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## Shifting Discourses of Roman Otium in Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Classics

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the transitions that the Roman discourses of *otium* experience between the years 60–40 BCE. I examine the instances of *otium* in Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust to reconstruct the discourses that influenced their usages of the term, and to shed light on how elite Roman men were adjusting to their shrinking access to the political sphere as a small number of men gained power. To perform this analysis, I rely on discourse theory and leisure studies. I have identified six main usages of *otium* in their writings: *otium* as free time; *otium* as peace, or time without disturbance; *otium* as opposite public business; *otium* as time for textual creation; *otium* as time for study; and *cum dignitate otium*. These usages are not mutually exclusive, demonstrating how various discourses overlap, change, and develop. When used for a collective, *otium* moves from being a signifier of tranquility within a state to a dangerous state that fosters sedition. On an individual level, textual creation within *otium* without participation in politics replaces the discourse that mandated *otium* be earned from *negotium*. This study narrows the gap between Republic and empire, demonstrating that the need for politics to form male identity was already being minimized before the early empire.

## KEYWORDS

Otium, Roman Republic, Cicero, Catullus, Sallust, leisure, Rome

## SUMMARY FOR LAY AUDIENCE

This thesis examines how three Roman authors, Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust, thought about and portrayed *otium*, the Roman word for leisure, in the years 60–40 BCE. The authors had different levels of involvement in politics and held different political beliefs. An examination of their uses of *otium* reveals how their beliefs and ideals appeared in their writing and also shows that Roman men were confronting the changes in their world and re-evaluating how to be a man during the political crises of 60–40. By the end of the time period under examination, some authors were using *otium* as a substitute for political work, foreshadowing a trend that would emerge in the Empire. This study endeavours to narrow the gap between the Republic and the Empire by demonstrating that the changes in values that are noted in the Empire were already underway during 60–40.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was written on the traditional lands of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapeewak peoples, on lands connected to the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. I am grateful to have been on this land these past two years. There are many people to whom I owe my gratitude, and I certainly don't have the space to express it all here. Primarily, I give great thanks to my supervisor, Debra Nousek, for her steady reassurance and her unwavering belief in my ability to complete this project. It is also thanks to her that there are consistent and precise references to historical events. Without Debra, the weaknesses of this thesis would be three-fold: research, analysis, and writing. Thank you to Doug Bruce, Jola Drost, and Richinez and Jolease Genge for their encouragement. Dad, sorry I didn't manage to fit photosynthesis into this paper. This thesis is dedicated to Amanda Williams, Ashley Franker-Shuh, Cassie Bergwerff, Cassandra Phang-Lyn, Matt Burch, Matteo Iacucci, Maryne Lahaye, Max Abram, Natalie Boccalon, Sean Wilson, Taylor Lott, and Valeria Logacheva (+ Charlie), who have each surrounded me with love since I first met them. Thank you to Stephanie and Jeff for being the best neighbours I could ask for, and always having a spare egg for when I needed to stress bake. I am grateful to the faculty of the Western Classics department for giving me the opportunity to learn and develop my skills as a scholar. Thank you to Aara Suksi for her understanding and gentle mentorship during these two years, and to Randall Pogorzelski for loving my pets more than I do. I am grateful to my committee members, Randall Pogorzelski, Michael Fox, and Kelly Olson, for their careful edits and thoughtful questions during my defense. I also give my thanks for the SSHRC grant that I received for my first year of study at Western, which was a great help. I would thank my pets, but this thesis was written in spite of, and not because of, them.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For elite Roman men in the late Republic, the world was shifting. As new forces rose to power, the political arena in which men could situate themselves in society changed, and they found themselves with time on their hands.<sup>1</sup> This time was referred to as *otium*, which modern scholars translate as ‘leisure’. Navigating their abundant and new *otium* meant redefining the discourses around *otium* in which Roman men as individuals and as a collective participated. With less access to the discursively ideal methods of earning *otium*, men had to justify their new free time, which they did in a variety of ways. These justifications represent a change in the social discourses around the worth and proper uses of *otium* during the late Republic. Imprints of the changing discourses of *otium* are extant in the works of Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust, all of whom lived during this time of social reorganization. By examining how these authors conceived of *otium*, we can reveal the changes happening in Roman society as access to political success narrowed.

For this study, I will examine the instances of *otium* within the corpora of Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust in turn. As Cicero’s corpus is immense, I do not do an in-depth analysis of each instance, but focus on a select group which I will discuss more further on. I will categorize these uses within their own texts, taking particular note of patterns of usage. I will then compare all the authors in order to explore the varying discourses that existed during this time.

Discourses are artifices that exist as a product of language.<sup>2</sup> Language is the means by which we define terms in opposition or relation to each other. These nebulous definitions are

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the political climate of the late Republic, see Feldherr (2007); Gleason (1995); Konstan (2007); Manwell (2007); McDonnell (2006); and Olson (2014).

<sup>2</sup> For a thorough explanation of discourse and discourse theory, see Mills (2004).

discourses. The subject of the discourse simply exists; it is discourse which gives it meaning.<sup>3</sup> Discourses provide ‘subject positions’ that define and guide their subject on how to act in regards to a concept, be that masculinity, ethnicity, or age, as some examples. Some discourses are promoted as an ideal by those in power because those discourses support or align with their position of power. This ‘ideal’ varies from group to group, making the ‘ideal’ discourse of masculinity subjective and relative. Regardless of the ideal in question, in practice it is almost impossible not to diverge from ideal models; the ideals often make demands that are incompatible with each other. For example, a dominant discourse on the ideal woman expects women to be both chaste and sexually appealing; this is internally contradictory as well as contradicting the dominant discourse around the ideal sexual prowess of heterosexual men. These dominant discourses are in tension with themselves and each other. However, accepting the ‘ideal’ discourse is not the only option available; individuals are able to resist discourses through performance. This performed resistance can be physical, for instance a style of dress or way of walking, or literary or dramatic, performed by those in or outside of the discursive norm.<sup>4</sup> Those challenging the discourse create a new discourse that is in conflict with the prior one. Through the processes of meeting and challenging ideals, discourses within a group shift.

In order to make this study manageable, I have confined the examination of shifting discourses to the years 60–40 BCE. Harriet Flower makes the case in *Roman Republics* that these years were no longer a single, monolithic Republic, but instead two triumvirates (60–52 and 43–33), a dictatorship (49–43), and a transitional period (52–49). Those living in this time had to rationalize and deal with civil unrest changing their way of life. The discourses about

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<sup>3</sup> For example, an apple has many names and many ideas attached to it depending on the language and context in which it is named and who is naming it, but the apple itself carries none of this without language. ‘Apple’ next to ‘Eve’ is very different from ‘apple’ next to ‘pie.’ Both of these are very different from ‘τὸ μήλον’ next to ‘βληθέν’ (thrown). An apple, unobserved and unnamed, is a fruiting body of a tree.

<sup>4</sup> Reeser (2010): 34.



what made a Republic, what made a man, what made a leader were all changing. It is within these years of change that I base my study, asking how, in this changing landscape, the Roman elite adjusted their discourses of *otium* to fit the new world around them.

This period has been the subject of study by other scholars interested in the changing discourses. David Wray examines the formation of masculinity in Catullus during this period, examining how the poet interacts with dominant societal expectations and defines himself against them. He focuses on Catullus through a postmodern lens, seeing the poet's focus on the ludic, the performative, and emotional outbursts in line with postmodern works.<sup>5</sup> Wray's work builds on the work of Brian Krostenko on oratorical terms within the same time period. Krostenko examines the changing meanings of *bell(us)*, *venest(us)*, *lep(idus)*, *facet(us)*, and a few others throughout Latin literature, focusing on Cicero and Catullus. His method of tracking the shift of these characteristics from socially valueless to valuable is applicable to my study of *otium* in these same authors, with the addition of Sallust as their contemporary. Krostenko demonstrates change in meaning over time, as well exploring as how Catullus values the terms differently than Cicero, while still interacting with their mainstream political meanings.<sup>6</sup> Krostenko argues that the shared terminology places the two authors in the political sphere and allows for comparison between Cicero's speeches and the poetry of Catullus.<sup>7</sup> The same principle can be used to compare the uses of *otium* in Cicero and Catullus. Catullus uses *otium* in ways that are different from Cicero's uses of *otium*, but this difference illuminates different

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<sup>5</sup> Wray (2001): 39.

<sup>6</sup> Krostenko (2001): 21–76. While Cicero uses the terms to apply to rhetorical style within the political world, Catullus applies them to distinctly non-political contexts. For example, when Cicero calls something *venustus*, he is commenting on how well-formed the speech is. When Catullus calls Lesbia *venusta*, he is calling her attractive. Catullus' inversions of the language of social performance rely on their existing meanings in political contexts to create his alternate, extra-political viewpoint.

<sup>7</sup> Krostenko (2001) :212–232.

discourses extant at the time of writing, something also seen in the language of social performance examined by Krostenko.

Another valuable model for the study of *otium* comes from the field of leisure studies. Qualitative definitions of leisure posit that leisure time can be used to live in one's ideal way and that the free choices made in this time reveal one's character.<sup>8</sup> Leisure is defined by the way it is spent, that is to say, not under obligation.<sup>9</sup> The issue with a purely qualitative definition is that it excludes from leisure any activities that contain obligation as they are not completely free choice. While some scholars focus on a belief that leisure is 'free' and 'freely chosen', others claim that leisure may in fact be the time most heavily constrained by moral ideals. That is, leisure can contain elements of obligation, such as religious activity or family time, without becoming work.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, quantitative definitions of leisure rely on a temporal division: leisure-time versus work-time. From here, leisure sociologists rely on a clear opposition between work-time and leisure-time, a temporal distinction that only emerged after the industrial revolution when shift work became more prevalent. This concept of leisure, as time when one is not working, is prevalent in today's society. However, not all free time can be leisure, nor can leisure simply be 'not work'.<sup>11</sup> The quantitative view of leisure has made leisure studies inapplicable to ancient history, as such a distinct temporal divide did not exist in many ancient cultures.

More recently, leisure has been studied as a social construct, understood in society as the antithesis to work and containing elements of freedom, enjoyment, and variety of choice. Leisure can thus be found in many places and be made up of many elements to the point where

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<sup>8</sup> Toner (1997): 11. He quotes Goodale and Godbey (1988): xiii.

<sup>9</sup> De Grazia (1962): 14. Leisure is "the freedom from the necessity of being occupied."

<sup>10</sup> Toner (1997): 18–19.

<sup>11</sup> Toner (1997): 12-13. Toner quotes Berger (1963): 29 "no time is free of normative constraints [and] leisure may refer to precisely those activities most constrained by moral norms."

anything can be defined as leisure, given the right mixture. This approach has made it difficult for leisure sociologists to study leisure, as, if everything is leisure, nothing is. Also, if leisure is opposite work, which is what most definitions rely on, work must be understood as a functional entity and that is just as complex as understanding leisure.

J.P. Toner's *Leisure in Ancient Rome* focuses on a definition of leisure as a social construct. This means that there are multiple discourses within a society about what leisure is, where it exists, who can have it, and how to do it. For this thesis, I will be using Toner's definition of leisure as "a system of symbols which acts to establish a feeling of freedom and pleasure by formulating a sense of choice and desire."<sup>12</sup> Work, suggests Toner, can likewise be understood as a system of symbols that "establish a feeling of restraint and effort by formulating a sense of obligation and necessity."<sup>13</sup> These definitions are more applicable to antiquity and, for my purposes, the years 60–40 BCE, where an elite Roman man would not necessarily have a 'career' or 'work' as leisure sociologists would define them today. Such men were obligated to do unpaid tasks, such as act as legal representation for an associate or hold a political position. These tasks carried a sense of necessity for the individuals either to themselves or to their society. A patron holding meetings with his clients in the morning, for example, would not be considered as being at leisure by either party under this definition, as it was a necessity under the demands of that relationship. *Otium* must be examined, not as a definable vocabulary term, but as a multi-faceted social construct with a variety of functions and interpretations that vary between discourses.

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<sup>12</sup> Toner (1997): 17. "For leisure is both a sociological concept and a social construct, one which we need to be able to understand, which needs to be abstracted to make it generally applicable, and then historicized to make it work. I hope to achieve this by developing a historically relevant theory of leisure; not necessarily true, but useful by reason of its applicability to the pre-industrial environment, and free of the intellectual excess-baggage of both the modern construct of leisure and the ancient notion of *otium*."

<sup>13</sup> Toner (1997): 19.

The term *otium* had several meanings in Roman society. As with other terms, it held different significance to different groups. Most of that significance is unknowable to us, due to lack of surviving evidence, the barrier of not having classical Latin as a first language, and the intrinsic mutability of discourses. We can look at how elite men thought of *otium* through their writing, but how women, lower class individuals, or slaves thought of the concept is lost to us.<sup>14</sup> It is vital to keep in mind that this study covers a very narrow slice of Roman history, both in time period and in available discursive subject positions to examine. The discursive subject position most available for examination is that of the elite Roman man. By ‘elite’, I mean a freeborn man who has: Roman citizenship; possession of money or property; and the ability to run for political office or the potential to become a senator. These men had ideal subject positions available to them that set expectations for their behaviours, including but not limited to their career path, their self-presentation, and their private lives. The way elite men earned and spent their *otium* is a part of the discourses that formed their identity in the Roman world.

Regarding the etymology of *otium* and *negotium*, Emile Benveniste argues that *negotium* is from *\*nec-otium*, an obstacle or an impediment.<sup>15</sup> Despite *negotium* being, linguistically, the absence or impediment of *otium*, it operated more as an independent term signifying an occupation. Saying *negotium* was not saying ‘I am impeded from *otium*,’ but ‘I have a *negotium*.’<sup>16</sup> Benveniste says that there is no satisfactory explanation for why Latin

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<sup>14</sup> On the meaning of *otium*, André (1963) : 5–6 writes: « nous nous trouvons en présence d'un mot qui dans sa longue destinée, des origines au premier siècle de notre ère, ou la notion paraît stabilisée, n'a cessé de s'enrichir et de se charger de sens. » “We find ourselves in the presence of a word which, in its long history, from its origins to the first century of our era where the meaning seems stabilized, has never ceased to be enriched and take on meaning.”

<sup>15</sup> Benveniste (1951): 22.

<sup>16</sup> Benveniste (1951): 22. “L’emploi de *nec* dans *neg-otium* ne prouve nullement qu’on doive partir d’une expression verbal. En latin ancien *nec* fonctionne aussi bien comme négation de mot que comme négation de phrase ... En quelque texte que ce soit, *mihi negotium est* signifie non « je n’ai pas d’*otium* », mais « j’ai un *negotium* », et partout *negotium* a le sens de « non-loisir », c’est-à-dire « obstacle, empêchement ».

would form the word for work from a negation. He suggests ἀσχολία ‘absence of spare time’ as the Greek calque, but Michiel de Vaan points out that *\*in-otium* would be more likely than *\*nec-otium* to develop in that case.<sup>17</sup> The etymology of both terms remains unclear.

J.M André also supplies an overview of some past etymologies of *otium*. He dismisses a previous theory on a pastoral origin involving sheep and the extended leisure time of shepherds in a pre-work era, which he points out is not supported by philology.<sup>18</sup> He also dismisses several philosophical etymologies.<sup>19</sup> He argues, further, that it is only in Cicero’s time that the word begins to become positive.<sup>20</sup> Cicero, he claims, is always fighting against a negative connotation of *otium*, but I would argue that this does not appear in his writing; when Cicero uses *otium*, it is in specific contexts and discourses that must have been understood by those to whom he was talking. André states that *otium* and *negotium* are mutable concepts that change meaning based on time and individual.<sup>21</sup> He then moves to examine past etymologies based on lemmas. He approves of the theory that *otium* comes from the idea of coming and going from places and things, specifically for soldiers.<sup>22</sup> André suggests the existence of an *otiosus otium* and a *negotiosus otium* that is supported by the wanderings of soldiers and the different *otia* that they would experience: one from the military where they have tasks at home,

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<sup>17</sup> De Vaan (2008): 437

<sup>18</sup> Schwyzer (1927) suggests that *otium* comes from the sounds sheep make, as he sees no origin for the sound other than the word for the noise sheep make. Shepherds made this word to describe how they spent their time, but needed an opposite when they had to start working. This created, somehow, the *homo \*otus*, who dressed up for festivals and was thus in stark contrast to the naked labourer. Then, he attempts to link *otium* to *eo, ire*. This theory has not caught on and is also not philologically or sociologically sound, as is thoroughly deconstructed by André (1963): 7–11. I owe great thanks to Cassandra Phang-Lyn for going through this mildly absurd article with me, and to Maryne Lahaye for explaining how to tell that something is facetious in written French.

<sup>19</sup> An example of these etymologies is as follows: André rejects an etymology from *ava* (away), as that would mean lack and absence, as he sees *otium* as meaning ‘joy,’ which is inconsistent with ‘lack.’ He also points out philological problems with the argument, as *ava* does not easily turn to *ot-* (11–12).

