reference. I did not view the standard classical system as a loose inventory of strategies grouped for convenience under a limited number of headings. I merely assumed that the system constituted a "theory" and that it ought to provide a method for critical inquiry. As a result, the conventional categories, which I, along with many others, still retained even as we appropriated new "theories," appeared as separate and distinct modules to be invoked in methodical order. The critic first read down through the text to analyze its argumentative appeals, and then invoked the same procedure to analyze its style. This fragmented approach, which runs contrary to the spirit of both Burke and Cicero, left me in a position where I could not read across a text so as to understand the interactions among argument, style, and context. Consequently, I floundered until I could borrow a "theory" that accounted for one of the prominent features in Cicero's speeches (that is, the extensive use of hyperbole), and I then fixed attention on that feature. This exercise was not without some value, but for reasons I did not then understand, it blocked a more fully realized interpretive effort. As Robert Cape has demonstrated recently (in his 1991 dissertation, "On Reading Cicero's Catilinarian Orations"), a more fluid use of the standard categories yields a much more sensitive reading of the *Catilinarians.*

Despite these misgivings, I still retain a certain fondness for the young man who wrote the following essay. He makes a noteworthy attempt to produce some sparks by striking a set of venerable texts against the thought of an important contemporary rhetorician. At times the interaction really seems to work, especially in the analysis of the metaphors of disease, parentage, death, and rebirth. In general, his problem is that he does not understand his own position as a critic. Note that when he comes to state his purposes in the last paragraph, he resorts to an almost meaningless jumble of phrases—something about living texts, historical documents, the grand possibilities of theory, and split-level realities. He does not realize that if he wants to understand other people's utterances, he must first make a serious effort to understand his own purposes. Given the blindness and confusion of this essay, I doubt that he will ever sort things out adequately, but he really seems committed to the task of opening old texts to contemporary understanding, and if he persists in this endeavor, he might improve his own self-understanding.

Redemptive Identification: Cicero's Catilinarian Orations

Michael C. Leff

Few events in ancient history are as well documented as the conspiracy of Catiline in 63 B.C.[1] Lucius Sergius Catiline was a member of a noble but impoverished Roman family. A man of talent and ambition, he sought status and wealth through political advancement. Despite his connections and ability, however, Catiline was thwarted three times in his desire to gain election to the consulship, and after his last defeat in 63 B.C., he was desperate. Deeply in debt, deserted by his most powerful ally, and deprived of any hope of recouping his losses, Catiline launched a conspiracy to overthrow the government and force a program of debt cancellation, *nova tabula.* The plot called for a rising in the city coupled with attacks on Rome from the Italian countryside. From its beginning, the plot offered little hope of success. Most Italians had recently gained Roman citizenship and were not inclined to test the strength of the Roman government without powerful support. Catiline did manage to raise a force of a few thousand ill-equipped troops, but this rag-tag army was no match for the regular troops which the government mobilized. The conspiracy collapsed as suddenly as it had emerged.

According to Cicero, the conspiracy was one of the most momentous events in human history.[2] He asserted that the incident marked the "bloodiest and cruelest war in the memory of man" (III.x.25), that the conspirators not only intended to stage a coup, but to burn down the whole city of Rome and invite savage Gauls to dance on its ashes (IV. xi.11–12), that Catiline was the author of every crime in the state, and that the conspiracy was responsible for all evil in Rome (I.vii.18,xiii.31–32,II.x.22–23). He immodestly praised himself as the sole savior of Rome (III.x.25), and he alleged that reaction against the conspiracy caused a total identification of "good" men which promised a permanent solution to the problems of the state (IV.viii.14–15). All these assertions were patently false. They grossly exaggerated the intent of the conspirators, the danger of the conspiracy, and the nature of the response to it.

For the historian, it is enough to know that Cicero overstates his case. Consequently most recent histories of the conspiracy note the problem, but do not attempt a detailed explanation of its cause. Furthermore critics of discourse have not examined this pattern of exaggeration. But Cicero's use of hyperbole is so frequent and so blatant that one must suspect that it

reveals a crucial and perhaps subconscious premise that colors the orations as a whole. The purpose of this essay is to investigate this question of hyperbole, and its methodology will come from Kenneth Burke's theory of redemptive identification.

