

DANIEL J. KAPUST



REPUBLICANISM, RHETORIC, AND ROMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

SALLUST, LIVY, AND TACITUS



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University of Georgia



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REPUBLICANISM, RHETORIC, AND ROMAN
POLITICAL THOUGHT

Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought develops readings of Rome's three most important Latin historians – Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus – in light of contemporary discussions of republicanism and rhetoric. Drawing on recent scholarship as well as other classical writers and later political thinkers, this book develops interpretations of the three historians' writings centering on their treatments of liberty, rhetoric, and social and political conflict. Sallust is interpreted as an antagonistic republican, for whom elite conflict serves as an outlet and channel for the antagonisms of political life. Livy is interpreted as a consensualist republican, for whom character and its observation help to maintain the body politic. Tacitus is interpreted as being centrally concerned with the development of prudence and as a subtle critic of imperial rule.

Daniel J. Kapust is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at The University of Georgia. He is the author of several published or forthcoming articles and book chapters on Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Cicero, Machiavelli, Hobbes, political fear, republicanism, and Friedrich Hayek. Professor Kapust received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in political science.

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This book's origin is in a doctoral dissertation of a different name and slightly different topic, *Rereading Republicans: Roman History and Liberal Dilemmas*, defended at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 2005. I began to write *Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought* in the fall of 2006, and continued to work on it through the spring of 2010. During that time, portions of the book were presented at meetings of the American Political Science Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, and the Southern Political Science Association, as well as at a workshop sponsored by the Politics Department at Fairfield University.

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Nam simul te aspexi, nihil est super mi.

— Catulus 51

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page vii
1 Introduction	I
2 An Ambiguous Republican: Sallust on Fear, Conflict, and Community	27
3 Channeling Conflict through Antagonistic Rhetoric in the <i>War with Catiline</i>	53
4 Exemplarity and Goodwill in Livy's <i>From the Founding of Rome</i>	81
5 Tacitus on Great Men, Bad Rulers, and Prudence	111
6 Tacitus' Moral Histories	141
<i>Epilogue</i>	173
<i>Bibliography</i>	177
<i>Index</i>	191

INTRODUCTION

I. SETTING THE STAGE

In his dialogue *Brutus*, written in 46 BCE, Cicero describes the deep pain he experienced at the death of Quintus Hortensius four years earlier. Hortensius was not only a friend, but like a father to Cicero: A distinguished man of like political sympathies when there was a “great dearth of wise and patriotic citizens,” he passed in a time of grave public danger.¹ Hortensius was also “a comrade and fellow-worker in the same field of glorious endeavor” – namely, the endeavor of eloquent speaking. Hortensius had been one of Rome’s leading orators; the young Cicero “had to outdo him, if he wished to take over this position” – and he did in the trial of Gaius Verres in 70 BCE.² Yet despite his grief at the passing of his friend, Cicero suggests that he passed “opportunistically”; had he lived longer, he would have been “able only to lament the fate of his country, not to help it.”³

Had Hortensius lived to the time in which Cicero wrote *Brutus*, he, like other “good and loyal men” – *bonis et fortibus civibus* – would “mourn the loss of many things.”⁴ In particular, Hortensius would be saddened at “the spectacle of the Roman forum ... robbed and bereft of that finished

¹ Cicero, *Brutus*, trans. G.L. Hendrickson, *Cicero: Brutus and Orator* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 2. In citing English translations of Latin or Greek texts, I generally cite the translations noted throughout, though I frequently provide key Latin phrases and terms, and occasionally paraphrase or loosely translate the Latin text.

² Manfred Fuhmann, *Cicero and the Roman Republic*, trans. W.E. Yuill (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992), 26.

³ Cicero, *Brutus*, 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

eloquence worthy of the ears of Rome or even of Greece,” emptied of eloquence by the rule of Caesar. For it is this eloquence and its weapons, suggests Cicero, “which are the peculiar and proper resource of a leader in the commonwealth and of a civilized and law-abiding state” – *bene moratae et bene constitutae civitatis*.⁵ Eloquence and its weapons were of little use now that Caesar had taken power.