<sup>20</sup> André (1963): 12–13. He bases this on comedy, though he does not give an example of *otium* being negative, only *otiosus*.

<sup>21</sup> André (1963): 15

<sup>22</sup> André (1963): 15–18.

and one from home and the military where they are completely at rest.<sup>23</sup> While he has some interesting ideas, he has very little support for his major arguments, and his proposed etymology is not cited by later scholars.

Also in his examination of Roman *otium*, André identified many connotations of the term that have been remarked upon by other scholars.<sup>24</sup> It is a time apart from agricultural, military, and political affairs. It became a political slogan for order and social peace within the city.<sup>25</sup> He also notes its connection to Epicurean lifestyles and how, in the time of Cicero, it also indicated the tranquility of a life of “l’apolitisme serein”.<sup>26</sup> He discusses change in the political life, which allowed for the growth of apoliticism. He places *otium* as an opposite of *negotium* at the center of Roman culture, the basis for their society.

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<sup>23</sup> André (1963): 17–18.

<sup>24</sup> André (1963): 6.

<sup>25</sup> André (1963): 6: “il désigne désormais dans la vie de la cite l’ordre et la paix sociale, notion équivoque et qui change de contenu suivant le contexte politique, dans l’éloquence et dans la littérature pamphlétaire ». “It signifies in city life order and social peace, an equivocal notion that changes content depending on the political context, in rhetoric and pamphletic literature.”

<sup>26</sup> André (1963): 6–7.

## CHAPTER 2: CLASSIFICATIONS OF *OTIUM*

In order to examine *otium* in texts, I had to develop a system of typology. This required a careful examination of the texts. *Otium* did not always fit neatly into one category or another, but this is to be expected; language is dynamic and multifaceted, and a single word can mean several things at the same time. When a category is closely connected to another, I note that within my breakdown. Should an instance of *otium* fit into several or no categories, I examined it in depth to determine what discourse it was involved in. The categories that I have noted have also been observed under different titles by other scholars, and the OLD and TLL also divide *otium* similarly. For the purposes of this paper, I call the categories by the following titles:

*Otium* as free time: when *otium* appears as a marker of time, but has no specification as to what it is opposite to, I have placed it in this category. When used in this way, *otium* can be positive, neutral, or negative.

Positive: *hic me gravido frigida et frequens tussis / quassavit usque dum in tuum sinum fugi / et me rucuravi otioque et vertica.*<sup>27</sup>

Neutral: *cum et Quintus noster iam, ut speramus, in otio consederit.*<sup>28</sup>

Negative: *ne Paris abducta gavisus libera moecha / otia pacato degeret in thalamo.*<sup>29</sup>

The quality of the *otium* or how it is spent is, for the purposes of this study, not as vital as the idea as *otium* as simple free time. This *otium* can be a measure of time within something, such as a speech: *vellem tantum habere me oti, ut possem recitare psephisma Smyrnaeorum.*<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>27</sup> Cat. c. 44: “There a deep chill and frequent cough grasped me until I fled to your bosom and recovered myself with *otium* and nettle.”

<sup>28</sup> Cic. *Att.* 2.4.2: “and when my Quintus settles, as I hope, in *otium*”

<sup>29</sup> Cat. c. 68b: “lest Paris carry on in *otium* in a peaceful bedchamber, rejoicing unrestricted with the abducted woman.”

<sup>30</sup> Cic. *Flac.* 75: “I wish that I had enough *otium* that I was able to read out the decree of the Smyrnaeans.”

*otium* itself is not inherently valued. How it is used, however, is what determines its value. This category is the broadest possible meaning of *otium*.

*Otium as peace, or time without disturbance:* when *otium* occurs in a text alongside or parallel with *concordia, libertas, pax, quietum, salus communis, or tranquillitas*; in constructions opposite terms such as *adversus, arma, bellum, concitatio popularis, depopulatio, discordia, periculum, praedo, seditio, tumultus, or turbulentus*; in connection with a positive relationship with a hostile or potentially hostile group (*primum otium Parthicum*);<sup>31</sup> as the hopes for or goals of a politician or future leader (*in Pompeio te spem omnem oti ponere non miror*);<sup>32</sup> as a state of being undisturbed or unbothered (*qui id numquam, dum modo otiose essent, recusarunt*);<sup>33</sup> or a desired state for a state or group of people (*otium atque divitiae, quae prima mortales putant*).<sup>34</sup> In this usage, *otium* is also a marker of free time, but the focus is on what *otium* is an opposite to or a lack of, in this case disturbance or war. This usage generally applies to a group rather than to an individual.

*Otium as opposite public business:* *otium* appears in contrast to *forum, iudicum, labor, lis, negotium, occupatio, res forensae, studium ambitionis*, or other terms relating to political work or public business;<sup>35</sup> *otium* indicates a public holiday when the courts are closed;<sup>36</sup> *otium* is stressed as being not *otiosus* (*ecquid ego dicam de occupatis meis temporibus, cui fuerit ne otium quidem umquam otiosum? nam quas tu commemoras, Cassi, legere te solere orationes, cum otiosus sis, has ego scripsi ludis et feriis, ne omnino umquam essem otiosus.*);<sup>37</sup> as a reward

<sup>31</sup> Cic. *Att.* 5.14.1: “First, *otium* from the Parthians.”

<sup>32</sup> Cic. *Att.* 6.1.11: “I do not marvel at you placing your hopes for *otium* in Pompey.”

<sup>33</sup> Cic. *Att.* 7.7.5: “who never reject it, so long as they are in *otium*.”

<sup>34</sup> Sall. *Cat.* 36: “*otium* and riches, which people think of as first.”

<sup>35</sup> For example, in Cic. *Att.* 1.17.5, Cicero compares his life path with that of Atticus. He is led *ad honorum studium* while Atticus is led *ad honestum otium*.

<sup>36</sup> Cic. *Cael.* 1.

<sup>37</sup> Cic. *Planc.* 66: “Do I need to say anything about my time spent in busy-ness, when my *otium* was not even *otiosus*? For those orations which you recount, Cassius, that you are accustomed to read when you are *otiosus*, those very orations I wrote during festivals and holidays, I was not at all *otiosus*.” This instance might also be



for a life in public service (*ego, tantis a me beneficiis in re publica positus, si nullam aliud mihi praemium ab senatu populoque Romano nisi honestum otium postularem, quis non concederet?*);<sup>38</sup> or as a time of removal from the *res publica* (*itaque ex re publica quoniam nihil iam voluptatis capi potest, cur stomacher nescio. Litterae me et studia nostra et otium villaeque delectant maximeque pueri nostri*).<sup>39</sup> Just as with *otium* as peace, the focus on this category on what *otium* is in contrast to or lacking, in this case occupation in the public sphere. This usage is mainly connected to individuals.

Otium as time for textual creation: this *otium* may appear opposite to public business but is explicitly for textual creation, either rhetorical, epistolary, philosophic, or historiographical. Letter writing is a primary function of *otium* for Cicero, especially when it concerns Atticus: “*sed ad te ipso qui me accusas unas mihi scito litteras redditas esse, cum et oti ad scribendum plus et facultatem dandi maiorum habueris.*”<sup>40</sup> Cicero, Catullus, and Sallust all use *otium* in this way, though the implications for each author are different. For Cicero, writing in *otium* is opposite to any obligation: “*et quantum mihi vel fraus inimicorum vel causae amicorum vel res publica tribuet oti, ad scribendum potissimum conferam.*”<sup>41</sup> For Catullus, writing in *otium* does not require an opposite activity to be specified: “*Hesterno, Licini, die otiose / multum lusimus in meis tabellis.*”<sup>42</sup> For Sallust, writing in *otium* becomes the obligation: “*profecto existumabunt me magis merito quam ignavia iudicium animi mei*

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counted as *otium* as time for textual creation, but the stress is on the fact that he was not being *otiosus* during a time that should have been *otium* and was *otium* for others. The activity he did is secondary to the juxtaposition between work and *otium*.

<sup>38</sup> Cic. *Sul.* 9: “If I, since you have received so much benefit in the Republic from me, were to request no other reward for myself from the senate and people of Rome except honest *otium*, who would not grant it?”

<sup>39</sup> Cic. *Q. fr.* 3.9.2: “And so since there is no pleasure that is able to be taken from *res publica*, why would I be annoyed? Letters and my studies and *otium* and villa and especially my two sons delight me.”

<sup>40</sup> Cic. *Att.* 1.5.4: “But only one letter has reached me from you, who accuses me, although you have more *otium* for writing and better ways to send.”

<sup>41</sup> Cic. *De Or.* 1.3: “Whatever *otium* is allowed to me either by the lies of my enemies or the cases of my friends or the *res publica*, I will dedicate it most of all to writing.”

<sup>42</sup> Cat. c. 50: “Yesterday, Licinius, in a day of *otium*, we played much in my little tablets.”

*mutavisse maiusque commodum ex otio meo quam ex aliorum negotiis rei publicae venturum.*<sup>43</sup> In this context, the way the *otium* is spent, rather than what it is opposed to, is foregrounded: “*Sed quoniam mane est eundem, has quinque dierum disputationes memoria comprehendamus. equidem me etiam conscripturum arbitror—ubi enim melius uti possumus hoc, cuicumodi est, otio?*”<sup>44</sup>

*Otium* as time for study: this context is closely linked to textual production, but the two are exclusive enough to merit a separate classification. Here, *otium* is: connected to the reading of works of literature (*nam si quis umquam de nostris hominibus a genere isto studio ac voluntate non abhorrens fuit, me et esse arbitror et magis etiam tum cum plus erat oti fuisse*);<sup>45</sup> the dedication of oneself to *artes* (*equidem contra existimo, iudices, cum in omni genere ac varietate artium, etiam illarum quae sine summo otio non facile discuntur, Cn. Pompeius excellat*);<sup>46</sup> the dedicated discussion of philosophy (*Quibus ego, ut de his rebus omnibus in angulis, consumendi otii causa, disserant, cum concessero*);<sup>47</sup> or connected to learning or instruction (*Quod si tibi tantum in nobis videtur esse, quibus etiamsi ingenium, ut tu putas, non maxime defuit, doctrina certe, et otium, et hercule etiam studium illud discendi acerrimum defuit*).<sup>48</sup> This usage focuses on how the *otium* is used rather than what it is opposite to.

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<sup>43</sup> Sall. *Jug.* 4: “Indeed, they will judge that I changed my opinion more from something worthy than from foolishness and that more benefit to the Republic will come from my *otium* than from the *negotium* of others.”

<sup>44</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* 5.121: “But since we have to leave in the morning, let me commit these discussions of the past five days to memory. I think that I will even write them down – for where could I better use my *otium* to whatever cause is its due.”

<sup>45</sup> Cic. *Flac.* 9: “For if there was ever anyone of our people not against that race [i.e. the Greeks], proving himself by study and goodwill, I believe that I am that man and was even more so when I had more *otium*.”

<sup>46</sup> Cic. *Balb.* 15: “On the contrary, judges, I think that, although Pompey excels in all kinds and varieties of skills, even those which are not easily learned without a lot of *otium*”

<sup>47</sup> Cic. *De Or.* 1.56-57: “To [philosophers] I allow that, in their corners, for the sake of eating up their *otium*, they may discuss these matters”

<sup>48</sup> Cic. *De Or.* 1.79: “So, as you think, I may not have been entirely devoid of talent, but I certainly lacked instruction, *otium*, and —oh yes—that passionate enthusiasm for learning.” Translation from May and Wisse (2001)

*Otium cum dignitate*: when *otium* appears within this phrase or near to *dignitas* alone.

This usage prioritizes the quality or worthiness of how the *otium* was earned, related to having a break from public business. Oftentimes appears in contexts similar to *otium* as peace, as in *Pro Sestio*, but is a distinct enough stock phrase to warrant its own category. It appears, as in *Agr.* 2.9, as a type of *otium* that is a result of peace, an *otium* than can be spent with *dignitas* as it was earned with *dignitas*. It is a source and result of public good, as I will discuss later on.

## CHAPTER 3: *OTIUM* IN CICERO

Marcus Tullius Cicero's life was set against a backdrop of political reform and civil wars. Between 60 and 40 alone, he experienced exile, recall, a brief return to his political career, and his forced removal from it.<sup>49</sup> Throughout all of this, Cicero wrote. He wrote speeches, indictments, and defenses. He wrote philosophical treatises and dialogues, letters to his friends and family, and, according to Catullus' tastes, bad poetry. His extensive corpus supplies us with a rare opportunity to study how he and life in Rome changed during his career. While what he chose to present to the public may not have been how he truly felt, it reflects extant discourses at the time, and his uses of *otium* can be examined as examples of these discourses.

There are two spikes in Cicero's usage of *otium* in his writing: the years 57–55, and 44.<sup>50</sup> I will mainly focus on these spikes for this study to make this study manageable. If there is a major change that occurs in a discourse in a year not focussed on, I will briefly go over that change. The years 57–55 and 44 are also very major points in Cicero's life, marking the years immediately after his exile and the year before his death after Caesar's assassination. A brief overview of Cicero's post-exile will supply context for analysing his writing. Cicero had just been recalled to Rome in 57 after his year of exile, and he wrote several speeches: his returning speeches to the senate and the people; a treatise on the appropriation of his house by Publius Clodius Pulcher during his exile; and a speech on the findings of the haruspices. All of these speeches comment on his excellence in governance and his commitment to the safety of the Republic. He attempted to push back against the growing power of the triumvirate, but

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<sup>49</sup> For a concise overview of Cicero's position at the age of 50, see Fantham (2004): 1–25.

<sup>50</sup> See Appendix 1 for a full chart of Cicero's uses of *otium*.

was deeply indebted to Pompey after the general helped end Cicero's exile.<sup>51</sup> After the triumvirs met at Luca in 56, Cicero was threatened with exile again if he did not stop his motions against Caesar's legislation.<sup>52</sup> Cicero's private letters to Atticus show the full extent of his disillusionment with the governmental structure, as he tells Atticus that he must connect himself to the new rule to protect himself from other betrayals.<sup>53</sup> He then presented *De Provinciis Consularibus* in late May or June of 56, in which he lavishly praises Caesar, encourages the senate to support Caesar's legislation, and retracts his past opposition against him. His political work diminished at that point, though his philosophical and rhetorical work continued. Cicero published the rhetorical treatise *De Oratore* in 55, in which he avoids direct discussion of politics and instead has the great orators of the previous generation discuss the importance of their art, as well as the best methods for performing it.

Cicero continued writing his philosophical and rhetorical works while holding a proconsulship in Cilicia in 51 and assisting Gaius Cassius Longinus against the Parthians. During the civil war, Cicero favoured Pompey but avoided openly opposing Caesar. After Caesar pardoned him in 47, he remained opposed to the dictator, so much so that Caesar's assassins were sure of his support, though they neglected to invite him. With Caesar having been killed, the previously silenced Cicero leapt back into discussions of politics, praising the actions of Marcus Junius Brutus in the opening of his dialogue on the history of oratory, *Brutus*, and excoriating Marc Antony in his *Philippics*. He survived the anger of Antony for one year after delivering and publishing his indictments and it is unclear what texts besides a couple of

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<sup>51</sup> Lintott (2008): 180–182: hope for his return starts with Pompey's conflict with Clodius, and Pompey's ally Milo was instrumental in returning Cicero to Rome.

<sup>52</sup> Cic. *Fam.* 1.9.9–11, Cicero's letter to Publius Cornelius Lentulus Spinther discusses this period of time. Pompey told Cicero, through his brother, to stop his work against Caesar.

<sup>53</sup> *Att.* 4.5: ... *ego mehercule mihi necessitatem volui imponere huius novae coniunctionis ne qua mihi liceat labi ad illos qui etiam tum cum miserere mei debent non desinunt invidere. Sed tamen modici fuimus apotheosei, ut scripseram*. "By the gods, I wanted to set up a friendship for this new alliance, so that I am not able to slide back to those who, even when they ought to be sorry for me, cannot cease from envy."

letters he may have produced directly before his death in 43. What he did produce during these politically turbulent times shows an evolution in the discourses around *otium* that he presents. *Otium* moves from being the reward of hard work in the forum, either for the people of Rome or the politician, to an overabundant resource that can lead to all sorts of evils for the individual and the state.