In his essay "Freud and the Analysis of Poetry," Burke begins, "The reading of Freud I find suggestive almost to the point of bewilderment."[3] The rhetorical critic could say much the same about Burke. Ranging over a seemingly limitless number of subjects from sociology to poetry, his writings are extensive, interrelated, and filled with seminal ideas. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to explicate even one of Burke's more specific concepts and contend that it is an accurate abstract of his thought. A more useful approach is to use Burke as he uses Freud, by adapting and assimilating a Burkean concept to one's own purposes, and appropriately such an adaptation can begin through an analysis of Freud's general theories of guilt and redemption.

Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* applies the techniques of psychoanalysis to the problems of society. Freud contends that guilt arises in civilization in much the same way as in individuals and that the existence of civilization, in and of itself, intensifies the problem of psychic adjustment. In fact, he concludes that guilt is the single most important problem faced by civilization.[4] According to Freudian theory, civilization exists in order for people to work together in harmony. This harmony of diverse interests demands an inhibited love-aim, in the sense of "love thy neighbor" as opposed to erotic love. Consequently, civilization must control the ego's desire for pleasure; it must curb certain forms of aggression. Unfortunately, this situation creates tension between the desire for aggressive pleasure seeking and the need for union within a human community.

Repression ultimately relies on some form of authority. In the early stages of human development, the child is governed by the external authority of his parents. At a later stage this authority is internalized as the "super-ego." Through the influence of his parents and of the culture as a whole, the individual creates a super-ego which confines the aggression of the ego. The function of the super-ego is especially complicated because it is internalized. External authority can control only overt behavior, but the super-ego is omniscient. While renunciation of errant behavior is often sufficient to allay external authority, it cannot mollify the super-ego. Consequently the tension between the ego and super-ego is never fully resolved, and civilized man is hopelessly caught-up in the tragic conflict between personal instinct and societal mores. The result is a sense of guilt which is sometimes, though not always, unconscious.

The sense of guilt becomes particularly keen when an individual experiences misfortune. So long as things are working to one's advantage, the super-ego's restriction is weak or easily disregarded, but when misfortune occurs, civilized man becomes disconcerted about possible violations of conscience, that is, the super-ego. In the primitive state, man blames ill-luck on a totem or a fetish, but the super-ego developed by civilization forces a conception of self-guilt; the individual is likely to view external misfortune as the result of his own improper conduct or thought. Moreover, this malaise may affect entire societies as well as individuals. In other words, a civilization may exhibit neurotic symptoms.

Naturally, societies develop means of eliminating or reducing guilt. One convenient mechanism is to distinguish sharply between one's own society and that of his neighbors. Aggression is often directed toward some alien force: "The advantage which a comparatively small cultural group offers of allowing the [aggressive] instinct an outlet in the form of hostility against intruders is not to be despised. It is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness."[5] In short, we love to find someone our whole society can hate. This concept is familiar to rhetoricians who have studied the tactics of "bloody shirt" orators, "red-scare" politicians, and anti-Semites.

Society also can find refuge in religion. In Freud's view, religion reduces guilt by manufacturing a spurious external authority, an outside force which absorbs the guilt arising from the tensions of society: "They [religions] claim to redeem mankind from this sense of guilt, which they call sin."[6] Anyone who has read more than a few sermons knows how important the notion of redemption of sin is to the preacher.

To Freud, then, guilt is an inevitable result of the conflict between natural instinct arising from the ego and inhibitory mechanisms located in the super-ego. This tension is converted into a sense of sin which blames all frustration on violation of the conscience. By analogy, societies are seen as liable to fall victim to this malady as well as individuals. The result is a powerful but often inexplicable guilt syndrome. This guilt, in turn, may be reduced or displaced through the use of external scapegoats or the invention of redemptive mythologies.

One need not extend Freud's argument very far to apply it to criticism, but some extension is needed in terminology. Fortunately Burke's theory of redemptive identification represents an adaptation and application of Freud's guilt concept to literary and rhetorical concerns.

Burke filters Freud's theory through the screen of traditional humanistic terminology. In particular, he notes the dialectical polarity which occurs in redemptive rhetoric and provides a vehicle for examining the phenomenon in the context of discourse. His basic conceptions, however, are very close to those of Freud. His view of sin and redemption, the redemption of sin through a common foe or through a symbol of the power of good, and misfortune as an impetus toward self-recrimination are all consistent with Freud.