The passages cited from Cicero are striking in their beauty and sentiment. But their importance for my discussion does not lie in their illustration of Cicero’s emotional state or even their possible effect on the work’s recipient, Marcus Junius Brutus, the future participant in Caesar’s assassination. Rather, Cicero is articulating the close connection between the freedom of the Roman republic and the practice of oratory, a connection seen in the loss of eloquence and the emptying of the forum with Caesar’s displacement of republican politics. This is a common theme in Cicero’s later writings, especially *Orator*, *Brutus*, and *On Duties*: The perils facing the republic and threatening its demise were the perils facing eloquence and threatening its demise as well. With Caesar’s victory in the civil wars, the status of eloquence had – so it seemed – been altered profoundly. We may note, in this regard, a passage from *On Duties*, written in 44 BCE, where Cicero contrasts his leisure with that of P. Scipio Africanus: “my leisure was determined by scarcity of business, not by my eagerness to rest; for when the senate has been suppressed and the lawcourts destroyed, what is there worthy of me that I can do in the senate house or in the forum?”⁶

The reality was, to be sure, more complex; Cicero, as is well known, has a penchant for exaggeration. Cicero was still giving speeches, though some were of a different sort, especially his two so-called Caesarian speeches, the speeches *For Marcellus* and *For Ligarius*, each of which praised Caesar’s clemency. Indeed, in *On Duties*, he refers to “the interruption – not to say the destruction – of eloquence.”⁷ Eloquence was not finished just yet, and Cicero would soon put it to use, though with tragic results, in his *Philippics*. Yet the danger Caesar posed to eloquence and liberty was real, for Cicero, and the relationship between Roman liberty and the practice of oratory was strong in his writings.

⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁶ Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. M.T. Griffin and E.M. Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3.2.

⁷ Cicero, *On Duties*, 2.67.

Cicero is our entry point; he provides a glimpse into the link between liberty, the participatory politics of the Roman republic, and oratory. We may now step forward nearly 150 years to Tacitus, whose *Dialogue on Orators* also centers on rhetoric and its relationship to liberty and order. In this dialogue, the interlocutors debate a number of issues – the relative merits of rhetoric and poetry, the training and ability of the orator, and the usefulness of rhetoric, past and present. The character Maternus, who early in the dialogue defends poetry and attacks oratory, makes an intriguing argument at the end of the dialogue, one that echoes and yet seems to subvert Cicero. He agrees with Cicero in linking oratory to liberty, though with a twist. What for Cicero was liberty is for Maternus license: “great and famous oratory is a foster-child of license, which foolish men call liberty, an associate of seditions, a goad for the unbridled people.”⁸ Rhetoric is thus linked to liberty, but to liberty misconceived, and the practice of rhetoric is not characteristic of the peaceful and well-ordered imperial present of Maternus and his interlocutors, since it “does not grow under a well-regulated constitution.”⁹ The irony is profound: Maternus’s *bene constitutis civitatibus* recalls Cicero’s *bene constituta civitas* and denies eloquence its place, suggesting that Cicero’s past in which eloquence blossomed was not well constituted, and that Cicero, champion of the free republic, misunderstood liberty itself.

In these texts, we see two poles of thinking about liberty and rhetoric – and Roman liberty and rhetoric in particular. One pole emphasizes the centrality of rhetoric to Roman liberty and the Roman republic itself. So close is the connection that in his classic article, “*Libertas* in the Republic,” Brunt remarks that the absence of a Latin equivalent to the Greek term *παρρησία* (frank speech) does not indicate that free speech was not valued in Rome; rather, free speech was so important “that the word *liber* can be used *tout court* to mean ‘speaking one’s mind.’” For Romans – or at least elite Romans – free speech meant speaking what one “felt without being subject to fear or pressure.”¹⁰ The internal conditions of liberty – peaceful and free republican government – could, then, be conceived as linked to the practice of oratory, a point that we will see Cicero making in subsequent discussions of *On the Ideal Orator*.

