric nature and subtly elevates their status. Thus by the final book of the *De Bello Gallico* these “barbarians” achieve a more civilized status thereby becoming a more worthy—and consequently a more formidable—opponent for Caesar and the Romans.¹⁵⁴ A case in point is the minor character Critognatus, whose highly rhetorical speech in defense of liberty forms a characterization for all Gauls.¹⁵⁵ Critognatus offers an argument to his Gallic audience that is made more persuasive through its rhetorical brilliance. By placing this piece of polished rhetoric in the mouth of a comparably insignificant Gaul, Caesar engages the audience outside of the text who is “susceptible to considerable distortion by the self-serving pen of Caesar.”¹⁵⁶ As a result, Caesar demonstrates the threat that he—and, by extension, Rome—is facing and offers a subtle justification for his engagement in Gaul.

¹⁵³ Bell, 753.

¹⁵⁴ It is interesting to note that Caesar’s use of the Latin word, *barbari*, to describe his opponents, despite its ubiquity throughout the first six books, appears nowhere in Book 7.

¹⁵⁵ Rasmussen, 52.

¹⁵⁶ Nordling, 159.

The Development of Characterizations

Throughout the course of the *De Bello Gallico*, Caesar also develops subtle characterizations of his opponents by manipulating the themes that pervade their speeches. These themes, moreover, do not remain constant, but evolve as Caesar's work progresses. As the *De Bello Gallico* begins, Caesar imbues the first speech with the notion of a Gallic state imperiously united by the Helvetian Orgetorix. Although this goal represents a departure from the divided state portrayed in the ethno-geographic account of the first chapter of Book 1, Caesar subtly introduces into the mind of the reader the threat that a united Gaul presents. Orgetorix' speech, of course, offers additional themes that suffuse the speeches of Caesar's other opponents. Orgetorix' belief that no task is too difficult will reappear in his own speech, as well as in the speeches of the *principes Galliae*, Litaviccus, and Vercingetorix. By employing this theme, Caesar highlights the haughtiness of his opponents and develops an antagonism between the Gauls and his Roman audience. Moreover, Orgetorix' speech contains an appropriation of Roman *virtus* that will surface again in the speeches of Divico and Ariovistus which serves to elevate Caesar's Gallic opponent in the mind of his Roman audience.

The theme that dominates the speeches of Caesar's adversaries, however, especially in Book 7, is that of unification.¹⁵⁷ Although its mention may be subtle, as in Vercingetorix' final contention that his actions have been undertaken for their *common* liberty, the notion of a united Gallic community recurs throughout the speeches and even serves to enlarge the events among which they are situated. As Convictolitavis and Litaviccus engineer the defection of the Aedui

¹⁵⁷ Altogether, Caesar suggests a threat of Gallic unification ten times in Book 7: 7.1.4-5, 7.20.7, 7.21.1, 7.29.6, 7.37.3, 7.38.8, 7.77.4, 7.77.7, 7.77.9, and 7.89.1.

from Caesar's side to that of the other Gauls, their speeches reinforce the events of the narrative. Moreover, Critognatus' speech, through its rejection of Roman control and cry for common liberty, highlights the fact that the tribes of Gaul are coming to the aid of those trapped in Alesia. As a result, the audience outside the narrative comes to understand the threat Caesar faces. Through this deft manipulation of a theme in his speeches, Caesar likewise manipulates his reader and presents himself in the best possible light. Consequently, the portrait of a self-assured, freedom-defending Gauls emerges. Serving as foils to Caesar's own character, these Gauls sharpen the contrast between themselves and Caesar and therefore serve to elevate Caesar's status in the minds of his reader.

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