Redemptive identification occurs through the process of shared guilt.[7]

The consubstantial bond linking the parties in this sort of rhetorical transaction is a common self-conception of sinfulness. This sin is externalized by projecting it on an alien force which acts as a scapegoat. The scapegoat serves as a receptacle, a symbolic vessel, for the "iniquities of those who would be cured by attacking it."[8] Expressed in another way, the persecutors attribute to a sacrificial victim all the sins which plague them internally and then are purged of sin by the actual or symbolic destruction of the victim.

The process, in Burke's terminology, is dialectical, for it operates through antithetical contrasts arising from division and synthesis. The ritual requires three steps: (1) the scapegoat originally merges with its persecutors in the sense that both share the same inequities; (2) the victim is then symbolically divided from its persecutors; and (3) a second merger occurs, this time the result of the "unification of those whose purified identity is defined in dialectical opposition to the sacrificial offering."[9]

The scapegoat appears in two primary forms, as the principle of good and as the principle of evil. This polarity results from the dialectical nature of the process. The victim must be separable from the rest of society along lines which can be defined in abstract, normative terms. Also it must serve as the receptacle of all sin because the externalization of sin requires that all guilt be dissociated from those seeking purgation. Finally, the victim is made a locus of power; only the powerful would have sufficient force to account for or purge so virulent a concept as that of national iniquity.

Two examples from Burke illustrate these forms of redemptive identification. The symbolism of Christ's passion represented purgation through sacrifice of the personified principle of good. The sins of mankind were poured into the Christ vessel, and when he died these sins perished with him. Through Christ's death man was redeemed. The Nazis, on the other hand, attempted unification through a common foe, utilizing the evil principle. The German defeat in the First World War caused extreme cultural dislocation. The traditional values of the society, imperial autocracy, militaristic organization, and capitalistic economic prosperity had been destroyed. The resulting sense of misfortune caused anxiety to mount and feelings of guilt developed which exercised a powerful grip on the German mind. The stage was set for Hitler's use of the Jew as sacrificial victim, and the Jew was depicted as the embodiment of all sin; his uncleanness polluted everyone and by his destruction the German nation would be purified.

Such, in brief, is Burke's theory of redemptive identification. Its affinity with Freudian theory is clear and its usefulness for rhetorical criticism is promising. It also appears to offer the most satisfactory explanation for the exaggeration that characterizes Cicero's Catilinarians.

Roman society in the age of Cicero and Augustus was unstable. This era was one of transition from republic to empire, which one historian aptly titled "The Roman Revolution." The government of the state was transformed from traditional oligarchy to imperial autocracy, the economy from agrarian simplicity to mercantile complexity, and the social mores from a belief in asceticism to open hedonism. And, at least for the educated classes, the pagan Roman religion no longer had any spiritual authority.[10]

It is always dangerous to draw analogies between one society and another, but both the Weimar Republic and late Republican and early Imperial Rome shared a sense of impending disaster. For the Romans the shock of cultural and social change was reinforced by political instability and civil war. Important leaders like the Gracchi and Saturninus were assassinated, and the disastrous conflict between Marius and Sulla set a precedent for brutality and cynicism previously unimagined in internal Roman politics. Freudian doctrine would lead us to expect symptoms of anxiety in such a society, and our suspicion is verified by the literary record. For example, in the introduction to his *Histories,* Livy recommends history as the best means of curing the sickness of his times (I.i), and the Elder Seneca speculates in his *Controversiae* that the decline of eloquence is due to moral decay (I.7.). Other examples of the same theme might be cited to support this hypothesis, but our concern is with the Catilinarian conspiracy, and there can be little doubt that it incited a feeling of guilt.