⁸ Tacitus, *A Dialogue on Oratory*, trans. W. Peterson and M. Winterbottom, *Tacitus: Dialogus, Agricola, Germania* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 40.2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.2.

¹⁰ P.A. Brunt, “*Libertas* in the Republic,” in *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Other Related Essays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988): 281–350, 314.

This is not to say that Rome was a democracy, as Fergus Millar has argued.¹¹ Indeed, much recent scholarship shows that while Rome was participatory, it was not a democracy, at least not in the sense that classical Athens was a democracy.¹² Yet while the Roman republic was no democracy, and was also a highly inegalitarian society, the liberty of the republic pitted the *libertas* of the people against the *auctoritas* of the Senate.¹³ It was antagonism between the people and the Senate, the many and the few, that was the stuff of republican politics, and it was partly the practice of rhetoric that set “limits on the arbitrary exercise of authority ... by figuring it as a practice constrained in part by ‘natural law,’ in part by the consensual standard of public approval.”¹⁴

If rhetoric and liberty were linked in one pole of thought about rhetoric and the Roman republic, the prior can also be understood as paving way for the latter’s destruction. As Hamilton wrote in *Federalist* 1:

of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics, the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people; commencing demagogues and ending tyrants.¹⁵

It is as if Hamilton were paraphrasing Cicero’s speech *On the Agrarian Law*, where Cicero describes:

the hypocritical pretences of certain individuals, who, while attacking and hindering not only the interest but even the safety of the people, are striving by their speeches to obtain the reputation of being supporters of the people.¹⁶

¹¹ See Fergus Millar, *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

¹² See, e.g., K.J. Hölkeskamp, “The Roman Republic: Government of the People, by the People, for the People?,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 19 (2000): 203–23; Robert Morstein-Marx, *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Henrik Mouritsen, *Plebs and Politics in the Late Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For a recent synthesis of this discussion, see Allen M. Ward, “How Democratic Was the Roman Republic?,” *New England Classical Journal* 31, no. 2 (2004): 101–19.

¹³ See Joy Connolly, *The State of Speech; Rhetoric and Political Thought in Ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 64.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁵ Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* 1 in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1961), 35.

¹⁶ Cicero, *De Lege Agraria*, trans. John Henry Freese, *Cicero: Pro Publio Quinctio, Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino, Pro Quinto Roscio Comoedo, De Lege Agraria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 2.7.

Eloquence – and especially the deceptive eloquence of demagogues – could be destructive to liberty and undermine the practice of rhetoric itself insofar as it undermined political liberty. Cicero, for instance, has Scaevola describe the Gracchi in *On the Ideal Orator* as having “shattered the State ... by eloquence.”¹⁷ Roman history abounds with stories of demagogues seeking *regnum* – seeking to make themselves kings.¹⁸ The great Roman historian Ronald Syme termed Caesar a “patrician demagogue,” and the point is clear: Sweet-talking leaders courted the people into the destruction of their liberty.¹⁹

In these texts by Cicero and Tacitus – *Brutus*, *On the Ideal Orator*, *On Duties*, and the *Dialogue on Orators* – we see, then, two themes, and two rival ways of interpreting these themes, whose contested relationship was of great importance in Roman political thought: liberty and rhetoric. Maternus and Cicero agree that rhetoric and liberty are connected, but what was a desirable phenomenon for Cicero was, it seems, undesirable for Maternus. For the latter, the tumult and turmoil of liberty and the play of eloquence was more trouble than it was worth; for the former, eloquence was symptomatic and productive of peace and liberty, rather than discord.

II. THE “ROMAN TURN” IN POLITICAL THEORY AND THE HISTORIANS SALLUST, LIVY, AND TACITUS

These two themes and their problematic connections, important as they were in the thought of Rome, are of great importance to contemporary scholarship in political theory. Indeed, Roman liberty – or republican liberty – has been of much interest to contemporary political theorists, as have the theory and practice of oratory – whether under the name of persuasion or rhetoric. Scholars such as Pettit, Skinner, and Viroli have sought to revive and reinvigorate a Roman-rooted conception of republican politics centered on

¹⁷ Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, trans. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.38.