The discourse of *otium* as peace, especially as a reward for the work of an individual to that individual or the Republic, is the only discourse of *otium* present in his writing in 57.<sup>54</sup> Having just returned from exile, Cicero needed to re-establish himself as a political force and keep the support of the Roman people. Before he could reengage fully, he had to justify his leaving, an act which he himself had called cowardly.<sup>55</sup> He combats the charges of cowardice by aligning himself with *otium* as peace. One such attempt was made in the *Post Reditum ad Populum*, his speech to the people made after his return. He begins it with the following:

*quod precatus a Iove optimo maximo ceterisque dis immortalibus sum, Quirites, eo tempore cum me fortunasque meas pro vestra incolumitate otio concordiaque devovi, ut, si meas rationes unquam vestrae saluti anteposuissem, sempiternam poenam sustinerem mea voluntate susceptam ...*

The things that I prayed for from Jupiter Best and Greatest of all the immortal gods, Romans, at that time when I devoted myself and my fortunes on behalf of your safety, tranquility, and *otium*, that, if ever I placed my own interests before your wellbeing, I might receive the punishment that I was then experiencing by my own will, forever...

*Red. Pop. 1*

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<sup>54</sup> Stroup (2007): 38–40 also notes this discourse, but does not examine it in depth, as her concern is with literary production.

<sup>55</sup> Cic. *Fam.* 14.1.1, 14.2.1, 14.3.1 express his regret at the suffering he has caused his family and his wishes that he had been less timid. In Cic. *Att.* 3.8.4 and 3.10.2, Cicero is chastised by Atticus for his leaving. In *Att.* 3.15.4, he claims that he should have stayed and fought, which would have given him honour or victory.

Cicero reframes his exile by stating it was through *voluntas*, by his own will, and not because he transgressed on his oath to Jupiter and acted selfishly. It was the result of the actions of others, and not his own. He makes himself a champion to Rome, unwaveringly devoted to their well-being and *otium*, proven by his return from exile. He aligns himself with *otium* and peace, placing those who exiled him against such concepts by default. He also does this in *Dom.* 15, stating that “*in meo reditu spes oti et concordiae sita videbatur, in discessu autem cotidianus seditionis timor...*”<sup>56</sup> He goes even further in *Dom.* 17, claiming that his exile caused the famine and his return restored “*spes oti.*” Cicero links himself to the ongoing health of the Republic.<sup>57</sup>

He praises Pompey, who entreated the senate to recall Cicero, in terms of *otium* in *Red. Pop.* 7. Cicero describes him as “*vir omnium qui sunt, fuerunt, erunt, virtute sapientia gloria princeps: qui mihi unus uni privato amico eadem omnia dedit quae universae rei publicae, salutem, otium, dignitatem.*”<sup>58</sup> Cicero praises his allies in the same way as he praises himself, again with the result of criticizing those who were responsible for his exile.<sup>59</sup> He and Pompey are thus on the side of peace, of preserving the *otium* of the people, while his enemies have no such interests. Cicero is more explicit in *Red. Pop.* 8: “*sed hoc inter me atque illum [Clodius] interest, quod ille, qua re plurimum potuit, ea ipsa re inimicos suos ultus est, armis, ego qua consuevi utar oratione, quoniam illi arti in bello ac seditione locus est, huic in pace atque otio.*”<sup>60</sup> Cicero places his opponents against peace and *otium*, aligning them with war and

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<sup>56</sup> “The hopes for harmony and *otium* seemed “depend on my return, and daily fear of conspiracy on my absence...”

<sup>57</sup> Hanchey (2013) discusses how Cicero does this after his return from exile, using communal *otium* to do so.

<sup>58</sup> “The greatest man of all men who are living, have ever lived, or will ever live, in virtue, wisdom, and glory: who, alone gave to me, alone, a private friend, all the same things which he gave to the whole Republic: safety, *otium*, and dignity.”

<sup>59</sup> Cicero avoids mentioning that Pompey did very little to protect him from exile, even though Pompey had assured Cicero that Clodius would do nothing to harm the orator as a condition for Pompey supporting him. For more on this, see Kaster (2014): 6–14.

<sup>60</sup> “But this is the difference between him [Clodius] and me: while he avenged himself against his enemies with his weapons, where he was most powerful, I will use oratory, as I am wont; his skills have a place in war and insurrection, but mine in peace and *otium.*”

conspiracy, but himself with beneficial states of being. *Otium* is a desirable state for the Republic, something that it is beneficial to be seen supporting.

Clodius is again called an enemy to *pax* and *otium* in *Dom.* 12, and in *Dom.* 137 he is described as “*turbo ac tempestas pacis atque oti.*”<sup>61</sup> Cicero attempts to regain his home by invalidating any legal right that Clodius had to dedicate it to the gods.<sup>62</sup> By placing him against positive forces for the state, alongside listing his various misdeeds, Cicero strengthens his own position while weakening Clodius’. When Clodius once again challenges Cicero’s claim to his house, Cicero responds with the speech *De haruspicum responsis*. Alongside declaring that Clodius has no right to dedicate anything to the gods on behalf of the city, Cicero again places Clodius Pulcher opposite to *otium*.<sup>63</sup> He describes him as follows:

*tum, inquam, tum vidi ac multo ante prospexi quanta tempestas excitaretur, quanta impenderet procella rei publicae. videbam illud scelus tam importunum, audaciam tam immanem adolescentis furentis, nobilis, vulnerati non posse arceri oti finibus: erupturum illud malum aliquando, si impunitum fuisset, ad perniciem civitatis.*

Then, I say, then I saw and beheld long before how great a storm was rising before us, how great a tempest was bearing down on the Republic. I saw that monstrous crime, that immeasurable boldness of a raging youth, nobly born, disgraced, not able to be restrained within the bounds of *otium*: at some time that evil would burst forth, if it was unpunished, to the ruin of the state.

*Har. 3*

Cicero aligns the breaching of the bounds of *otium* with the destruction of the Roman state. As Cicero so often aligns himself with a state of *otium*, the transgression can be read as his exile; Clodius remained unpunished, the *malum* grew, and Rome almost lost a protector. Clodius’ opposition to Cicero is an opposition to the health of the state.

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<sup>61</sup> “Whirlwind and tempest for peace and *otium*.”

<sup>62</sup> Usher (2008): 72–77.

<sup>63</sup> For a full summary of the speech, see Usher (2008): 77–79.



In 57, then, Cicero leans very heavily on a discourse of *otium* as a good state for a collective to validate his return to Rome and politics. He supports himself and his recall by presenting himself as an avatar of good things for the Republic, including an ongoing state of *otium*. This state is the product of political work done in the Roman forum, and can be dispelled or disturbed by others. The state of *otium* is desirable, as it appears alongside peace, health, and safety. At this time, *otium* is closely connected to public work, and prolonged *otium* for the individuals in Rome is positive. The presence of *otium* in the city means a reduced likelihood of conspiracy and attempts to change the current structure. When *otium* as peace occurs elsewhere in Cicero, it is in the same contexts as noted above.

In 56, Cicero engages in several new discourses of *otium*. He continues to use *otium* to signify peace for the majority of the instances, but he begins to use it in other ways as well: *otium cum dignitate*, *otium* as time opposite public business, *otium* as a time for study, and *otium* as free time with no obligation. A year after his return, Cicero reengages in politics beyond self-promotion and criticism of Clodius, likely because Cicero had regained all of the assets that he could from Clodius and was feeling more secure politically. *Cum dignitate otium* is his second most frequent discourse within this year, and encompasses how the Roman state ideally operates. All instances except one are in speeches or defences, which suggests that they were meant for a wider audience and for a particular agenda, and thus engage with a wide range of discourses.

Cicero defends Publius Sestius *de vi* (*Pro Sestio*), in which he uses *otium* as peace six times. Cicero covers Sestius' case very briefly before embarking on series of digressions about himself and the state of the Republic.<sup>64</sup> Cicero portrays Sestius as an exemplary Roman man, one who works for the safety of the Republic above all else. Cicero claims that Sestius has,

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<sup>64</sup> He discusses Sestius and the case in 6–13, 71–84, 124, and 144.

throughout his career, tried to protect “*salutis communis atque oti.*”<sup>65</sup> By connecting him with *otium* as peace, Cicero places him opposite those who would wish to do *otium* harm.<sup>66</sup> Cicero’s own enemies are described as “*mihi irati, sed multo acrius oti et communis salutis inimici.*”<sup>67</sup> He is not as closely connected to the state of *otium* here, allowing for others, like Sestius, to play a role in its conservation. His uses of *otium* in relation to peace follow the same patterns as his uses in 57. He makes a particular point of stressing that the people are currently content with their *otium* and are thus do not wish to engage in seditious activity.<sup>68</sup>

It is in 56 that Cicero introduces the concept of *otium cum dignitate* to his writing in full force. Used once previously in 63 in *Agr. 2.4*, Cicero promotes the concept in *Pro Sestio* six times.<sup>69</sup> He introduces and explains it as follows:

*quid est igitur propositum his rei publicae gubernatoribus quod intueri et quo cursum suum derigere debeant? id quod est praestantissimum maximeque optabile omnibus sanis et bonis et beatis, cum dignitate otium. hoc qui volunt, omnes optimates, qui efficiunt, summi viri et conservatores civitatis putantur; neque enim rerum gerendarum dignitate homines efferri ita convenit ut otio non prospiciant, neque ullum amplexari otium quod abhorreat a dignitate.*

So, what is placed before these pilots of the Republic, to which they ought to pay attention and by which they ought to set their course? That thing which is most outstanding and most wished for by all healthy men, all good and happy men: *otium* with *dignitas*. Men who want this are all the best men. Those who achieve it are thought to be the leaders and the defenders of their state; for men should not be so overtaken by the *dignitas* of the matters that must be done (“public affairs”) to which they have agreed that they do

<sup>65</sup> Cic., *Sest.* 5: “The common safety and *otium*.”

<sup>66</sup> Hanchey (2013) examines how Cicero connects his personal activities to the ongoing wellbeing of the Republic. I give a brief summary of his work in §2. Kaster (2014): 120 notes that *otium* is most often connected to communal tranquility in the *Pro Sestio*.

<sup>67</sup> Cic., *Sest.* 15: “Angry at me, but a much more bitter enemy to *otium* and general wellbeing.”

<sup>68</sup> *Sest.* 104. Covered in Usher (2008): 83–84. Group *otium* allows for enough peace for senators to gain for *dignitas*.

<sup>69</sup> For a more in-depth look at the broader political context, see Kaster (2014): 1–14. Hellegourc’h (1972) does an examination of political vocabulary in the Republic, where more detailed information on *dignitas* can be found.

not look forward to *otium*, nor should they embrace any *otium* that is separated from *dignitas*.

Sest. 98

Much of the discussion on Roman *otium* centers around one phrase: *cum dignitate otium*. While some postulate that *cum dignitate otium* means something broad, like “tranquility for the people and honour for the senators,”<sup>70</sup> others see it as a more individual notion.<sup>71</sup> Wirszubski, for instance, argues that *otium* is opposite to *bellum*, *sedition*, and *novae res*, and thus a vital tool for maintaining the *status quo*.<sup>72</sup> He makes no firm statements, however, and concludes that it is a vague phrase with many different interpretations.<sup>73</sup> Balsdon takes a firm stance, stating that Cicero misapplies the words as “he hides under an ornamental profusion of fine oratory the barrenness of his own thoughts and the thoughts of his political friends.”<sup>74</sup> He sees the phrase as an acceptance of the existing power structure, and *otium* is a method of maintaining it.<sup>75</sup> Balsdon does not take into account the uncertainty of the time period, especially for the recently recalled Cicero, and I will be applying historical context to the discourses under review.<sup>76</sup> Unlike Balsdon, Lacey sees the phrase as an attempt to promote political stability in an uncertain time.<sup>77</sup> Lacey focuses on what message Cicero may have wanted to promote and why, an approach that I take with the three authors in this thesis. Additionally, I will examine why they say what they do to attempt to bring the discourses of the time to light.

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<sup>70</sup> Rawson (1975): 127.

<sup>71</sup> Wirszubski (1954): 1–13.

<sup>72</sup> Wirszubski (1954): 4.

<sup>73</sup> Wirszubski (1954): 13.

<sup>74</sup> Balsdon (1960): 46–47.

<sup>75</sup> Balsdon (1960): 47–48.

<sup>76</sup> Of Balsdon’s reading of *Pro Sestio*, Lacey (1962) writes: “Whatever the ultimate truth of Balsdon’s view of Cicero’s political thought, any view which is founded on such an interpretation of Cicero’s sermon to the young in *pro Sestio* 96 ff. seems to involve such a grave misrepresentation of the nature and purpose of this discourse that it can hardly be allowed to pass unchallenged.” (67)

<sup>77</sup> Lacey (1962): 71.

Hanchey studies the way Cicero turned *otium* from ‘idleness’ to an ideal that reflected the stability of the Republic, specifically in his work post-exile.<sup>78</sup> He argues that Cicero portrays *otium* as an unchanging concept that connects the past Republic with the present one. He conducts his analysis of how Cicero portrays *otium* as a transtemporal and a spatial concept, making *otium* a transcendence of, not an escape from, political realities; in *otium*, there is no threat to the Republic. He first opposes André’s conclusion that *otium* was purely negative in Ennius and Cato on the basis that there is not enough extant evidence to support the statement. There has, Hanchey argues, always been the potential for *otium* to be used positively. It has also, based on evidence from comedy, stood as an opposite to both *negotium* and war, having the sense of ‘peace.’ Hanchey notes that *otium* in Cicero starts in its public role as ‘tranquility’ or freedom from war, which he refers to as ‘the *otium* of stability.’ Hanchey sees a tension between public and private *otia* on Cicero. Private *otium* is not necessarily a danger, but it is undesirable for someone like Cicero. In Cicero’s mind, he is not one who should ever have private *otium*, the kind unconnected to public work. So, when he finds himself with an abundance of private *otium*, he must ‘rehabilitate’ the concept.<sup>79</sup> Hanchey argues that this rehabilitation occurs in *De Oratore* with *cum dignitate otium*, which is a hybrid of the public and private *otia* that were formerly distinct. Cicero now claims that the two are connected and that political work can be done in *otium*, and that private *otium* requires public *otium*. This new ideal of *otium* consists of peace for Rome and a way to use free time with dignity. Cicero himself cannot meet this ideal at the time of writing, but the way that he discusses it suggests that it is still a possibility. Later, in *De Legibus*, Cicero portrays himself as having *otium* like that of the men in *De Oratore*, though this does not reflect his actual situation. Hanchey notes that, for Cicero, the best use of this *otium* is study and textual creation that are connected to

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<sup>78</sup> This and the following can be seen in Hanchey (2013): 171–179.

<sup>79</sup> Hanchey (2013): 182–184.

public affairs.<sup>80</sup> The *otium* within his dialogues is “a counter-reality, an unpolluted, atemporal space, historically unavailable for many of the interlocutors because of an absence of public *otium*, but accessible to all of them nonetheless in the context of the dialogues.”<sup>81</sup> In this way, the public/private *otium* of *cum dignitate otium* is available for all future generations. Hanchey also argues that Cicero links himself to the survival of the Republic through this stable representation of peace through *otium* in the dialogues.<sup>82</sup> Hanchey’s theory on Cicero’s development of *cum dignitate otium* is well-developed and aligns with my own findings regarding the changing discourses of *otium* in this time period. I agree that Cicero found himself needing to validate his new position in the world, and still required a connection to politics in order to feel secure.

In my view, *cum dignitate otium* operates as an ideal from an idealized past that Cicero attempts to apply to the present and future. In this expression, *dignitas* is the result of public business, or state matters. Gaining and having *dignitas* is what is discussed, that of any man involved in politics, not just optimates. Each individual who holds authority ought to strive for this ideal.<sup>83</sup> Kaster, in his edition of *Pro Sestio*, states that in this text, *cum dignitate otium* should be the goal, not just of statesmen, but of all who are not lowlives.<sup>84</sup> This is due, in part, to the fact that the *otium* Cicero is promoting is the communal type that means tranquility for the state.<sup>85</sup> Cicero goes on to elaborate that this *dignitas* is made of the foundational practices of the Republic, from the religious observances to the courts. Those who oppose such things

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<sup>80</sup> Hanchey (2013): 184–190.

<sup>81</sup> Hanchey (2013): 190.

<sup>82</sup> Hanchey (2013): 194.

<sup>83</sup> In *Pro Sestio*, Cicero seems to be trying to redefine who are the optimates, which must have been rather startling for his colleagues. Cicero includes the *equites* and municipal citizens in his vision of *cum dignitate otium*. See Lintott (2008): 197–198; Usher (2008): 83–84; Kaster (2013): 31–37, 319; Hellegourc’h (1972).

<sup>84</sup> Kaster (2014): 34 n. 72.