Sallust, our second contemporary source for the conspiracy, belonged to a political faction opposed to Cicero. His *Bellum Catilinae,* therefore, forms a useful comparison to check issues of fact and interpretation against the account provided by Cicero. Sallust argued that the conspiracy was a foul and guilty compact, and the topic of moral decadence emerged as the theme of his introduction. He noted the high ethical standards of the ancient Romans, and then recorded their fall from honor: "Avarice destroyed honor, integrity and every other virtue and instead taught men to be proud and cruel and neglect religion and every other virtue and to hold nothing too sacred to sell. . . . At first these vices grew slowly and sometimes met punishment, later on, when the disease spread like a plague, Rome changed; her government once so just and admirable became harsh and unendurable."[11] Catiline was both a prime example and a cause of this terrible corruption: "He [Catiline] was incited also by the corruption of a society plagued by two opposite but equally disastrous vices—love of luxury and love of money. . . . In short, all who were in disgrace or afflicted by poverty or consciousness of guilt were Catiline's intimate associates. And if anyone innocent happened to become friendly with him, the temptations to which daily intercourse with Catiline exposed him soon made him as evil a ruffian as the rest."[12] In these passages, we note an aura of guilt occasioned by misfortune and dishonor. The corruption afflicted all Roman society, but it was especially apparent in the person of Catiline. The point is underscored by the use of disease images. Catiline, infected with the disease of the times, attracted all those like him and polluted the healthy with whom he came into contact.

Although less explicit and less dramatic, a similar view of the conspiracy

is conveyed by Virgil and Seneca the Elder, writers of the Augustan age. For example, in Book VIII of the *Aeneid,* Aeneas is given a shield which Vulcan decorates with scenes from later Roman history, and Catiline appears in the portrait of evil: "Elsewhere the deep Gates of hell were represented, the domicile of the damned and the torments they suffer—Catiline hangs from the edge of a terrible precipice, shrinking away from the Furies above him. But the righteous are set apart."[13] The image of the Furies, relentless agents of retribution, is particularly vivid, and the separation of the righteous from Catiline calls to mind the dialectical polarity between scapegoat and persecutors. A variation on this theme appears in Seneca's *Suasoriae* when he recalls the great deeds of Cicero's consulship, "the host of the conspirators, the discovery of the guilty pact, and the stamping out of the sin of the nobles."[14] One might argue that Virgil and Seneca view the conspiracy through the bias of Cicero and Sallust, and so their special attention to the guilt involved merely reflects their sources. Nevertheless, they were not forced to accept the hyperbole of earlier writers. Therefore, the probable conclusion is that guilt and the conspiracy are closely related in the minds of many Romans in the late Republic and early Empire. Furthermore the materials cited establish that Catiline sometimes assumes a symbolic function; that is, his conspiracy is regarded as more than a literal threat to the safety of the Roman state in one particular instance. His name is associated with guilt in much the same way Cicero's is associated with eloquence. This guilt theme is most fully developed, however, by Cicero himself.

In his attack, Cicero exaggerates the intent of the conspirators, and he exaggerates their allegedly evil character. The orations abound with examples of both. In the middle of the first speech, for instance, Cicero exaggerates intent when he hurls this invective against his opponents: "Here, here in our very midst, Conscript Fathers, in this most sacred and dignified council of the whole world, are men who plan for the destruction of all of us, who plan for the destruction of this city and even the destruction of the whole world" (I.iv.9). Throughout the orations, Cicero persists in arguing that the conspirators planned indiscriminate slaughter and the destruction of Rome through fire (III.iv.8). The extent of his passion is revealed in the introductory lines of the third speech where he boasts of saving "the state, citizens, the lives of you all, your property, your fortunes, your wives and your children" (III.i.1). The full force of his hyperbole becomes apparent in the final speech. In demanding severe penalties against the conspirators, Cicero has this vision:

> For I seem to see this city, the light of the whole world and the fortress of all nations suddenly involved in one general conflagration. In my imagination I see on the grave of the fatherland the wretched unburied heaps of corpses. Before my eyes rises the countenance of Cethegus and his madness as he revels in our death. . . . So we in the case of these men who have wished to murder us, our

wives, our children, who have tried to destroy all our homes and this common dwelling of the state, who have done this that they may set up the tribe of the Allobroges amid the ruins of this city and on the ashes of a burnt out empire, if we shall be most stern we shall be considered merciful. . . . This Lentulus summons the Gauls to overturn the foundations of the state, he instigates the slaves, he invites Catiline, he assigns us to Cethegus to be murdered, the other citizens to Gabinius to be slaughtered, all Italy to Catiline to be devastated and plundered (IV.vi.11–13).