¹⁸ See Andrew Lintott, *The Constitution of the Roman Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 36.

¹⁹ Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 25. See also Andrew Lintott, “The Crisis of the Republic: Sources and Source-Problems,” in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume IX: The Last Age of the Roman Republic, 146–43 B.C.*, ed. J.A. Crook, Andrew Lintott, and Elizabeth Rawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 1–15, 9–10.

a distinctive conception of liberty, one that rivals the more dominant liberal tradition. Other scholars, such as Allen, Garsten, and Remer have looked to classical rhetoric to enrich and broaden contemporary debates over democratic citizenship and deliberation. In the background of both discussions looms the liberty and rhetoric of republican Rome.

As its title, *Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought: Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus*, indicates, this book is concerned with these contemporary discussions, and more broadly with rhetoric and liberty. This book explores rhetoric, liberty, and their relationship to social and political conflict in Roman thought of the first century BCE and the first century CE. My primary concern is not with the works of Roman philosophers such as Cicero or Seneca or with Roman rhetorical writers such as Quintilian, though recent scholarship, with which I engage, has focused on these writers.²⁰ Rather, my concern is with the ways in which conflict, liberty, and rhetoric were depicted and theorized by Rome's three greatest Latin historians: Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus. To be sure, other Roman writers (such as Pliny, Quintilian, and Seneca) and scholarly engagements with them will feature in my discussion; this is especially true of Cicero, who will often serve as a point of comparison to the historians, and whose writings – especially *On the Ideal Orator*, *On Duties*, *Orator*, and *Brutus* – will serve as crucial sources of ideas and themes in my analysis of the historians.

My focus, however, is on the Roman historians themselves. Why turn to Rome's historians to write about conflict, liberty, rhetoric, and the Roman republic? A possible answer is simply to point to the diverse and broad influence exerted by these historians on subsequent figures in the history of political thought who dealt with a wide array of problems. The Roman historians served as key sources for Augustine and other medieval thinkers, such as John of Salisbury and Christine de Pizan; their importance in Renaissance political thought is hard to exaggerate; their status as key sources and influences in early modern thought, ranging from Lipsius to Hobbes, to eighteenth-century thinkers such as Rousseau, Madison, and Burke, to nineteenth-century thinkers such as Mill, and to twentieth-century thinkers such as Arendt, have all been the subject of scholarly inquiry.²¹ The historians

²⁰ See, for instance, Connolly, *The State of Speech*; Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Dean Hammer, *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Theoretical Imagination* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008).

²¹ For overviews of each historian's influence on subsequent thought, see Neal Wood, "Sallust's Theorem: A Comment on 'Fear' in Western Political Thought," *History of*

were received and interpreted in many different ways by these writers: Sallust provided ammunition to Augustine in his critique of Roman ideas and practices and to humanists in their conflicts with Italy's ducal cities, whereas Hobbes would cite him in his own struggles with the practice of rhetoric and the admirers of the Roman republic.²² Livy provided Machiavelli with themes for his *Discourses*, and was a key source for Montesquieu. He has been read as an Augustan, in that he seems to back Augustus' agenda; he has also been read as a champion of the Senate and a critic of autocracy.²³ Tacitus, for instance, was viewed as both teacher and critic of tyrants – that is, as a “black” Tacitus or “red” Tacitus.²⁴ An exploration of these historians in their own right is thus a useful contribution to the study of the history of political thought.

A second reason – and one of more contemporary concern and directly linked to my topic – centers on their role in contemporary discussions of republicanism and rhetoric. Pettit, Skinner, Viroli, and other scholars of republicanism discuss Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus; political theorists such as Saxonhouse, Boesche, and Fontana have looked to Tacitus and Sallust as resources for exploring rhetoric and liberty, respectively.²⁵ The Roman

Political Thought XVI, no. 2 (1995): 174–89; Sheila M. Mason, “Livy and Montesquieu,” in *Livy*, ed. T.A. Dorey (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971): 118–58; J.H. Whitfield, “Machiavelli's Use of Livy,” in *Livy*, ed. T.A. Dorey (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971): 73–96; P. Burke, “Tacitism,” in *Tacitus*, ed. T.A. Dorey (New York: Basic Books, 1969): 149–71. For a discussion of the role of the historians in Renaissance thought in particular, see Quentin Skinner, “Machiavelli's Discorsi and the Pre-Humanist Origins of Republican Ideas,” in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisella Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990): 121–41.