<sup>85</sup> Kaster (2014): 120.

or want “*novus motus conversionesque*” are criminals or insane.<sup>86</sup> The only way to reach “*otium illum portum et dignitatis*” is to not change anything.<sup>87</sup> Cicero stresses that it takes an especially good man to hold on to that balance in hard times, as “*boni nescio quo modo tardiores sunt et principiis rerum neglectis ad extremum ipsa denique necessitate excitantur, ita ut non numquam cunctatione ac tarditate, dum otium volunt etiam sine dignitate retinere, ipsi utrumque amittant.*”<sup>88</sup> Even *boni* have trouble with *otium cum dignitate*. The ideal seems nearly unattainable, but Cicero supplies comfort for the present:

*multa etiam nostra memoria, quae consulto praetereo, fuerunt in ea contentione ut popularis cupiditas a consilio principum dissideret. nunc iam nihil est quod populus a delectis principibusque dissentiat: nec flagitat rem ullam neque novarum rerum est cupidus et otio suo et dignitate optimi cuiusque et universae rei publicae gloria delectatur.*

There have been many things in my memory, which I deliberately pass over, in which the desires of the people have been at odds with the judgement of the leaders. Now, there is nothing in which the people differ from the chosen leaders: neither does it demand anything nor desire any revolution and it is pleased by its own otium and the dignitas of its best men and the renown of the entire Republic.

Sest. 104

The leaders, he claims, have *dignitas*, and that is maintaining the *otium* of the whole state. The two concepts merge here, making *otium* as peace the *otium* of *otium cum dignitate*. The *dignitas* of the few has led to the beneficial *otium* of the many. The *otium* of the many in turn allows more opportunity for men to earn their *dignitas*. To summarize, *cum dignitate otium*

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<sup>86</sup> Sest. 99.

<sup>87</sup> Sest. 99: “That port of *otium* and *dignitas*.”

<sup>88</sup> Sest. 100: “I don’t know why but somehow good men are slower, neglectful at the beginning of matters, stirred to action then at the end by necessity itself, so that sometimes because of their delays and slowness, while they wanted to hold on to their *otium* without *dignitas*, they lose both.”

requires cooperation between the leaders and the people which, Cicero tells his listeners, currently exists.

The *dignitas* that allows for the *otium* comes from public business. This is expressed when Cicero addresses the men who benefit from the *dignitas* of others:

*nam si qui voluptatibus ducuntur et se vitiorum inlecebris et cupiditatum lenociniis dederunt, missos faciant honores, ne attingant rem publicam, patiantur virorum fortium labore se otio suo perfrui. qui autem bonam famam bonorum, quae sola vere gloria nominari potest, expetunt, aliis otium quaerere debent et voluptates, non sibi.*

For if there are men who are led by their pleasures, and have given themselves to the allure of vices and enticements of passions, let them abandon the *honores* (public offices), let them not touch the Republic; they are permitted to enjoy their *otium* from the work of braver men. Men who seek out the good fortune of good men (*boni*, political sense), which is truly the one thing able to be called *gloria*, they ought to seek out *otium* and pleasures for others, not themselves.

*Sest.* 138–139

Cicero is not speaking to the people in *Pro Sestio*, as he was in *Post Reditum ad Populum*, but to his political peers. Thus, the definition of *otium* on which he relies change slightly. Instead of the broad ‘*otium* as peace’ that he uses to connect to the people, he focuses in and connects *otium* as peace to the *dignitas* of the men. He tells his audience that too many good men are comfortable in their *otium sine dignitate*, that they will lose both if they do not act. He tries to spur them to action with this ideal, not just in Sestius’ trial, but in Rome in general. He strives to redefine what it means to be a *bonus*, to give all the men who love Rome a hand in her rescue. When they achieve group *otium*, he says, opportunity for individual *dignitas* comes too. He warns of the dangers of change to their systems, their religion, their morals, that might threaten this ideal. He warns, in veiled words, of Caesar and the other triumvirs vying for

power. With this digression, Cicero succeeded only in straining his relationships with the triumvirs. Instead of a reduction in Caesar's power, Cicero received only a gag order.

After the conference at Luca, Cicero changed his tune. In *De Provinciis Consularibus*, Cicero explains his change of heart regarding the triumvirs as follows:

*etenim si iis qui haec omnia flamma ac ferro delere voluerunt non inimicitias solum sed etiam bellum indixi atque intuli, cum partim mihi illorum familiares, partim etiam me defendente capitis iudiciis essent liberati, cur eadem res publica quae me in amicos inflammare potuit inimicis placare non possit? quod mihi odium cum P. Clodio fuit, nisi quod perniciosum patriae civem fore putabam qui turpissima libidine incensus duas res sanctissimas, religionem et pudicitiam, uno scelere violasset? num est igitur dubium ex iis rebus quas is egit agitque cotidie quin ego in illo oppugnando rei publicae plus quam otio meo, non nulli in eodem defendendo suo plus otio quam communi prospexerint?*

Indeed, if, to those men who wanted to destroy everything with fire and sword, if to them I have not only declared myself to be an enemy but also waged war against, although some of them were my friends, and others had been freed from capital punishment by my defence, why is it not possible that that same Republic which was able to inflame me against my friends calm me toward my enemies? What reason was there for me to hate Clodius, other than that I thought that he would become a ruinous citizen for the country, he who, inflamed by the foulest desire, violated two most sacred matters, religion and modesty, with one crime? Therefore, is it doubtful from these deeds which he has done and which he does everyday that I, in opposing him, looked out for the Republic more than my own otium, and not less others, in defending him, looked out for their own otium more than the community?

Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 24

Cicero claims that all that he did was for the Republic more than for his own *otium*. His opposition to individuals comes from, again, concern for the Republic instead of personal dislike. Thus, as he now supports Caesar, Caesar must be good for the Republic. Those who hold an opposing political stance to Cicero work for *otium suum*, not for *commune otium*. Here, *otium* as tranquility for a state and *otium* as ease for an individual appear together. Cicero



forgoes more *otium* for himself in favour of more for the community. That he uses this argument demonstrates that personal *otium*, even when earned with public work, is seen as lesser than working for communal *otium*. If private *otium* must be had for an individual in politics, it ought to be for public good, as it is certainly a result of a peaceful, *otiosus* Republic.<sup>89</sup> Cicero constructs himself through this presentation of his own *otium*, or lack thereof, as a good, perhaps *bonus*, Roman man, one in whom the community can trust. This self-presentation carries on throughout his later writings.

In 55, Cicero published *De Oratore*.<sup>90</sup> In this essay on the composition and presentation of oratory, *otium* is discussed in a myriad of ways. Often, it is when writing or studying occurs, or as a time without public business. Many of the instances of *otium* in the text do not easily align with any one category and some fit none at all. This incongruity makes *De Oratore* a fascinating text to examine in relation to discourses of leisure and, from that, identity formation within the time of the first ‘triumvirate’. Cicero had been exiled and, although he had been allowed to return to Rome, he was still in a period of enforced leisure. In *De Oratore*, the optimates of the late 90s, Lucius Licinius Crassus, Marcus Antonius, Publius Sulpicius Rufus, and Gaius Aurelius Cotta take the main roles in discussing the nature and value of rhetoric. They are joined in the latter two books by Quintus Lutatius Catulus and Gaius Julius Caesar Strabo Vopiscus. Most of these men, with the exceptions of Sulpicius and Cotta, whom Sulla killed or exiled, were killed by Marius during his proscriptions. These men were moderate

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<sup>89</sup> Also see Hanchey (2013): 182. “So then, while Cicero's *otium* here [in *Pro Sestio*] maintains the traditional contrast with war, unlike in Ennius, when *otium* as a cessation from war could mean inactivity and the inability to achieve, Cicero's *otium* reflects a Republic at peace through the efforts of excellent individuals. And these individuals, by maintaining the Republic of their ancestors, earn personal *dignitas* and preserve an arena for others to do the same. According to this definition of *otium*, the opposite of *otium cum dignitate* is not only *otium sine dignitate*, but also the pursuit of *dignitas* through an upsetting of *otium* criticized in *Leg. Agr.* 2.102 and *De Domo Sua* 1.3.”

<sup>90</sup> From three of Cicero's letters (*Att.* 4.13.2, 13.19.4; *Fam.* 1.9.23), we know that Cicero finished *De Oratore* in the early winter of 55, after having worked on it for a while, and published it soon after.

conservatives, with only Sulpicius joining the *popularis* Marius. These men were known to Cicero in his childhood and during his introduction to the world of politics before their deaths.

There is a certain element of sorrow in the opening of *De Oratore*, when Cicero remarks:

*Cogitanti mihi saepe numero et memoria vetera repetenti perbeati fuisse, Quinte frater, illi videri solent, qui in optima re publica, cum et honoribus et rerum gestarum gloria florent, eum vitae cursum tenere potuerunt, ut vel in negotio sine periculo vel in otio cum dignitate esse possent; ac fuit cum mihi quoque initium requiescendi atque animum ad utriusque nostrum praeclara studia referendi fore iustum et prope ab omnibus concessum arbitrarer, si infinitus forensium rerum labor et ambitionis occupatio decursu honorum, etiam aetatis flexu constitisset.*

Whenever my reflections and reminiscences take me back to times gone by, my dear brother Quintus, it always seems to me that the men of that era were tremendously fortunate. Living in the best days of our State, and prospering in high honors and the glory of their accomplishments, they could maintain a course of life that offered them the opportunity for political activity without peril, as well as the possibility for otium with dignitas. There was, in fact, a time when I believed that, once an end had come to my ceaseless work in the forum and my concern with political campaigning, after holding all public offices and having reached a turning point in my life, I too would have almost everyone's approval for entering a period of well-deserved rest, in which I could redirect my attention to the splendid intellectual pursuits which we both love.<sup>91</sup>

*De Or.* 1.1

This was not, as we know, the case for Cicero. The hope for a present *cum dignitate otium* is already soured from its appearance in *Pro Sestio*; it is now difficult to achieve in the present. However, he tells us that he makes the best of it: “*Sed tamen in his vel asperitatibus rerum vel angustiis temporis obsequar studiis nostris et quantum mihi vel fraus inimicorum vel causae*

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<sup>91</sup> Translation is from May and Wisse (2001). I retained the Latin for the sake of this study.

*amicorum vel res publica tribuet oti, ad scribendum potissimum conferam.*”<sup>92</sup> Although he has been blocked from most political action that he might like to take, Cicero continues to invest in the discourse that makes *negotium* the requirement for *otium*. His main identity is that of a man in politics, a man who stands against his enemies and engages in reciprocal relationships of support with his friends. His work on oratory fits into that discourse; it is a product of his years of experience, relates to his public works, and provides a benefit to any future men who would like to follow in his footsteps. He prizes *negotium* over *otium*, and *otium* is to be used productively in a way that supports *negotium*.

The subordination of *otium* to *negotium* holds true throughout *De Oratore* when Cicero discusses writing in *otium*; writing is to be done when one has the *otium*, and if one does not have the *otium* or focuses more on *negotium*, that writing is not done. In her research, Stroup also notes that a subset of *otium* is “intellectual activity within a social setting.”<sup>93</sup> This definition may have developed from an association with the Greek σχολή, a term which had been linked to extended discussion in a social setting since the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. This extends, Stroup argues, to socially available time for the writing, reading, and exchanging of texts. Stroup links *otium* to the temporal aspect of writing, not the physical. In this, I would agree with her.

Consider *De Or.* 2.57, where Philistus of Syracuse is described as a man who “*otium suum consumpsit in historia scribenda*”<sup>94</sup>, or at 1.224 when writing is relegated to “*huiusce modi Tusculani requiem atque otium*,”<sup>95</sup> or regarding non-orators who are learned in legal

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<sup>92</sup> *De Or.* 1.3: “Nevertheless, despite this difficult situation and these constraints upon my time, I will heed the call of our studies and will devote, especially to writing, as much *otium* as I am afforded by the intrigue of my enemies, the cause of my friends, and my duty to the State.” Translation from May and Wisse (2001), Latin retained by me.

<sup>93</sup> Stroup (2007): 38–40.

<sup>94</sup> “he spent his *otium* writing history.” Translation by May and Wisse (2001).

<sup>95</sup> “periods of rest and *otium*, such as we are now enjoying at this Tusculan villa.” Translation from May and Wisse (2001).

matters in 2.139, “*tantum satis est intellegi ne hoc quidem eos consecutos, quod in tanto otio etiam sine hac forensi exercitatione efficere potuerunt, ut genera rerum discernerent eaque paulo subtilius explicarent,*”<sup>96</sup> or any of the other instances of *otium* for writing.<sup>97</sup> Of particular interest is Antonius and Catulus’ discussion regarding Crassus’ knowledge that ought to be shared and his dedication to political work:

*“Ergo’ inquit ‘ista’ Antonius ‘tum a Crasso discemus, cum se de turba et a subselliis in otium, ut cogitat, soliumque contulerit.’ ‘Iam id quidem saepe’ inquit Catulus ‘ex eo audivi, cum diceret sibi iam certum esse a iudiciis causisque discedere; sed, ut ipsi soleo dicere, non licebit; neque enim auxilium suum saepe a viris bonis frustra implorari patietur neque id aequo animo feret civitas, quae si voce L. Crassi carebit, ornamento quodam se spoliata putabit.’ ‘Nam hercle,’ inquit Antonius ‘si haec vere a Catulo dicta sunt, tibi mecum in eodem est pistrino, Crasse, vivendum; et istam oscitantem et dormitantem sapientiam Scaevolarum et ceterorum beatorum otio concedamus.’”*

“‘Well then,’ said Antonius, ‘these are the things we shall learn from Crassus, once he has withdrawn, as he intends to do, from the chaos of the court-benches to the *otium* of his counselor’s chair.’ ‘Yes,’ Catulus said, ‘I have often before heard him say that he is determined to bid farewell to pleading cases at court. But as I always tell him, he won’t be allowed to do so. For he himself will be unwilling to let good men [*boni*, political] beg for his help in vain too often, and the community will not calmly endure this either: if it is deprived of the voice of Lucius Crassus, it will consider itself stripped of a jewel.’ ‘Yes indeed,’ added Antonius, ‘if what Catulus says is true, Crassus, you will have to pass your life in the same treadmill with me, and we might just as well leave that yawning and sleepy

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It is worthwhile to note, although there is not the space to explore it in this paper, that from 75 BCE to 50 CE, there was an influx of Roman men building leisure villas in Tusculum. It had become a recognized place for leisure activities, where men could retreat, willingly or not, from politics. For more on the growth of Tusculum, see Notarian (2011).

<sup>96</sup> “It is enough merely to understand that they have not even accomplished what they could have in their abundant *otium*, even without our experience in the forum: namely, they might have distinguished the general categories and described them with some precision.” Translation from May and Wisse (2001).

<sup>97</sup> The instance not mentioned above is *de Or.* 1.2. Cicero laments that he has received no *otium* with which to pursue old hobbies with Quintus. As the two surrounding sections refer to writing, I have classified this instance as *otium* for writing, though it may also be *otium* for study. The two uses are related in the discourses with which Cicero engages, as they are both activities in, and not the purpose of, *otium* and occur in similar places. I will discuss this more in the main body further on.

wisdom of yours to the Scaevola family and the rest of the blessed, who have the *otium* for it.”

*De Or.* 2.143–144<sup>98</sup>

Crassus’s knowledge is to be passed on when he is no longer an active member of the political world, when he has *otium*. But, this *otium* and the texts that would come from it are not as valuable to the community as the work of Crassus. Because of this, Crassus will likely never retire. The knowledge he might pass on in literature is less important than the immediate benefit that he can provide for the Republic. His teaching through example, by participating in the courts, taking on a young man to introduce him to the world, assisting his friends, is an *ornamentus* for the Republic in a way that a static text is not. It is unclear if this view of texts is a reflection of the ideal past that Cicero mentions in 1.1 or reflects the values that Cicero himself holds.<sup>99</sup> Cicero does, in 1.1–3, focus on his recent lack of *otium* due to all of his political work. His focus on his public work serves to validate the writing of *De Oratore*; he is doing it in what little time he has, not as a replacement for politics. He is still, he assures the reader, politically active. Within the discourses that Cicero expresses, identity comes from political work, not activities done in *otium*.

In Cicero, textual creation and study are very similar uses of *otium*. While textual creation requires some validation, as discussed above, studying in *otium* is often a way to improve oneself for activities in *negotium*. For example, in *De Or.* 1.79, Crassus makes the following statement regarding oratory:

*‘Quod si tibi tantum in nobis videtur esse, quibus etiam si ingenium, ut tu putas, non maxime defuit, doctrina certe et otium et hercule etiam studium illud discendi acerrimum defuit, quid*

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<sup>98</sup> Translation from May and Wisse (2001).

<sup>99</sup> It is an interesting look at training and education, which was traditionally done through apprenticeship. Books played some role in this, hence older published speeches and more written documents, but Cicero’s points here suggest that they were still less important than hands-on learning.

censes, si ad alicuius ingenium vel maius illa, quae ego non attigi, accesserint, qualem illum et quantum oratorem futurum?’