All this is a magnificent display of rhetorical virtuosity, but it is neither true nor relevant to the point at issue in the debate. While the exaggeration in this passage is unusually extensive, the continued repetition of similar and equally false assertions is a dominant characteristic of the orations.

In the first two speeches, the critic might explain Cicero's exaggeration of conspiratorial intent on the grounds that it is an appropriate rhetorical response to a situation where concrete evidence is lacking. This sort of argument will not do, however, in the case of the third speech; Cicero had obtained all the proof he needed, and the conspirators already had been convicted by the Senate. Since this speech so well illustrates the magnitude of Cicero's hyperbole, it will be profitable to examine the oration and the circumstances surrounding it in some detail.

On the night of November 7, 63 B.C., Catiline left Rome and repaired to Etruria where his allies were recruiting an army. A number of other conspirators, led by the dissolute nobles Lentulus and Cethegus, remained in the city. The two groups intended to coordinate the attack of the Etrurian army with disturbances in Rome. These plans were known to Cicero, but he lacked sufficient evidence to arrest the conspirators who were still within the city walls. As a consequence, his dramatic invectives of early November were not followed by any decisive action. Meanwhile, the conspiracy sputtered in the hands of Lentulus, Cethegus, and their lieutenants.

By a stroke of luck, Cicero finally managed to gain the legal evidence he needed against the conspirators in early December. Ambassadors sent to Rome by the Allobrogian Gauls were rebuffed by the Senate, and the conspirators then invited them to lead their tribe into an alliance with Catiline. The Allobroges concluded that the conspiracy had no chance of success and divulged the plot to their patron Fabius Sanga, who reported it to Cicero. The Allobroges were enlisted as counterspies and instructed to express interest in the conspiracy and to demand letters pledging the support of its leaders. On the night of December second, Lentulus, Cethegus, and Statilius gave their letters to the envoys. The Gauls then departed, supposedly on their way to meet Catiline in Etruria, and another of the conspirators, Volturcius, accompanied them to deliver both written and oral messages to Catiline. The whole party was intercepted at the Mulvian bridge.

The next day, Cicero convened the Senate and summoned Statilius, Lentulus, Gabinius, and Cethegus who were still unaware of what had hap-

pened. When the evidence against them was presented, they confessed their complicity in the plot and were convicted by the Senate. After adjournment, Cicero hastened to the forum to deliver his "Third Oration Against Catiline." In his earlier speeches he sought to rouse public opinion by bold assertion; now he added a more subtle tactic—exaggeration of the intent of the conspirators by distorting the evidence. He presented four pieces of evidence to justify the arrest of the conspirators: the testimony of the Allobroges, the letters from the conspirators to the Allobroges, the letter carried by Volturcius, and his account of the oral message to Catiline.

The testimony of the Allobroges reveals the names of the leading conspirators and a general account of the services demanded of them, as well as some miscellaneous information about Lentulus' superstitiousness. Such evidence certainly proves that an illegal plot is afoot and indicates the parties involved, but it reveals nothing about the details of the conspiracy. Moreover, Cicero is vague in recounting the Allobrogian testimony, merely asserting that they affirmed that some form of "murder and arson" was contemplated (III.iv.10). This source, then, does not justify Cicero's extravagant assertions about the nihilistic aims of the conspirators.

Secondly, Cicero offers in evidence the letter carried by Volturcius: "You will know who I am from him whom I am sending to you. Be brave and consider into what a situation you have brought yourself; and see what you now need and take care to secure for yourself the aid of all, even of the lowest classes" (III.v.12). The authenticity of this letter is beyond question, for an almost identical version of it is reproduced by Sallust. Since Lentulus is identified as its sender, the letter does prove collusion between Lentulus and a public enemy, but it is hardly a model of unambiguous prose. We have no further information about the intentions of either Lentulus or Catiline except that they considered making an appeal to "the lowest classes."

Next there is the meager evidence provided by the letters of Statilius, Cethegus, and Lentulus pledging support to the Allobroges. These documents, however, say only that the conspirators would do what they promised (III.v.10). Obviously the pledge is vague. Coupled with the testimony of the Allobroges themselves, it does prove that something treasonous is imminent, but Cicero still has no basis for his strongest accusations.