²² See Skinner, “Machiavelli's *Discorsi* and the Pre-Humanist Origins of Republican Ideas.” I will discuss Hobbes' reading of Sallust in more detail in Chapter 2.

²³ For a reading of Livy as Augustan, see T.J. Luce, *Livy: The Composition of His History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977). For a reading of Livy as a champion of the Senate, see P.G. Walsh, *Livy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974).

²⁴ On “red” and “black” readings of Tacitus, see Burke, “Tacitism,” 162–6.

²⁵ See Roger Boesche, “The Politics of Pretence: Tacitus and the Political Theory of Despotism,” *History of Political Thought* VIII, no. 2 (1987): 189–210; Benedetto Fontana, “Sallust and the Politics of Machiavelli,” *History of Political Thought* XXIV, no. 1 (2003): 86–108; Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Arlene W. Saxonhouse, “Tacitus' Dialogue on Oratory: Political Activity under a Tyrant,” *Political Theory* 3, no. 1 (1975): 53–68; Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Skinner, “Machiavelli's Discorsi and the Pre-Humanist Origins of Republican Ideas.”; Quentin Skinner, “The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty,” in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisella Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990): 293–309; Maurizio Viroli, *Republicanism*, trans. Antony Shugaar (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002).

historians are thus of continued importance because of their influence on contemporary scholarly developments in political theory.

Yet these writers do not merit attention simply because they have been read by other authors or feature in the genealogies of political concepts; they are worthy of attention in their own right because they wrestled in psychologically rich ways with tensions and problems in the practice of rhetoric, its place in the political community, its relationship to conflict, and its associations with liberty and participatory government. It is on these problems and these relationships that the present study will focus. Before we move further, however, I turn to a discussion of republicanism, rhetoric, and Roman historiography in particular.

III. REPUBLICANISM AND POLITICAL THEORY

It is no exaggeration to say that interest in Rome and Roman thought has not been center stage in political theory for much of the twentieth century, though recent years have seen renewed interest.²⁶ Indeed, Rome has been much in the air of late; some have drawn comparisons between the American republic and the Roman republic, or between Roman imperialism and American power.²⁷ My starting point is with two threads of recent scholarship, behind each of which lies Roman thought: the republican revival in history and political theory, on the one hand, and recent scholarship exploring the relationship between rhetoric and its practice and democratic theory and practice.

Republicanism has been an important focus of inquiry among political theorists and historians since the late 1960s.²⁸ This scholarship emerged in

²⁶ On the fate of Roman political thought in the twentieth century, see Hammer, *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Theoretical Imagination*, chapter 1. On this renewed interest beyond the republican and rhetorical scholarship discussed in this section, see, e.g., Connolly, *The State of Speech*; Fontana, "Sallust and the Politics of Machiavelli"; Benedetto Fontana, "Tacitus on Empire and Republic," *History of Political Thought* XIV (1993): 27–40; Daniel J. Kapust, "Between Contumacy and Obsequiousness: Tacitus on Moral Freedom and the Historian's Task," *European Journal of Political Theory* 8, no. 3 (2009): 293–311; William Walker, "Sallust and Skinner on Civil Liberty," *European Journal of Political Theory* 5, no. 3 (2006): 237–59.

²⁷ For a discussion of both topics, as well as the general status of matters Roman in American culture, see Cullen Murphy, *Are We Rome? The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007).