“So, as you think, I may not have been entirely devoid of talent, but I certainly lacked instruction, otium, and—oh yes—that passionate enthusiasm for learning. If you still find so much merit in me, don’t you see what a truly great sort of orator we will have if someone perhaps more talented than I should in addition master these things, which I have not even touched?”<sup>100</sup>

In addition to natural talent, Crassus argues that a truly great orator will also have education, passion for learning, and the *otium* in which to do that learning. This belief is repeated by Antonius in 1.95.<sup>101</sup> Study is, to Cicero, therefore more valuable than literary creation as it allows for the collection of new skills that help in the political world. This difference in value from that of the political *negotium* upon which Cicero bases his identity is why I have separated the two categories. Study in *otium* makes a good orator, and textual creation is best made by a good orator, but is less desirable than active participation in the political world.

The ability of the men in *De Oratore* to spend their *otium* in study or writing is due to the state of *cum dignitate otium* that they are in. This state is not historically accurate, but Cicero creates, as Hanchey argues, an alternate time space in his dialogues where Rome is safe from harm.<sup>102</sup> This is reflected in the speakers’ statements on the future ideal orators: the methods for becoming a good orator and the need for orators is ongoing and unchanging in

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<sup>100</sup> Translation from May and Wisse (2001).

<sup>101</sup> “*ego enim, quantum auguror coniectura quantaque ingenia in nostris hominibus esse video, non despero fore aliquem aliquando, qui et studio acriore quam nos sumus atque fuimus et otio ac facultate discendi maiore ac maturiore et labore atque industria superiore, cum se ad audiendum legendum scribendumque dederit, existat talis orator, qualem quaerimus, qui iure non solum disertus, sed etiam eloquens dici possit*” “For personally, insofar as I can predict on the abundant talent I see in our fellow citizens, I do not despair that there will be someone, someday, with keener enthusiasm than I have or have had, with more *otium* and greater and earlier opportunities for learning, who will apply himself with more industry and harder work. And after devoting himself with greater effort to listening, reading, and writing, he will engage as the kind of orator we are looking for—an orator who may rightly be called not just an accomplished speaker, but an eloquent one.” Translation from May and Wisse (2001).

<sup>102</sup> Hanchey (2013): 194.

this literary world. While the real Cicero is not currently in a world with *cum dignitate otium*, it is still a possibility and is still the ideal. The phrase *cum dignitate otium* does not appear after 55, perhaps because the political world was becoming more inaccessible and the *dignitas* required for the ideal was unattainable.

Before I continue on to Cicero's uses of *otium* in 44, one major shift in his discourses must be addressed. In *De Re Publica*, published in 51, he expresses a new idea: for the first time, *otium* appears exclusively as a negative. It is not connected to any temporal opposite, the way it is spent is not discussed, and it is placed against communal health and tranquility:

*unum hoc definio, tantam esse necessitatem virtutis generi hominum a natura tantumque amorem ad communem salutem defendendam datum, ut ea vis omnia blandimenta voluptatis otiique vicerit.*

I will make this one assertion, that so great a requirement for *virtus* has been given to humanity by nature and so great a love for defending the communal safety, that that strength has conquered all the enticement of pleasure and *otium*.

*Rep. 1.1*

It becomes clear throughout *De Republica* that the *otium* he here condemns is the individual *otium* of men who are not involved in politics. He begins to set up in 1.1 the most vital thing a leader needs: *virtus*. This condemnation of *otium* comes from Cicero's valuing of political *negotium* and public benefit over private activities with no benefit to the state. He is not stressing *cum dignitate otium* anymore, and so there is a greater divide between communal *otium* and private *otium*. This may be due to the fact that Cicero and other centrist politicians now have much more private *otium*, forcing Cicero to make a distinction between how he spends his time and how his political rivals spend their time. His prior ideals regarding *otium* relying on *negotium* are difficult for him to achieve, and so the way in which private *otium* is spent becomes more important than how it was earned.

When Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of March in 44, optimates rejoiced. Cicero is no exception to this. His works in 44 have more instances of *otium* as peace than any other year and discussion of *otium* opposite public business reaches the same levels as it did in 55. Cicero enthusiastically took up the cause of the Republic once again and moved quickly and forcefully against Marcus Antonius (hereafter referred to as Antony) in a series of impassioned speeches that he called the *Philippics*, in which he uses *otium* as peace seven times, half of all instances. Antony is, as Clodius was, against the *otium* of the Republic.

Cicero's return to the discourse of *otium* as peace demonstrates his ongoing investment in the ideals of the *boni* that he laid out in *Pro Sestio*, namely that things would return to a 'before' time when the traditional ways of forming masculine identity were accessible and directly connected to a stable Republic. As a someone who desired to capitalize on Caesarian sympathies to gain power, Antony was the antithesis of this ideal, which Cicero demonstrates by placing him in opposition to it throughout the *Philippics*.

In *De Officiis*, Cicero focuses on the best ways to live, and so private uses of *otium* come to the fore. Cicero focuses on the importance of a political career, and his uses of *otium* are in direct relation to political *negotium*.<sup>103</sup> This is especially prevalent in his introduction to Book Three, in which he compares the work and *otium* of Publius Scipio Africanus to his own. The first three sections are full of *otium*, but to spare the reader blocks of Latin and translation, I shall be selective and provide a brief overview. Cicero tells the reader that Cato said of Scipio that he was '*numquam se minus otiosum esse, quam cum otiosus*,'<sup>104</sup> an observation that Cicero

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<sup>103</sup> See *Off.* 1.69, where *otium* is a retreat from public life; 1.153 where a man with abundant *otium* to study would die of loneliness; 1.156 where the *otium* of old men is dedicated to the *negotium* of younger men; and 2.4 where he could not write, only read, because he lacked *otium* due to his political work.

<sup>104</sup> *Off.* 3.1: 'Never less in *otium* than when he was in *otium*.'



made about himself in *Pro Plancio*.<sup>105</sup> Cicero uses this fact about Scipio to show that the general was a great man who was never led into *languorem*, idleness, by *otium*, but instead was energized by it. Cicero wishes he could imitate this, but '*a re publica forensibusque negotiis armis impiis vique prohibiti otium persequimur*.'<sup>106</sup> The only thing keeping Caesar from living up to Scipio's example is that others will not allow him to. There is a clear block between him and the ideal that, if removed, would allow a return to prior life. Cicero goes on to say that he can not compare his *otium* with that of Scipio, as Scipio could return to politics at any time, while Cicero can not. There is nothing for Cicero but leisure now. Cicero laments the changes that the Republic has undergone, but states that he has learned to make good out of evil. For this reason, '*otio fruor, non illo quidem, quo debebat is, qui quondam peperisset otium civitati, nec eam solitudinem languere patior, quam mihi affert necessitas, non voluntas*.'<sup>107</sup> Cicero here mentions the *otium* that is owed to one who brought *otium* to the people, a statement that is in line with the discourses he expressed a decade ago. Cicero's ideals have not changed, although his situation has. He reiterates his ideals in 3.4 when he says that Africanus deserves more praise than himself, as he was never in this situation and had a stronger mind, since he did not need *otium*. Cicero says his own mind is not strong and so he uses literary work as a distraction. Even though Cicero can not participate in public life, the discourses in his writing do not shift to make his prolonged *otium* equally beneficial to the Republic. He may be writing, but his literature is unequal to public work. Cicero always mentions his past work when discussing his writing, and always states that he did less writing

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<sup>105</sup> *Planc.* 66: *ecquid ego dicam de occupatis meis temporibus, cui fuerit ne otium quidem unquam otiosum?* 'Do I need to say anything about my time in business, when my *otium* was not even in *otium*?' It is also in this section that Cicero quotes Cato on how a man should have a use of his *otium* and *negotium*.

<sup>106</sup> *Off.* 3.1: 'having been barred from public business and *negotium* by violence and unpatriotic weapons, I pursue *otium*.'

<sup>107</sup> *Off.* 3.3: 'I am using my *otium*, although it is not that [*otium*] which is owed to one who brought forth *otium* for the people, nor will I allow this solitude, which necessity brought to me, not will, to make me idle.'

when occupied with political *negotium*. He is careful to say that his writing is not idleness, it is an acceptable way to pass *otium*, but having as much *otium* as he does is unacceptable. He is, as he tells us, making the best of a bad situation.

The Cicero who writes in 44 holds similar ideals to the one who wrote in 57–55. His identity is based on his ongoing political work, and, when that becomes inaccessible to him, his past political work. Because of this, individual *otium* is, to Cicero, a lesser concept. If one must have it, it ought to be used in ways that support public work or public *otium*. Public *otium* feeds into political work, allowing men to distinguish themselves without the imposition of war or sedition, and vice versa. Writing in *otium* is an acceptable way to not be idle, though study would be better, and not having *otium* at all would be best. The steadiness of his discourses on *otium* reflect the constancy of his belief in the ability of the Republic to return to a ‘before’ time.

## CHAPTER 4: *OTIUM* IN CATULLUS

Gaius Valerius Catullus lived a short life in a very active period of time. He was born in 84 and died in 54.<sup>108</sup> As his poetry references events in the years 55 and 54, the dates 84–54 are likely correct. Born in Cisalpine Gaul to a wealthy equestrian family, Catullus seems to have spent most of his young adulthood in Rome, with a provincial command in Bithynia under Gaius Memmius (pr. 58) from 57–56. He occasionally crossed paths with Cicero, whose poetry he critiqued, and wrote a short criticism of Caesar, for which he apologized after the general reached out to his family.<sup>109</sup> Catullus grew up under the fallout from dictatorship of Sulla and was in Rome during the alliance of Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus. He was alive for the extension of Caesar’s governorship an extra five years, but he died before the decline of the triumvirate and the outbreak of civil war. As far as we know, Catullus never ran for political office; his poetry certainly shows no interest in such activities. Catullus seems to have dedicated his life to poetry and leisure, but only 116 of his works survive. Of these works, five of them include *otium*: cc. 10, 44, 50, 51, and 68b.

Let me begin with a brief summary of each poem I will discuss. In c. 10, Catullus is led away from the forum, where he was *otiosus*, by his friend Varus. Varus takes him to meet his new girlfriend, and the group begins to talk of Catullus’ post in Bithynia. After saying he got nothing from it, he quickly adjusts to say that he got a team of litter bearers. When the woman calls out his lie by asking to borrow the litter, Catullus admits they belong to his friend and criticizes her for not allowing him a little embellishment. In c. 44, Catullus reads a very bad treatise that makes him physically ill. He escapes to his country villa to recover in *otium*

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<sup>108</sup> The consular *fasti* make it easy to confuse 87–57 with 84–54, so there has been some debate over his actual birth and death dates. Based on events referenced in his poems, Hirst (1928) argued that he could not have died before 54, and thus was born in 84.

<sup>109</sup> Catullus’ family seems to have been rather influential, as they hosted Caesar during his consulship in Gaul and, once Catullus apologized for his lampoons, Caesar invited him over for dinner that same day (Suet. *Jul.* 73).

and laments his greed for getting him sick, as he only read the terrible work to be invited to a *convivium* by the author. He ends the poem criticizing the author for forcing his guests to read his terrible work in order to secure an invitation. In c. 50, Catullus begins by describing how he and Licinius spent their day of *otium* by creating poetry. He proceeds to say that he was unable to find rest because he is so energized by the day that passed and that which is to come. He closes his poem by telling Licinius that Catullus created a poem for him and, if Licinius does not reply, the goddess Nemesis will come punish him. Then, in c. 51, Catullus creates an allusive translation of Sappho 31. He begins by giving god-like qualities to the man near Lesbia and then goes through his own reaction to her. He breaks away from Sappho and his physical reaction to Lesbia in his final stanza, where he states that *otium* is harmful to him. In c. 68b, Catullus thanks his friend Allius for helping him secure access to Catullus' mistress, wishing to immortalize him in verse. He then likens his mistress to Laodamia entering the home of Protesilaus on their wedding day, and shifts into recalling the death of Protesilaus at Troy, which reminds him of his brother's death. He calls Troy ill-omened and remembers the Trojan war, waged so that Paris did not have the *otium* to assault Helen. Catullus then returns to Laodamia, then back to his mistress, and ends with more praises of Allius. As can be seen from these poems, in Catullus, *otium* is time for textual creation (c. 50) or free time with no specified use (c. 10, 44, 51, 68b).

Let us look at each poem now more closely. One such instance of time with an unspecified use is in c. 10. Catullus is led from the forum, after he has been seen as *otiosus*:

*Varus me meus ad suos amores*  
*visum duxerat e foro otiosum,*  
*scortillum, ut mihi tunc repente visum est,*  
*non sane inlepidum neque invenustum.*  
*huc ut venimus, incidere nobis*                               5  
*sermone vari, in quibus, quid esset*  
*iam Bithynia, quo modo se haberet,*  
*ecquonam mihi profuisset aere.*

My dear Varus led me, otiosus, from the forum to see his girlfriend, a little whore, who seemed to me at first glance to be not entirely witless or without charm. Then, as we came there, we talked about various things, among which, how things were in Bithynia, how it was for me, whether I'd got any money from it.

In the forum—that is, a place where most are engaging in *negotium*—Catullus is openly and recognizably in *otium*. Stroup sees c. 10 as a dialogue about the differing expectations between public and private spaces and displays. Catullus is being *otiosus* in the wrong place, and is then led by Varus to a place where *otium* is acceptable: the home.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, I would argue that Catullus is not so much making the point that his public display of *otium* is to be avoided, as subverting the expectations of where business is conducted and what that business is. The conflict that he experiences with the woman does not come from his *otiosus* behaviour in public, but from his declaration of success that she calls into question. She questions his persona, the self that he presents through his boast, and thus shatters it.<sup>111</sup> There is no mention of a reaction to Catullus' presence in the forum within the poem, nor does his action, or lack thereof, within the forum have repercussions. I agree with Stroup in the importance of the silence within the forum, but see it as a part of the inversion, as Catullus conducts his verbal 'business' in private, discussing with Varus and the woman the state of affairs in Bithynia. Krostenko has demonstrated that Catullus often inverts the expectations for language; he examines c. 10 in terms of Catullus' description of the young woman as *venusta* in parallel to *sal*, recalling the connections of *venustas* to humour in oratory, and extends that oratorical use to c. 10.<sup>112</sup> Catullus thus uses political paradigms to discuss private ones, erasing or shifting

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<sup>110</sup> Stroup (2010): 43–46.

<sup>111</sup> Nappa (2001): 56 points out that what is presented in c. 10 is not the praise of another or any criticism, but Catullus' attempts to save face when questioned. The perspective of another looking in, in this case the woman, is foregrounded. Skinner (2001) explores 10 and 44 as public performances, where the judgement made of the woman is a tactic to save face by belittling her in front of a crowd of other men, making her the outsider instead.

<sup>112</sup> Krostenko (2001): 236. *Sal*, literally meaning salt, was a term used to denote humour or wit.

the boundaries between the two; this idea is evident in his being led *e foro otiosum* in c.10.2.<sup>113</sup> As the poet shifts the context of *venustas*, he similarly shifts the context of *otium*. There is nothing in the poem to suggest that his actions are irregular in the social world that he and his companions inhabit, strange though they may be to the political world.

Catullus performs another such inversion in c. 44:

*O funde noster, seu Sabine seu Tiburs,  
(nam te esse Tiburtem autumant, quibus  
non est  
cordi Catullum laedere: at quibus cordist,  
quovis Sabinum pignore esse contendunt)  
sed seu Sabine sive verius Tiburs, 5  
fui libenter in tua suburbana  
villa, malamque pectore expuli tussim,  
non immerenti quam mihi meus venter,  
dum sumptuosas appeto, dedit, cenas.  
nam, Sestianus dum volo esse conviva, 10  
orationem in Antium petitoem  
plenam veneni et pestilentiae legi.  
hic me gravedo frigida et frequens tussis  
quassavit usque dum in tuum sinum fugi  
et me recuravi otioque et urtica. 15  
quare reffectus maximas tibi grates  
ago, meum quod non es ulta peccatum.  
nec deprecor iam, si nefaria scripta  
Sesti recepso, quin gravedinem et tussim  
non mi, sed ipsi Sestio ferat frigus, 20  
qui tunc vocat me, cum malum librum legi.*

O, my farm, whether Sabine or Tiburine (for some declare you are Tiburtine who do not love to annoy Catullus, but those who do will bet anything that you are Sabine), but whether Sabine or, in truth, Tiburtine, I was glad to be in your countryside villa, to expel an evil cough from my chest, which, not undeservedly, my stomach gave me, since I was seeking out extravagant dinners. For I wanted to go to Sestius' convivium, so I read his oration against the candidate Antius, full of poison and plague. Then, a horrible cold and a frequent cough shook me and I fled to your lap to recover myself with otium and nettle. Having recovered, I give my thanks to you because you did not punish my great error. Now, I pray that,

<sup>113</sup> Krostenko (2001): 289.

if I ever get receive an evil writing of Sestius', that the chill and cough grasp not me, but bear the cold to Sestius himself, who only invited me when I had read an evil book.