Finally, and most important, there was the matter of the oral message Lentulus sent to Catiline through Volturcius. When given the promise of a full pardon, Volturcius confessed his guilt and revealed the content of the message Lentulus entrusted to him. According to Cicero, it indicated that the conspirators intended to "set fire to the city in every part, just as it had been apportioned and allotted, and kill a vast number of citizens, and that he [Catiline] should then be ready to intercept the fugitives and join his leaders in the city" (III.iv.8). If this paraphrase represented an accurate report of Volturcius' testimony, Cicero at last would have had justification for some of his stronger allegations against the conspirators. Sallust, how-

ever, presented a different version of Volturcius' story: "He [Lentulus] also sent a message by word of mouth: what, he asked, was Catiline's idea—since he had been declared a public enemy by the Senate—in refusing to enlist slaves? All was ready at Rome according to his order and there must be no delay on his part in advancing nearer."[15] Thus, Sallust did not acknowledge any specific information about the execution of the plot in his rendering of the testimony.

When the two versions of this incident are compared, there is little reason to accept Cicero's account. Catiline had already given detailed orders concerning the plan of action before departing to Etruria. There was no reason why Lentulus should have repeated these instructions concerning arson and murder to Catiline. Moreover all of the other messages were couched in the vague language we would expect of conspirators. There was no motivation for Lentulus to send a message of the sort Cicero described. On the other hand, we would expect an acknowledgment that plans already agreed to were ready for action.

On the basis of this analysis, we are forced to conclude that Cicero deliberately overstates the goals of the conspirators by tampering with the evidence. He never proves his charge of indiscriminate murder and unrestricted incendiarism, and it is quite clear that he consistently distorts the intent of the conspirators both through bold assertion and manipulation of specific evidence.

A second and even more pronounced form of exaggeration occurs when Cicero attacks the character of Catiline and his allies. He devotes much of the Catilinarians to the depravity of any and all persons associated with the conspiracy, and even by the standards of antiquity, Cicero is unusually vehement. By the time our orator leaves the podium, he has accused Catiline of every imaginable form of corruption, madness, and debauchery.

A particularly clear example of this hyperbole occurs late in the first oration. Here, Cicero lists the "personal crimes" of Catiline claiming that he has been stained by the unholy trinity of crime, corruption, and lust. He accuses Catiline of "leading youth astray," "dissipating his personal fortune," and even of murdering his wife. Finally, Cicero hints darkly about a sin so great that he hesitates to mention it for fear of bringing the wrath of the gods on the state (I.vi.13–14). The reference is to the rumor that Catiline had killed his own son. The most shocking of these charges could not have had any basis in fact. Catiline had associated with the most patrician circles in Rome for some time and had there been any real suspicion of such crimes, he could hardly have remained in this rarified society. The lack of specific legal action against him also must make us skeptical about Cicero's veracity.

Cicero is equally savage about Catiline's public life. In fact, Catiline's public misconduct is so villainous that Cicero has the personified state cry out against his sins: "She [Rome], Catiline, thus confers with you, and as it

were, though silent speaks: 'No crime for some years now has come into existence except through you, no outrage without you; you alone have killed many citizens . . . you have been able not only to neglect the laws and the courts but even to thwart and destroy them' " (I.vii.18). In another speech, Cicero repeats the same argument in his own voice, charging that Catiline has been a partner in every crime committed in Rome. His hyperbole far-reaches a crescendo as he proclaims that "no murder, no foul lewdness" in recent memory has been accomplished without Catiline lending a hand in it (II.iv.7–8).

Cicero has vitriol enough for it to spill over to the other conspirators. Among the plotters, Cicero detects a clique composed of parricides, assassins, and sundry other criminals. Their crimes are of such a magnitude that no prison could contain them (II.x.22). In addition, there is a special coterie of softer, more personal criminals. Within this category lurk all of Rome's adulterers, all of the unclean and impure rascals of the city who whiled their hours in sensual pleasures, sprinkling poison and waving daggers (II.x.22). In general, the conspiracy is manned by a brigade of the damned. While no one can doubt that the conspirators were an unsavory crew, we may still believe that at least a few of Rome's adulterers managed to stay clear of the plot.