²⁸ See, for instance, Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967); Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century*

part as a reaction to the perceived dominance of liberalism in both political theory and intellectual history, a dominance that seemed both overstated and illegitimate.²⁹ This concern began to shift from historical to normative inquiry with the waning of the liberalism/communitarianism debates, especially in the scholarship of Quentin Skinner and Philip Pettit.³⁰

Skinner and Pettit's discussions of Roman liberty and republicanism were, at least in part, reactions to a perceived false dichotomy in the debates between liberalism and communitarianism. By way of illustration, MacIntyre argued in *After Virtue* that "the crucial moral opposition is between liberal individualism in some version or other and the Aristotelian tradition in some version or other."³¹ In "The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty," Skinner challenges this dichotomizing view, seeking to navigate the gap between liberals whom he views as "sweeping the public arena bare of any concepts save those of self-interest and individual rights" and those who hold an Aristotelian view of public life based on a conception of humans as "moral beings with certain determinate purposes."³² There is instead a third way, Skinner argues, and a key historical resource for Skinner's argument is Roman political thought.

In making this argument, Skinner also challenges the view – linked to Isaiah Berlin – of political liberty as either a primarily negative or primarily positive concept.³³ Skinner describes a view of liberty he associates with "classical republicans" – seventeenth-century English opposition figures, Machiavelli, and ultimately Roman writers such as Sallust – a view that sees a free state as "one that is able to act according to its own will, in pursuit

Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

²⁹ Especially important in this regard was Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955). For a discussion of republican scholarship in American history, see Daniel T. Rodgers, "Republicanism: The Career of a Concept," *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 1 (1992): 11–38.

³⁰ For a good summary of these debates, see Stephen Mulhall and Adam Swift, eds., *Liberals and Communitarians* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1996).

³¹ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1984), 259.

³² Skinner, "The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty," 308, 306–7.

³³ See Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy and Roger Hausheer (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997): 191–242.

of its own chosen ends.”³⁴ To be free is to be independent of the will of another, and to follow one’s own will in one’s actions. Such a view of liberty entails collective and individual benefits: “civic greatness and wealth,” along with “personal liberty.”³⁵ The latter concept emphasizes that each citizen remains free from any elements of constraint (especially those that arise from personal dependence and servitude) and in consequence remains free to pursue her own chosen ends.³⁶

The crucial opposition, then, is not between liberty and interference, as with Hobbesian negative liberty, but rather between liberty and servitude – a *liber* (a free person) is not subject to a *dominus* (a master).³⁷ By this account, the individual cannot be free unless she lives in a particular kind of community: a self-governing community. This account was not burdened by moral perfectionism, but it still enabled citizens to share in a public life founded “on common meanings and purposes,” as opposed to the calculations of instrumental reason.³⁸ The departure from Berlin is clear: Rather than view liberty as a dichotomous concept, entailing positive (illiberal) and negative (liberal) poles, republican liberty views certain kinds of interference as undesirable and other kinds as beneficial, combining aspects of both positive and negative liberty (though republican liberty is itself largely negative in locating liberty in the *absence* of slavery).³⁹

Skinner’s account of republican liberty – rooted in the world of republican Rome and transmitted, via humanist and prehumanist Italian thinkers, to English commonwealthmen – was primarily historical.⁴⁰ Philip Pettit, by

³⁴ Skinner, “The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty,” 301.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 301, 302.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 302.

³⁷ See *The Digest of Justinian*, ed. Theodor Mommsen, Paul Krueger, and Alan Watson, vol. I (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 1.5.3; 1.6.1, 4.

³⁸ Skinner, “The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty,” 308. On this distinction, see Paul Weithman, “Political Republicanism and Perfectionist Republicanism,” *Review of Politics* 66, no. 2 (2004): 285–312.

³⁹ To be sure, Berlin was aware that the idea of political liberty as a negative concept entailed difficulties; he notes that while “all coercion is, in so far as it frustrates human desires, bad as such ... it may have to be applied to prevent other, greater evils; while non-interference, which is the opposite of coercion, is good as such, although it is not the only good.” Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” 200. Other values might intervene to trump the good of non-interference.

⁴⁰ See, for instance, Quentin Skinner, *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Quentin Skinner, “The Italian City-Republics,” in *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey, 508 B.C. to A.D. 1993*, ed. John Dunn (New York: Oxford University