He retreats to his villa to recover from a cold, but his illness and overexertion do not come as a result of *negotium* or participation in public business; instead, they come from seeking “*sumptuosae cenae*” (9). The particular *cena* that prompted the trouble is that of Sestius.<sup>114</sup> To prepare and garner an invitation to this event, Catullus read a bad speech by Sestius, so terrible that its bad qualities were passed on to Catullus and made him ill. Catullus therefore in this poem does not need to take *otium* from the forum, but from the dinner table. Once again, Catullus places himself in a world parallel to that of Cicero and Sallust, one where his ‘work’ is their *otium*. Beyond this, Hansen argues that Catullus, in the end of the poem, rejects Sestius’ dinner and has no desire to be among people with bad taste.<sup>115</sup> Catullus’ ‘*negotium*’ is optional; he picks where he spends his time and who is able to influence his identity. The political standing of Sestius and his fellows means little to Catullus in light of their utterly terrible taste in literature and their own abysmal creations. Catullus rejects not only the political world in c. 44, but also the opinions of the men who engage in it. Both Stroup and Hansen argue that the

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<sup>114</sup> Publius Sestius was, according to Cicero, rather annoying to deal with as he was easily irritated (*Q. Fr.* 2.4.1). Plutarch writes (*Cic.* 26.5) that, during his trial, he irked Cicero by his need to be in control and his desire to do most of the speaking himself. Skinner (2001), when discussing c. 44 as a presentation at the *convivium* of Sestius, infers from these discussions of his character that Sestius would not enjoy an open mocking of his writing style. However, archaeological evidence suggests a connection between the Valerii Catuli and the Sestii: amphorae made in Sestian factories have been found in Gaul where the Valerii Catulii were the leading family; and an amphora inscribed with “C. Valerius Catullus” was found in Rome, suggesting that this figure was involved in the export of garum from southern Spain to Rome between 60 and 40 BCE (CIL XV 4756). This connection between families may have resulted in a social bond between Sestius and Catullus, turning this poem into a ‘roast’ rather than a harsh critique. For more on the latter inscription and the circumstances of its excavation by H. Dressel in 1878, see Wiseman (1987): 339–40. This connection is not, of course, verifiable beyond speculation.

<sup>115</sup> Hansen (2011), unlike Skinner (2001), argues that Catullus did not attend the *convivium* and that the poem is about his prioritization of quality literature over belonging among Sestius and his other influential friends: “Comments on wit and taste are a staple of Catullus’ poetry. Further inclusion and exclusion from social groups are of great importance in his poetics. Catullus has no desire to be included among those who encourage the reading of bad literature” (Hansen 426).

*otium* he takes at the villa is a time for literary creation, in which he composed c. 44. This is also possible; the *otium* can be both opposite the ‘work’ of attending a *convivium* of people with bad taste and a period where Catullus can compose some good poetry.<sup>116</sup>

In c. 50, Catullus and Licinius use their *otium* for textual production:

*Hesterno, Licini, die otiose*  
*multum lusimus in meis tabellis,*  
*ut convenerat esse delicatos.*  
*Scribens versiculos uterque nostrum*  
*ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc, 5*  
*reddens mutua per iocum atque vinum.*  
*Atque illinc abii tuo lepore*  
*incensus, Licini, facetiisque,*  
*ut nec me miserum cibus iuaret*  
*nec somnus tegeter quiete ocellos, 10*  
*sed toto, indominus furore, lecto*  
*versarer, cupiens videre lucem,*  
*ut tecum loquerer simulque ut essem.*  
*At defessa labore membra postquam*  
*semimortua lectulo iacebant, 15*  
*hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci,*  
*ex quo perspiceres meum dolorem.*  
*Nunc audax cave sis, precesque nostras*  
*oramus cave despuas, ocelle,*  
*ne poenas Nemesis reposcat a te. 20*  
*Est vemens dea: laedere hanc caveto.*

Yesterday, Licinius, we played much in my little tablets for a day of *otium*, as we had agreed to be naughty. Writing little verses, both of us were playing now in one meter now another, mutually giving through jokes and wine. And then I went from there set on fire by your pleasantness, Licinius, and your wit, so that neither could food delight miserable me, nor could sleep touch my eyelids with peace, but unrestrained with madness, I turned all over my bed, desiring to see light so that I might at once speak with you and be with you. But after my limbs, exhausted with struggle, were laying half-dead on the bed, I made for you, my delight, this poem, from which you might see my sorrow. Now beware lest you are proud, and beware, I pray, that you do not spit upon my prayer, dearest, lest Nemesis demand a penalty from you. She is a forceful goddess: beware offending her.

<sup>116</sup> Stroup (2010): 54; Hansen (2011): 425–426.



The two men play, as *lusimus* and *ludebat* indicate, with verses. Besides the sexual connotations of *ludo*, the verb demonstrates that their behaviour is far from political *negotium*.<sup>117</sup> Their poetry is not work; their writing is occurring in *otium*, and is for their own enjoyment. The texts that they produce are not philosophical treatises or political speeches, but verses that are *delicati*. These poems, however, are still a vital part of Catullus' place in his social circle. The texts that he and Licinius create in this *otium* are part of a reciprocal exchange, one that deepens their social bonds. Writing in *otium* is useful, therefore, but not to the general public. It holds value, but in a parallel way to the political realm, outside of the patron-client relationships upon which that world historically depended.

The important role of the written text is further indicated by the end of the poem, when Catullus invokes Nemesis. Should Licinius not deliver a *poema*, Catullus (through Nemesis) will deliver a *poena*. Stroup notes a bilingual pun between *poema* and *poena*, and Wray sees another between the Greek *poema* and the Latin *feci*.<sup>118</sup> From this prayer, we can infer that, within their social circle, it is expected that text is met with text. Writing and exchanging written works is crucial to Catullan social identity, as discussed by Stroup.<sup>119</sup> A textual gift is often given the title of *munus*, a physical gift in a cycle of reciprocity.<sup>120</sup> A text given as a *munus* is priceless, a representation of the relationship with the author and is valuable only within a context of exchange.<sup>121</sup> For Catullus, the exchange is outside of a patron–client

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<sup>117</sup> Catullus uses *ludo* in c. 17.17, 61.204, and 68.156 to reference sex. Otherwise, it references unserious behaviour.

<sup>118</sup> Stroup (2010): 233 and Wray (2001): 98.

<sup>119</sup> Stroup (2010): 80–100.

<sup>120</sup> Stroup (2010): 67–69. She notes that a *donum* is a physical object that does not expect a further relationship, and a *gratia* is a favour that may or may not expect reciprocity.

<sup>121</sup> Stroup (2010): 69–70. For more on the *munus* in the time of Cicero and Catullus, see Stroup (2010): 66–100.

relationship and is a symbol of private affection, and is a vital part of his alternative social world.<sup>122</sup>

The poem that Catullus produces for Licinius in c. 50 is generally agreed to be c. 51 on the basis of the following evidence. In c. 50, Catullus uses a Greek word, *poema*, to describe what he writes for Licinius. Elsewhere in his corpus, Catullus uses *poema* three times (twice in c. 22, once in c. 50) and *carmen* seven times (c. 61, five times in c. 64, twice in c. 65, c. 68a, c. 68b, c. 90, c. 116). In c. 22, he is discussing the uneducated nature of Suffanus, who still likes to write *poemata*. Otherwise, when referring to poetry, he uses *carmen*. Both Stroup and Wray argue for the importance of the word *poema*.<sup>123</sup> It is, as mentioned above, a pun, and also it is a Greek term that fits a translation of a Greek poem. Beyond this similarity of terminology, the concept of *otium* appears in each, beginning c. 50 and ending c. 51. Batstone argues that the repetition of *otium* and the context of the sent poem create a ring composition that frames the Sapphic translation.<sup>124</sup> He begins in a Roman context of textual exchange between men, engages with Sappho, and then returns to a Roman context of *otium*. The two poems work together well for analysis. The end of c. 51 is as follows:

*otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:*  
*otio exsultas nimiumque gestis.*  
*otium et reges prius et beatas*            15  
*perdidit urbes*

*Otium*, Catullus, is grievous to you: you are aggravated in *otium* and express too much. *Otium* ruined prior kings and prosperous cities.

51.13–16

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<sup>122</sup> Stroup (2010): 87: on poetic obligatory transaction and the result of that transaction, “the ongoing nature of *munus*-exchanges, an unending cycle in which poetic reciprocity is identified with the poetic immortality of both the relationship and the individuals who participate in it.”

<sup>123</sup> Stroup (2010): 233, and Wray (2001): 98.

<sup>124</sup> Batstone (2007): 244.

This verse comes after Catullus has spent the previous twelve lines engaging in a translation of Sappho 31. This shift is incredibly abrupt, causing some scholars to argue that it does not, in fact, belong to c. 51.<sup>125</sup> However, a ring composition from *otiosus* in c. 50 with *otium* in c. 51 is incredibly tempting, and the repetition of *otium* foregrounds the term as important, strengthening the connection. In the final verse of c. 51, Catullus links his *otium* to that of past leaders, and focuses on the destructiveness of the state. But what is it that Catullus does in c. 51 that is so destructive? What is the *otium* in which he engages? Others have argued that the destruction comes from Catullus' close and prolonged interaction with Sappho 31, a poem that, by translating, fragments his poetic persona.<sup>126</sup> Hanchey sees the final verse as Catullus' frustration at not being able to use *otium* properly, namely to interact with Lesbia in the company of the other man.<sup>127</sup> This theory is interesting as it suggests that Catullus views the purpose of *otium* to be interaction with women, an idea that occurs in c. 68b as well. Kruck (2014) argues that, for Catullus, the *otium* is translating poetry, and in these final lines of c. 51, he encourages himself to return to the *negotium* of original poetry. While this is certainly an attractive idea, Catullus states in c. 50 that he and Licinius spend a *die otiose* composing original verse. Kruck argues that nothing in c. 50 indicates any serious poetry is occurring, but

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<sup>125</sup> Jensen (1967) and Fordyce (1961: 219) both state this argument. Jensen sees no link between the content of Sappho 31 and the end of c. 51, and sees no similar tonal shift in any other Catullus poem, but does not consider that a link can be found in c. 50 that makes the transition make sense. Fordyce suggests that there is an issue in the manuscript, but does not suggest a satisfactory alternative for where the final lines would belong if not in c. 51. On the other hand, D'Angour (2006) argues that a similar reversal occurs in Sappho 51, though we have only fragments of that remaining, and that Catullus Romanized the ending by blaming the suffering on *otium* instead of on, as D'Angour suggests Sappho does, love.

<sup>126</sup> Clark (2008) notes that externally visible symptoms are omitted from the Catullus translation. She sees the *otium* as *otium* from sexual behaviour, for which he is suffering. While this is interesting, it is not textually supported. O'Higgins (1990) observes that Catullus does not soothe himself in the end, as Sappho seems to, but reproaches himself (165). She sees the destruction that he goes through as completed, not prematurely ended (167). Her view on the *otium* is that it is not inactivity in a literary or amatory way, but a "reluctance or failure to confront in one or more areas of life" (166). She disagrees with Segal (1970) and Itzkowitz (1983) who divide *otium* into two aspects. Her explanation of the role of *otium* is vague and she does not elaborate.

<sup>127</sup> Hanchey (2013): 182–184.

I believe that this undervalues the role that their textual exchange played in their individual and group identity formation. The subject matter of the poetry may not be serious but, as the invocation to Nemesis at the end reflects, the act of exchanging poetry was.<sup>128</sup> Instead, I suggest that “*scribens versiculos uterque nostrum / ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc*”<sup>129</sup> could indicate that translation was a part of their *otiosus* day. With this addendum, I see Kruck’s theory on the meaning of *otium* in c. 51 as possible. If we engage with this theory, in Catullan discourses, *otium* is for non-original poetry and for confirming social identity and group membership, while original poetry is, if not *negotium*, not *otium*.<sup>130</sup> Stroup sees the *otium* as destructive because he is able to enter the reciprocal textual relationships in his *otium* and is at risk of gathering too many obligations. While I do not agree with her conclusion that the final verse is an ironic reclamation of his poetic persona, I do agree that textual obligation is a major theme in cc. 50 and 51. He is, as Stroup points out, tied to Lesbia, Sappho, and Licinius in cc. 50 to 51, which is a lot of bonds to fit into one poem. It is no wonder that his persona is stretched thin.

Hanchey, Kruck, and Stroup all propose excellent theories. Due to the multiplicity of discourses extant in Rome, any or all of them could be possible. With either Kruck or Stroup’s theory, *otium* is firmly connected to textual creation and group identity, but in Hanchey’s theory, *otium* is much more individual and a time for indulgence in affairs. The former discourse of *otium* is seen in c. 50, and the latter in c. 68b. Both discourses can be occurring at once, especially as Catullus offers no overt clarifying information. Stroup’s theory is, to me, the most convincing, as it connects to the use of *otium* in c. 50, and I see the two poems as a

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<sup>128</sup> Kruck (2014): 139–141. Kruck goes on to say that Cicero also describes the act of translating as an *otium*, but to Cicero, all literary creation was the province of *otium*, not just translation.

<sup>129</sup> c. 50.4–5: “Writing little verses, both of us were playing now in one meter now another.”

<sup>130</sup> I say not *negotium*, as Catullus does not refer to his writing at any point as a kind of ‘work’. I do not feel confident in asserting that he viewed poetry composition as a *negotium*.

unit. Catullus begins in a time for engaging in reciprocal relationships but does not leave it, thus stretching himself too thin and risking his reputation and poetic persona in the process.

Catullus 68b is a 120-line ring composition poem, starting and ending with a thanks to Allius, with *otium* nestled in the middle. *Otium* plays an interesting role here, dissimilar to Catullus' other uses at first glance:

*undique pubes  
Graeca penetralis deseruisse focos,  
ne Paris abducta gavisus libera moecha  
otia pacato degeret in thalamo.*

To [Troy] at that time the young Greek men from hearths all over  
[are said] to have zealously gathered so that Paris might not pass  
free *otium* in a peaceful chamber delighting in his stolen mistress.

c. 68b.99–104

Here, *otium* is a time in which an affair might take place. It is clear from Catullus' poetic corpus that he was not against an affair, but he is, in 68b, rather against Troy, as it is where his brother is buried. The tone of the *otium* is difficult to grasp. Stroup makes an interesting point about c. 68b, where the *otium* is a reflection of the literary nature of the figures Paris and Helen, and that it is Greek in tone. However, her argument is based on later Imperial uses of the plural *otia* that signified time for writing, and there is no reason to assume that Catullus uses this later discourse in c. 68b.<sup>131</sup> Her analysis of *otium* may be informed by the subject matter of her own study, which focuses on textual creation. It is possible that Catullus here uses *otium* to mean 'free time,' similar to how it was used in the comedies of Terence and Plautus. In the comedies, *otium* is time free of obligation. The young men with *otium* get into compromising situations during this free time, and then those situations become the main plot of the play.<sup>132</sup> While

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<sup>131</sup> Stroup (2007): 54, n.33.

<sup>132</sup> For more on *otium* in comedy, see Stroup (2007): 40–42 and Hanchey (2013): 174–177.

comedy might seem out of place in a poem that mentions Catullus' dead brother, we must keep in mind that this is all within the structure of a thanks to Allius for allowing Catullus to meet his mistress. Catullus may be drawing parallels to the comic situation of himself sneaking through a field to go visit a woman in a secluded hut to the epic affair of Paris and Helen by using some of the language of comedy to describe them. This usage is related to, as Hanchey suggests he is in c. 51, using *otium* to refer to free time in which affairs can be undertaken. Comedy may have popularized the use, but Catullus may not be relying on *otium* as a time to get in trouble in c. 68b, instead just as time to carry out an affair.

## CHAPTER 5: *OTIUM* IN SALLUST

Gaius Sallustius Crispus was born in 86 and died around 35.<sup>133</sup> Sallust entered political life in Rome and became tribune of the plebs in 52. During this year, he supported the prosecution of Milo for the murder of Clodius, working opposite Cicero's defense. He was also a supporter of Caesar, later siding with him in the civil war.<sup>134</sup> He led an unsuccessful campaign in Illyricum in 49, and narrowly escaped death in 47 when he failed to end a mutiny near Rome. He accompanied Caesar to Africa in 46 as praetor, where Pompey's remaining army was defeated. Subsequently, he served as governor of Africa Nova, a position that he abused with extensive oppression and extortion, only escaping charges due to the influence of Caesar.<sup>135</sup> Upon his return to Rome after the assassination of Caesar, Sallust retired from public life, and he began working on his historical literature sometime in or after 44.

J.A. Rosenblitt has proposed that, in Sallust, we can see examples of a political discourse that competes ideologically with the one Cicero presents. The discourse with which a speaker engages is a way to demonstrate ideological allegiance and show the type of politics with which he engaged.<sup>136</sup> In presenting the speeches of prominent political figures, Sallust engages in many discourses around what makes a proper Roman man, and what is good for Rome. Sallust takes a stance that is rather anti-*nobilis* in his literature, attributing their success

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<sup>133</sup> Sources for birth and death dates examined in Ramsey (2007): 1. The following information on Sallust can also be seen in Ramsey (2007): 1–5.