As one might expect, Cicero and his allies—including not only all the respectable citizens of Rome but also the immortal gods—are the precise opposites of Catiline's thugs. Cicero praises himself with an abandon equal to his denunciation of Catiline. He presents himself as a savior clad in the toga of peace protecting the innocent from lunatic criminals (III.x.23). He assumes full credit for saving both Rome and the rest of the world and immodestly delights in explaining his signal honor of having won a vote of thanksgiving while still a civilian (III.vi.15). He asserts that his actions have had a salutary effect on the politics of the nation. Good men have come to their senses and, roused by a common danger, they have joined together in order to crush evil. His conception of the unanimity of support behind him is revealed when he says, "This is the only known case since the founding of the city in which all men absolutely agree" (IV.vii.14); "After a strife with this order [the Equestrians] for many years, this day and this case have recalled them to you [the Senate]. And if we maintain this union consummated in my consulship, I assure you that hereafter no civil and domestic strife will come to any part of the state" (IV.vii.15); and "All the orders are united in purpose, heart and voice to save the state" (IV.ix.18). Like Virgil, Cicero makes a hard and fast dichotomy between Catiline and the forces of good. This contrast is most fully developed in the following antithesis: "For on this side fights modesty, on that fraud; on this righteousness, on that crime; on this steadfastness, on that madness; on this honesty, on that deceit; and finally on this side justice, temperance, fortitude, prudence, all the virtues contend with injustice, extravagance, cowardice, recklessness, all the

vices; lastly abundance with poverty, good reason with bad, sanity and insanity and finally fair hope against deepest despair" (II.xi.25).

By now it is painfully obvious that much of Cicero's consular oratory is composed of extravagant hyperbole. The real task is to explain why he used such a tactic. One possible explanation is to contend that he has some specific political goal in mind and that exaggerated praise and blame further this goal. Such a theory is particularly tempting in light of Cicero's political doctrine of *concordia ordinum* which is implied in passages which extol the "good" men in the state and celebrate their union against Catiline.[16] No doubt this motive accounts for some of the hyperbole, but it is unconvincing as an explanation of the whole phenomenon. At times Cicero's overstatement constitutes a positive drawback to his political objectives. In the first oration, the exaggerations perform the useful function of diverting attention from the poverty of legal evidence. On the other hand, his total lack of restraint in the second oration renders it incredible (III.ii.4). Sallust testifies that popular opinion was not hostile to Catiline until nearly three weeks after Cicero's second oration,[17] that is, at about the time that Lentulus and his cronies were caught red-handed. Consequently if Cicero's program of distortion arises out of the rational desire to steer his countrymen toward his own political platform, it is apparent that Cicero is trapped by his own snare, a victim of what Burke calls cunning identification.

Finally, the political account of this exaggeration runs afoul of the third oration. Tactically, the hyperbole is more skillful and probably more effective, but one wonders why Cicero goes to the trouble of altering the evidence at all. More than enough proof is available to convict the conspirators and put them out of operation. The conspirators within Rome have been contained, and Cicero has consistently argued that once the plot within the city is quashed there is no cause for fear. Why then does he persist in calling the conspiracy a threat to all civilization and later demand the execution of the conspirators? As a last resort, one might argue that Cicero is a vain man, and to satisfy his vanity, he wants to appear as the savior of the Roman way of life. This is true, but it explains nothing, for it simply says that Cicero exaggerates because he feels a need to exaggerate.

The best explanation results if we move to the psychological and ritual dimensions of the situation. We see that Cicero's hyperbole functions to change Catiline from a man representing a specific external threat to the government to a symbol representing an internal threat to the integrity of society. In other words, Catiline becomes a scapegoat. The use of exaggeration is necessary because the real Catiline is neither powerful enough nor dangerous enough to serve as a victim in this sacrificial drama. Thus, the danger of the conspiracy is magnified, and vivid pictures are drawn of what would occur if the conspirators were left unchecked.