<sup>134</sup> Sallust is commonly portrayed as a life-long follower of Caesar, but this may not be the case. Ramsey (2007) points out that his opposition to Milo may have been because of a connection to Pompey (3). There is only one piece of evidence connecting Sallust to Caesar in 52, the bill unanimously passed by all ten tribunes to allow Caesar a second consulship. This bill was also supported by Pompey (Caes. *BCiv.* 1.32.3; Cic. *Att.* 7.1.4).

<sup>135</sup> This tale of his extortion comes from Dio 43.9.2, and his rescue by Caesar from Dio 43.47.4.

<sup>136</sup> Rosenblitt (2016): 660. Rosenblitt presents an alternative to the dominant Mostein-Marx theory which claims that there is no united popular rhetoric to be found within Sallust. Rosenblitt examines the speeches of Lepidus, Macer, and Memmius to demonstrate that there are similarities in their rhetoric despite them being different levels of 'extreme' in their political beliefs.

to their abuses of power, and placing the decline of the Republic on their hands.<sup>137</sup> I agree with Rosenblitt that there is a continuity of discourse within Sallust's speakers, especially Macer and Lepidus, and that Sallust engages with Cicero's political discourses in a way that separates his speakers from them. Rosenblitt briefly examines *cum servitio otium / cum dignitate otium*, but there is much more to look at in regards to Sallust's *otium* and the discourses of Roman political identity.

Before discussing the discourses in Sallust, it is worthwhile to examine some past and current approaches to his politics. Mommsen popularized the idea of Sallust as a partisan of Caesar, and his writings as political pamphleteering in favour of Caesarians. The view of Sallust as an active political partisan is countered by the theory that sees Sallust as an individual with no connections to the political sphere. Gerrish suggests that both of these theories make Sallust a "relic of the Caesarian era who had lingered past his time," either unable to move forward or running blindly away.<sup>138</sup> Instead of these theories, Gerrish presents a Sallust who responded to the present, who, while withdrawn from active politics, was still connected to his contemporary Rome.<sup>139</sup> In this view, his writing is a response to and engagement with the political discourses of his time.

When Sallust uses *otium* to indicate a time for writing in his first monograph, he does so with great care and ample justification. Before discussing his writing, Sallust gives a brief

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<sup>137</sup> Earl (1961): 39. Earl compares Sallust's opinion of the *nobiles* to that of Cicero, the *novus homo* who desired to be recognized as an equal on his own merit. Instead of desiring to have his own work valued by the *nobiles*, Sallust cites the fall of Carthage as the time when *ambitio* and *avaritia* overwhelmed the *nobiles*, who then abused their positions for more power and luxury. While Cicero reworks the term *bonus* in *Pro Sestio*, Sallust wants to rework the value of being a *nobilis*.

<sup>138</sup> Gerrish (2019): 4.

<sup>139</sup> Gerrish (2019): 4.



overview of his past in politics, which he portrays negatively.<sup>140</sup> With that done, he delves into his writing:

*igitur ubi animus ex multis miseriis atque periculis requievit et mihi reliquam aetatem a re publica procul habendam decrevi, non fuit consilium socordia atque desidia bonum otium conterere, neque vero agrum colundo aut venando, servilibus officiis, intentum aetatem agere; sed a quo incepto studioque me ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus statui res gestas populi Romani carptim, ut quaeque memoria digna videbantur, perscribere, eo magis quod mihi a spe metu partibus rei publicae animus liber erat.*

Therefore when my mind recovered from my many misfortunes and dangers, and I decided that I must spend my remaining time a long distance away from public affairs, it was not my plan to waste my good *otium* with sloth and idleness, nor indeed to lead my life focused on tending fields or hunting, servile occupations, but, returning to the pursuit and undertaking from which evil ambition had detained me, I resolved to write out the achievements of the Roman people in separate parts, whatever seemed worthy of memory, for this reason I was all the more inclined because my mind was free from hope, fear, and political partisanship.

Sall. *Cat.* 4.1–2

He refers to the events of his past as *multae miserae et pericula*,<sup>141</sup> and because of those events and the peril of politics that were so corrupt, he was forced to retreat from public life.<sup>142</sup> By

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<sup>140</sup> Sal. *Cat.* 3: *Sed ego adolescentulus initio sicuti plerique studio ad rem publicam latus sum, ibique mihi multa advorsa fuere. nam pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro virtute audacia largitio avaritia vigeabant. quae tametsi animus aspernabatur insolens malarum artium, tamen inter tanta vitia imbecilla aetas ambitione corrupta tenebatur; ac me, quom ab reliquorum malis moribus dissentirem, nihilo minus honoris cupido eadem qua ceteros fama atque invidia vexabat.* “But I, as a young man, was first, like many others, led by zeal to partake in politics; and there, there were many forces against me. For in place of modesty, in place of temperance, in place of integrity, boldness, corruption, and greed prevailed. Although my mind spurned these things, being unaccustomed to wicked arts, nevertheless amid such great vices my young age was held, having been corrupted by ambition; but I, who disagreed with the evil character of the others, nevertheless was troubled by the same desire for political office by means of which reputation and jealousy troubled the others.

<sup>141</sup> Sal. *Cat.* 4: “Many misfortunes and dangers.”

<sup>142</sup> Sallust had a particularly tough time against Milo and Cicero in 52, which resulted in him being removed from the senate on various charges of corruption that may have been greatly exaggerated. This may have been a political purge by the optimates, against whom Sallust stood many times. The optimates are likely the corruption to which Sallust refers (Ramsey (2007): 4).

emphasizing the difficulty that he endured, he offers an excuse for his extended *otium*. His short time in politics, he suggests, was difficult enough to count as a lifetime of public business. He goes on to say that he is suited to writing the accomplishments of the Roman people specifically because “*a spe metu partibus rei publicae animus liber erat.*”<sup>143</sup> Sallust strips from himself any connection to his past in the political sphere. He stresses that his work is not connected to his prior life or alliances, and he is the impartial narrator of the past.<sup>144</sup> This new, neutral life, seems virtuous in comparison to the political world that he describes as corrupt in *Cat.* 3, and a life of *otium* becomes the better choice when presented in this way.

Sallust’s claim that his *otium* will be spent not in *socordia* or *desidia* demonstrates the discourse that *otium* is to be used productively. Ramsey points out the contrast between *bonum otium* and *ambitio mala*, perhaps to offset *otium* from *desidia*, with which it could be synonymous.<sup>145</sup> *Otium* is different from those negative states and so, then, are the activities that take place in that *otium*.<sup>146</sup> Writing the deeds of the Roman people is both productive and provides a broad benefit, unlike the current state of Roman politics. Sallust will not engage in another *officium*, like hunting or farming, that is *servile*.<sup>147</sup> The act of writing in *otium* is thereby elevated to the same importance as political work; it provides a benefit to the state and is not a ‘slavish’ task.

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<sup>143</sup> Sal. *Cat.* 4: “My mind is free from hope, fear, and political partisanship.”

<sup>144</sup> Marincola (1997): 138–139 points out that Sallust, in his prefaces, attempts to justify what, in the traditional mindset, he had not yet earned, and thus must portray the political arena as corrupt and thus of no benefit to the republic.

<sup>145</sup> Ramsey (2007): 66.

<sup>146</sup> It is also possible that one can partake in activities that are *socordia* and *desidia* in *otium*, and that Sallust is placing only the act of writing against such activities instead of *otium* as a whole. Both accomplish the same result: Sallust’s writing is an acceptable, productive activity.

<sup>147</sup> Ramsey (2007): 66 points out that Cato (*Agr. Praef.*) and Cicero (*Off.* 1.151) call agriculture one of the worthiest occupations a free man can have, which seems to reflect the typical Roman opinion of farming. He suggests that Sallust rejects this as he may be thinking only of activities that use one’s *ingenium* or *animus* rather than the *corpus*.

In his introduction to *Bellum Catilinae*, then, Sallust both relies on and modifies the discourse on what *otium* is. He relies on the existing discourse in which *otium* is a time for textual creation, as already developed by Cicero and Catullus, and, tangentially, on *cum dignitate otium* by using his past career to justify his *otium*. As a *popularis* politician, it was more complicated for him to follow the ideal that the *optimates* Cicero set out; to him, the senatorial *status quo* was more of a hinderance than something to be protected. As such, he had to modify the discourses by asserting that he does not need to partake in ongoing *negotium* to have *otium*; he can provide an equal benefit to society in *otium* alone through his writing. *Otium* for writing is shaped into his *dignitas*, his *officium*, expanding and modifying the discourse to work for his new reality.<sup>148</sup>

In the opening of *Bellum Jugurthinum*, published around 41, Sallust once again modifies the discourses on *otium*. Sallust further distances himself from his past actions, discussing the current political state obliquely and as if he had not been involved in political activities in the past.<sup>149</sup> As in *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust contrasts his writing with the political work of others, but here, instead of using his past career as justification for his choice to write, he now values his writing above politics:

*atque ego credo fore qui, quia decrevi procul a re publica aetatem  
agere, tanto tamque utili labori meo nomen inertiae inponant,  
certe quibus maxuma industria videtur salutare plebem et conviviis  
gratiam quaerere, qui si reputaverint, et quibus ego temporibus*

<sup>148</sup> In *Cat.* 8, Sallust attributes the memory of the greatness of the Athenians to it being written down by historians. Until now, he argues, Rome has had no such historians. Now, though, they have Sallust, who can immortalize them, making his work a great benefit to the state.

<sup>149</sup> *Sal. Jug.* 3: *Verum ex iis magistratus et imperia, postremo omnis cura rerum publicarum minime mihi hac tempestate cupiunda videntur, quoniam neque virtuti honos datur neque illi, quibus per fraudem ius fuit, tuti aut eo magis honesti sunt. nam vi quidem regere patriam aut parentis, quamquam et possis et delicta corrigas, tamen inportunum est, quom praesertim omnes rerum mutationes caedem, fugam aliaque hostilia portendant.* “Indeed, from these [pursuits], civil and military posts, and indeed all care of public affairs seem to me, at this time, not at all to be desired, since the honour of public office is not given to excellence, nor are those to whom authority has come through fraud safe or more respected for that reason. For to rule our country or subjects by force, although you may be able to and might correct wrongdoings, is unseemly, especially as all changes of affairs lead to slaughter, exile, and other hostile things.”

*magistratus adeptus sim et quales viri idem adsequi nequiverint et postea quae genera hominum in senatum pervenerint, profecto existumabunt me magis merito quam ignavia iudicium animi mei mutavisse maiusque commodum ex otio meo quam ex aliorum negotiis rei publicae venturum.*

And I believe that there will be some who, since I have decided to live out my life away from the political sphere, will place the name ‘laziness’ on my so useful and arduous work, certainly those to whom it seems that the greatest toil is to court the masses and seek out favour through banquets. If those men consider both in what circumstances I gained the political office and the sort of men who were unable to acquire it, and afterwards what types of men came into the senate, certainly they will think that I have changed the judgement of my mind more from sense than laziness, and that there will come a greater benefit to the Republic from my otium than from the negotium of others.

Sal. Jug. 4

The opinion is limited to ‘some men,’ specifically those who criticize Sallust for his absence from public life. Sallust reduced the role of political work to something that only seems important (*videtur*).<sup>150</sup> Writing is *inertia* to these men because they engage in a different, but not better, discourse. Sallust further removes their authority when he mentions his prior, undignified career in politics as a way to criticize the current political state in which his detractors engage. Furthermore, he calls his writing “*labor*” before making his statement on the beliefs of those who speak against him. He contrasts his work with their work; the only difference is that these men do not perceive his work as such. Sallust explains his views of writing as not *otium* by engaging with the discourse of *otium* as time opposite political work. His writing is only called *otium* in direct opposition to *negotium*, otherwise his writing is a

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<sup>150</sup> The importance of ‘seeming’ over being is discussed in regards to Sappho 31 and Catullus c. 51 by O’Higgins (1990), where the repetition of ‘seeming’ in Sappho 31 indicates a closed ring that contains the experience, making it ‘unreal’. Catullus, by contrast, introduces the ‘seeming’ godlike aspect of the man, which he does not undercut, but confirms and expands by making him godlike (157, 162). Sallust’s use of ‘seeming’ has no such confirmation of the positive, leaving it ambiguous and leaving the possibility that the belief is untrue. Additionally, Sallust describes M. Porcius Cato (*Cat.* 54) as *esse quam videri bonus malebat*, “He preferred to be, rather than to appear, a good man.”

*labor*.<sup>151</sup> He contrasts the benefit of his so-called *otium* with the political work of others to highlight how ill-fitting a label *otium* is for his writing. How can it truly be called *otium* when it does more for the Roman people than *negotium*?<sup>152</sup> When it is the more honourable choice with how the political world is at the time of writing? Sallust undercuts the dominant discourse by exposing a fault in it. He can not access *negotium*, and, even if he could, the men who are a part of that world are not, he suggests, good men. His writing is no longer an *otium*, nor does his dedication to it require an excuse; it has surpassed politics in benefit and ability to provide *dignitas*.

Elsewhere in Sallust, including in the *Histories*, *otium* indicates ‘free time’ in twelve instances.<sup>153</sup> There is no sense of *otium* as directly opposite public work in these instances, only as time devoid of occupation of any kind. Five of these instances are neutral; nothing bad or good comes from this *otium*, it is a temporal marker alone.<sup>154</sup> Sallust portrays *otium* negatively equally often. It is a time that allows skills to fade, as seen in *Cat.* 11 and 16, when the forces of Sulla and then Catiline are ruined, or at risk of ruin, from *otium*:

*huc adcedebat quod L. Sulla exercitum, quem in Asia ductaverat, quo sibi fidum faceret, contra morem maiorum luxuriose nimisque liberaliter habuerat. loca amoena voluptaria facile in otio ferocis militum animos molliverant*

To this there was added [the fact that] Lucius Sulla was treating his army, which he had led into Asia, excessively luxuriously and freely, in order to make them loyal to him, contrary to the *mos*

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<sup>151</sup> A *labor* is a more general term than *negotium*. *Negotium* is most often applied to politics, though it is a *labor*. Each *negotium* is a *labor*, but a *labor* is not necessarily a *negotium*.

<sup>152</sup> Marincola (1997): 139 also notes that Sallust emphasizes the importance of his *otium* in relation to the corrupt *negotium* of the political sphere. There is no place for principled men in the government, so he turns to historiography.

<sup>153</sup> *Cat.* 11, 16, 17, 37; *Jug.* 13, 14, 55, 66, 76, 95; *Hist.* 1.49.25 R; *Hist.* 1.67.11 R. Numbering for the *Histories* is from Ramsey (2015).

<sup>154</sup> *Hist.* 1.67.11 R: Lepidus despises *otium* and hates war; *Jug.* 13: Jugurtha reflects in a moment of *otium*; 55: Jugurtha allows no *otium* to the army setting out to fight him; and 95: Sulla spends time in luxurious *otium* but this is neither positive nor negative.

*maiorum. In otium, the lovely comfortable province had softened the spirits of the fierce soldiers.*<sup>155</sup>

Cat. 11

*si causa peccandi in praesens minus suppetebat, nihilo minus insontis sicuti sontis circumvenire iugulare: scilicet ne per otium torpescerent manus aut animus, gratuito potius malus atque crudelis erat.*

If a reason for crime was less at hand at the moment, nevertheless he [Catiline] surrounded the innocent as if they were guilty and killed them; certainly, lest hands or mind grow torpid through otium, he was gratuitously and purposefully wicked and cruel.

Cat. 16

When a group of people have *otium* in Sallust, it leads to loss of skill or idleness. This can be caused by mismanagement, as in the case of Sulla, or prevented by keeping individuals busy, as with Catiline. Regardless of what the busy-work is, the *otium* is seen as a negative by Sallust in *Cat.* 11 and by Catiline in 16. As seen in *Cat.* 11, *otium* connected to terms like *luxuria* and *voluptas*, things that are over indulgences and can cause corruption.

In both *Jug.* 76 and *Cat.* 37, *otium* results in conspiracy and dissent. A person, or group of people in *otium* does not make things easier for the leading people, but more complicated. I will introduce both passages and analyse them below. At this point in *Bellum Jugurthinum*, Jugurtha is contending with Metellus and is frequently shifting his plans out of fear of traitors. By *Cat.* 37, Catiline has fled the city and his camps are still full of supporters. Sallust pauses to reflect on how Rome got to this state, able to be broken by civil war, and lists some of the causes:

*neque postea in ullo loco amplius uno die aut una nocte moratus, simulabat sese negoti gratia properare, ceterum proditionem*

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<sup>155</sup> *Otium* is linked to the idea that loss of *metus hostilis* led to the decline of Rome. With no more fear of the enemy, the Romans turned to lives of luxury and destructive *otium*. For more on *metus hostilis*, see Jacobs (2010), who discusses the rise of the concept in Latin historiography. For *metus hostilis* as a socio-political force, see Mumper (2017): 43–54.

*timebat, quam vitare posse celeritate putabat: nam talia consilia per otium et ex opportunitate capi*

Nor afterward did he [the king] delay in one place for more than one day or night, he pretended that he was hastening for the sake of *negotium*, but he was fearing treachery which he thought he might be able to escape through speed: for such conspiracies took hold through *otium* and opportunity.

*Jug. 76*

*praeterea iuventus, quae in agris manuum mercede inopiam toleraverat, privatis atque publicis largitionibus excita urbanum otium ingrato labori praetulerat. eos atque alios omnis malum publicum alebat.*

Furthermore, youths who had endured poverty by manual labour in the fields, having been roused by private and public lavish giving, preferred urban *otium* to thankless labour. These and all others were nourished by the general state of corruption.

*Cat. 37*

A group of people in Sallust, especially the Romans, with *otium* is dangerous. Sallust does not question the king's conclusion that conspiracy begins in *otium*, and it is his narratorial voice that tells the reader that *otium* is what brought Catiline his followers. It is not *otium* alone, though, that is harmful. It is *otium* and opportunity, or *otium* and a general state of corruption. In Sallust, there is nothing beneficial affecting the *otium* that might make it positive. It may be that, in better circumstances, *otium* might be a positive force for a group, and, as in Cicero, objection to it shows bad character.<sup>156</sup> One particularly poignant example of a rejection of the discourse is *Jug.* 14, where Adherbal asks the senate for help in deposing Jugurtha. As his

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<sup>156</sup> Two notable examples of groups rejecting *otium* are as follows: *Cat.* 17: *ceterum iuventus pleraque sed maxime nobilium Catilinae inceptis favebat: quibus in otio vel magnifice vel molliter vivere copia erat; incerta pro certis, bellum quam pacem malebant.* "Besides most of the young men, especially the nobles preferred Catiline's plans: for whom there was an opportunity to live in *otium*, either grandly or luxuriously;" cf. *Jug.* 66: *nam volgus, uti plerumque solet et maxime Numidarum, ingenio mobili, seditiosum atque discordiosum erat, cupidum novarum rerum, quieti et otio advorsum.* "For the common people, as is customary generally and especially among Numidians, having a changeable temperament, were seditious and discordant, fond of revolution, hostile to *otium* and peace."

country had helped Rome in war, he asks for their protection now that they are both in *otium*. Instead, the senate rejects him and his request to uphold *otium* in order to accept bribes from Jugurtha. Their rejection of a plea for group *otium* demonstrates the emptiness of the discourse for Sallust. Adherbal used what Cicero presents as the correct discourse to connect to the senate, but it was rejected for personal gain. While Cicero presents an ideal where the senate and the people work together for the mutual preservation of *otium*, Sallust's senators have no interest in the preservation of *otium* when they could gain money privately. There are no examples of *otium* as peace or tranquility actually occurring or being promised in Sallust, only spurned, suggesting that Sallust does not greatly invest in the discourse of *otium* as tranquility beyond its use as a convenient shorthand for seditious or corrupt people.

Instead of *pax* or *dignitas*, *otium* appears in connection to a different concept in Sallust: *servitium*.

*quae si vobis pax et composita intelleguntur, maxuma turbamenta rei publicae atque exitia probate, adnuite legibus inpositis, accipite otium cum servitio et tradite exemplum posteris ad rem publicam suimet sanguinis mercede circumveniundam.*

If this is understood by you as peace and peaceful situations, approve this massive disturbance and ruin the Republic, assent to the laws which have been imposed on you, accept *otium cum servitio* and hand an example to the next generations to defraud the Republic for the price of their own blood.

*Hist. 1.49.25 R*

*quod ego vos moneo quaesoque ut animadvortatis neu nomina rerum ad ignaviam mutant es otium pro servitio appelletis.*

I warn and beg you this, that you pay attention to not call it *otium* instead of *servitium*, changing the name of the thing for the purpose of cowardice.

*Hist. 3.15.13 R*



In the mouths of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus and C. Licinius Macer, *otium* appears as a cover for *servitium*. The political situation after Sulla's death was volatile and several factions emerged with different opinions on how to proceed. Lepidus was one of those who first attempted to undo the Sullan constitution, against Sulla's supporters wishes, and march upon Rome. Macer was a historian and a *popularis* politician who, in this work, is petitioning for the rights of the people in 73. He was convicted of bribery by Cicero in 66 and killed himself as a result. The use of *otium* by these men as a direct opposite to how Cicero used it, in the mouth of someone whom Cicero prosecuted, suggests that *otium* as *pax* was a recognized political shorthand at the time of Sallust's writing and that one could make a political statement by reframing that dominant discourse.<sup>157</sup> *Cum servitio otium* is also a powerful reworking of *cum dignitate otium*, raising the question of *dignitas* for whom. Does Cicero's idealized *otium* benefit anyone but the other men of his rank and ideology? Sallust does not seem to think so. It is a discursive shorthand for control in Sallust, as shown by its transformation into *cum servitio otium*. Does Sallust place the blame for the decline of the Republic on the people who opposed change with *cum dignitate otium* or on those who failed to effect the change? Lepidus gives an impassioned speech against accepting Sulla's rule, but, in Sallust's view, the morals of the Romans were already failing. The fault lies, in Sallust's works, not with one man but with all of Rome for their growing comfort with their enemies, their indulgence in luxury, and their desire for power. In Sallust, a group with *otium* is, if you'll forgive the imagery, one of the horsemen of the fall of Rome, alongside luxury, loss of fear, and greed.

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<sup>157</sup> It is also possible that *otium* as *pax* was a discourse in the time periods covered in the *Histories*. Terence does use *otium* as an opposite to *bellum* in *Adelphoe* (20), but that is our earliest non-fragmentary source.

## CHAPTER 6: COMPARISON OF AUTHORS

Now that each author's use of *otium* has been examined individually, I will compare the major categories between them. I will begin with *otium* as peace and *cum dignitate otium*, then *otium* as a time to write, and finally *otium* as free time and *otium* as time opposite public business.

*Otium* as peace appears as an attainable ideal in Cicero. It should be the ultimate goal of any citizen and leads to *dignitas* for those who fight to achieve such communal *otium*. When people are in *otium*, it is a sign that they are content and are less likely to revolt or want change. If it were not for the few corrupt men who hate communal *otium* standing in the way, Rome would be in this state and be safe from harm. While Cicero continues to engage in this discourse up until his death, Sallust alters it. In Sallust's mind, a group with *otium* is, more often than not, open to corruption, idleness, loss of skill, or sedition. Those who, in Cicero's mind, ought to want to preserve communal *otium* reject it in favour of bribes. This alteration may be a result of Sallust holding differing political opinions from Cicero and thus rejecting the more traditional discourses, or it could also be a result of the numerous civil wars and uprisings making Cicero's 'otium is peace' and communal *cum dignitate otium* seem almost laughable. Sallust replaces the term with *cum servitio otium*, turning Cicero's ideals into hollow words that cover up the subjugation of the Roman people to rule by a few men. They may be in *otium* while these self-styled *boni* men are in control, but, Sallust seems to say, it is truly slavery.

*Otium* as a time for writing evolves from an activity that takes place to occupy one's time away from politics, to the purpose of *otium*, to non-existent because writing is not *otium*. When Cicero discusses writing in *otium*, it is integral that the *otium* is a product of political work. Letters are written when there is a break in work and are generally about political affairs, speeches for *negotium* are composed and written down when one has a moment of *otium*, and

a balance of *otium* and *negotium* creates the best writing. Writing is just one of the potential uses for *otium*, and not the best one; study is a much better use, as education can improve one's *negotium*. For Catullus, *otium* is for writing. The *otium* is not gained from political work; when its 'opposite' is mentioned, that opposite is what those in the political world might consider to be a form of *otium*. The discourse that Catullus engages in to form his identity values *otium* over *negotium*, and shifts what belongs to either definition. Catullus inverts what is expected of him, and uses writing in *otium* as a way to reinforce membership of his group, parallel to the favours done in the world of politics. Sallust, on the other hand, shifts from *otium* for writing as a replacement or substitute for political work to 'writing is not an activity of *otium*'.

The three authors interact with *otium* as writing in whatever ways help them solidify and reinforce their own identities in the Roman world. Cicero views himself as an upright citizen of the Republic, and the discourses in which he invests demonstrate that. In his ideal, the Roman man works in the courts for his patrons or clients, wins political office through election, protects the state from harm, and is rewarded for this work with relaxation and respect. When this ideal becomes unattainable, he shifts his ideals slightly to value the benefit that literature produced by a politician in his free time can provide to others in society, especially those who desire to follow the same path. Cicero does not, in his writing, admit that the world has changed in irreversible ways. He continued to create texts that were in line with his view of the ideal Rome until his death. Catullus' view of the Roman world and his sense of identity involved much less politics and much more literature. The discourses with which he and his fellows engage in value *otium* and writing in *otium* as central to identity formation. If there is an opposite to *otium*, it is not politics or public works, but *convivia* and reading bad poetry. He has inverted the discourses that are present in the public sphere, as, by the time he was of age to engage in politics, there was so much strife, uncertainty, and inaccessibility to the public

world that entering it might have seemed tantamount to madness. Sallust suggests the same thing when talking about his retreat from politics. Unlike Catullus, Sallust did enter the political arena, with disastrous results. He played the game, was swept up in the corruption, and retreated in mild disgrace. When he re-emerges with *Bellum Catilinae*, he styles writing as equivalent to his previous career. With *Bellum Jugurthinum*, Sallust takes a different stance on the political discourses surrounding *otium* and identity; perhaps it was due to the positive reception of his first book, or the further decline in the traditional method of self-forming, but here Sallust completely replaces politics with writing. Writing is barely an act of *otium* in *Bellum Jugurthinum*. It is directly contrasted with the expected *negotium* of politics and judged by Sallust as more worthy. He establishes for himself a discourse where his place in society and his identity as a Roman are tied to his writing of history and not, as they were previously, to his political work.

*Otium* as free time, its broadest sense, is not frequent in Cicero. He prefers to specify exactly what the *otium* is opposite to and also what it is being used for. There is no ambiguity in his portrayal that *otium* is a time earned by public business. Catullus, though, rarely specifies an opposite for the *otium*. It does not need to be earned; it exists without *negotium*. It can be used for a variety of things, from talking to friends, to writing, to taking liberties with one's illegally taken Spartan bride. Sallust mentioned *negotium* with his *otium* for the purpose of arguing that *otium* does not require ongoing *negotium* to exist. Otherwise, *otium* is extant without opposite. It is a way to mark a vacancy in time.

## CONCLUSION

The three authors individually use *otium* in ways that align with the other views that they express in their works. Cicero is a *bonus* who believes that the Republic can be saved by good men working together to preserve tradition. These beliefs are demonstrated by his engagement with discourses that frame *otium* as the peace of an idyllic past that can be achieved through public work and will supply more opportunities for men to distinguish themselves. He values public work over private action and *otium* ought to be used to support public work. Catullus is a young poet who does not engage in public life, preferring to invest his time in private relationships and norms that run parallel to the dominant discursive norms. His *otium*, then, is not dependent on public work and is a time when he forges social bonds and obligations that strengthen his identity in his social group. The point of life for Catullus is *otium*. Sallust is a former *popularis* politician who left politics after the upheaval of 44 and began to write histories. For him *otium* is a way to frame his shift in career as acceptable in the eyes of his detractors, using their discourses. Once he has established himself, he removes *otium* from writing altogether, making literary creation an acceptable identity-forming activity for a man, instead of politics. What we see in these authors is a large spread of ideals and beliefs vying for space amongst each other and others around them. Each author declares that his is the correct discourse while negotiating with the ideals and beliefs of others, shifting themselves or each other to make space.

An analysis of *otium* in 60–40 BCE reveals the complexity inherent in any time period, especially one involving great change. The changes seen in this period foreshadow later ideals that grow in prominence under Augustus, namely the great value of literary production. The shift begins with Catullus and Sallust as they modify the older ideals that Cicero promotes to make space for their own identities. This study is only a glimpse at the complex relationships

occurring within and between the discourses of Roman men in this period of change. I examine only how *otium* figured in to discourses on how to be a Roman man, but there are a myriad of other terms and ideas that I do not examine and voices that no longer exist to be examined. It is my hope that this research will allow further research to be done on how *otium* and the use of *otium* was used by leading men to justify their own actions and provide a model for how to act. Augustus famously promoted literary creation in the early days of his rule, and I believe that the discourse shifts regarding *otium* that occurred in 60–40 are partially responsible. With Augustus controlling the majority of politics, men had no access to previous methods of identity formation. By promoting literary creation as a masculine activity worthy of praise, Augustus could have been reducing the need for political activity in his subjects and making his control over politics more acceptable. If Roman men did not need politics to be men, but could write in their new *otium*, why would they risk it? At this point, this theory is only conjecture, but it is an avenue that I wish to pursue.

# APPENDIX I

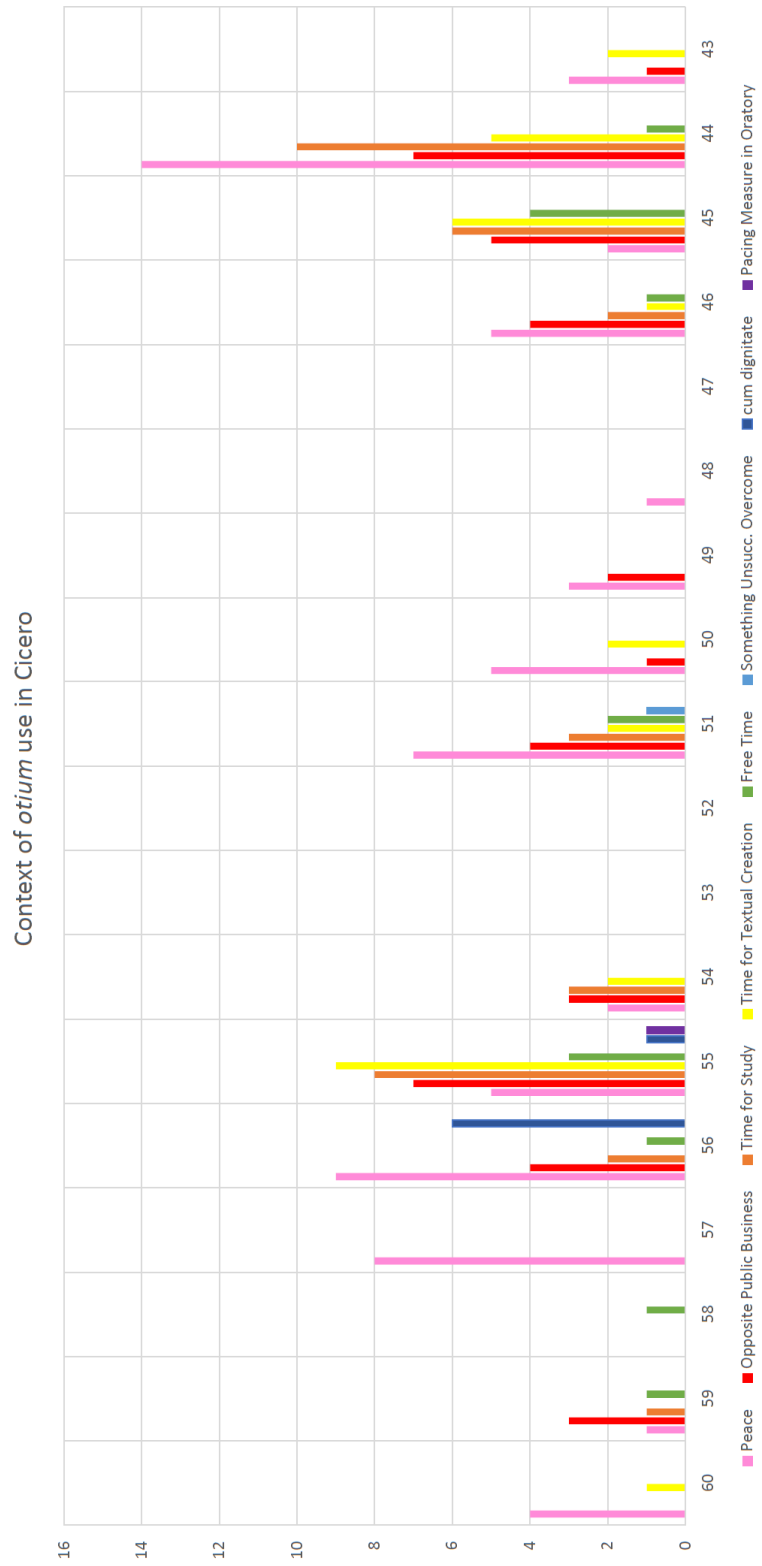


Figure 1: Context of *otium* use in Cicero

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