When we recall the steps in Burke's dialectic of the scapegoat, it becomes apparent how closely Cicero's rhetoric of exaggeration fits the pat-

tern. The victim must be originally merged with the persecutors. This much is given to Cicero. Catiline's conspiracy is an act of civil violence from within the state and from within the ranks of the nobility. The scapegoat now must be *totally* isolated from the rest of society. This step requires the application of Cicero's art because he must make a desolate and desperate conspirator appear as the soul of evil and as a virulent threat. As a consequence, Cicero invokes repeated ritual incantations which associate the conspirators with all sin. Hence the insistence that all crime springs from Catiline's corruption and that the conspiracy magnetically attracts every particle of iniquity within the society ("all the adulterers, all the impure"). Hence also the distortion of evidence when it serves little practical purpose and the demand for the death of the captured conspirators. Finally, Cicero creates a dialectical polarity that separates the "good" men from the minions of the conspiracy. This is accomplished most notably in the antithetical juxtaposition of normative terms used in the extended antithesis of the second oration ("on this side fights modesty, on that fraud"). The third step, a union of those redeemed by the persecution of the victim, is represented by Cicero's argument that respectable men have ceased warring and closed ranks in opposition to the common foe ("all the orders are united"). Whatever the practical consequences of these orations, they also constitute a symbolic rite of purgation.

The hypothesis that the sense of guilt is the driving force in the rhetoric of the Catilinarians is reinforced when we examine Cicero's use of metaphor. Metaphoric clusters referring to disease, corruption, parentage, and rebirth occur regularly in the speeches, often in close proximity. Such patterns reveal the symbolic direction of the discourses and put us in touch with the level of artistic creativity that Burke terms "dream." The analysis of symbolism provides the best means of comprehending the subconscious "dancing of attitudes" in the discourses.

The use of disease images is a natural and explicit outgrowth of Cicero's tendency to concentrate on the conspirator's corruption. Both the conspiracy in general and Catiline in particular are associated with various kinds of sickness and diseases. Reference to the mental illnesses involved in the conspiracy is particularly frequent. In the third oration, for example, Cicero maintains that some of those sympathetic to the conspiracy may yet be recalled to a healthy state of mind *(mentis senari)*. Catiline is repeatedly described as mad *(furor)* or insane *(amentia)*, and Cicero suggests that this condition is pathologically rooted in his nature. The images involving physical disease are more relevant to our argument. In the *Pro Murena,* a speech delivered in the interval between the second and the third Catilinarian, Cicero speaks of Catiline as though he were an infection *(contagio)*. Elsewhere the word *morbus* (sickness or disease) is used to describe Catiline's effect on the state. Our orator labels the conspiracy as an abundant and pestilent *(pernicosa)* bilge water *(sentina)* of the state, but the most fre-

quently used medical term is *pestis* (pestilence, plague, or infectious disease). It recurs throughout the first two speeches in passages such as this one, "If this man alone is executed, I know that his disease in the state can be checked for a time, but it cannot be completely crushed." The same type of metaphor also appears in *Pro Murena* where Catiline is called an insatiable disease *(pestis immanis)*. Taken together these metaphors create an image of physical and mental corruption through madness, infection, and disease. In this way the evil of the conspiracy is located within the body politic and Cicero paves the way for atonement and exorcism.

Images of sickness are often coupled with some sort of purgation metaphor. In *Pro Murena* the citizens seek to cast Catiline's disease out of the state (xxxix.85); in the first oration Cicero wishes to pump the bilge water out of the state (I.v.12), and in the second speech Cicero declares the state relieved because it has "spewed" out Catiline like a pestilence (II.i.2). The most noteworthy example of this symbolic purgation is contained in the first Catilinarian, the theme providing the symbolic underpinning for the oration as a whole. Faced with the uncomfortable situation of having to argue that Catiline is a dangerous criminal, but lacking solid evidence, Cicero cannot demand a formal resolution to exile Catiline. In answer to this rhetorical dilemma Cicero develops the argument that Catiline should leave the city voluntarily and take the rest of the conspirators with him. This would draw off entirely the infection polluting the state and remove all traces of corruption. If Catiline alone is driven from Rome, "the danger will remain and it will be hidden deep in the veins and vitals of the state. Just as often men sick with a grievous disease and tossed about in a burning fever drink cold water and at first seem to be relieved, but later are much more grievously and violently afflicted, so this disease in the state though relieved by the punishment of this man will grow worse as long as the rest remain. Therefore let the wicked depart; let them separate themselves from the good; let them assemble in one place" (I.xiii.31–32). In this instance the disease metaphor is closely linked to the dialectical antithesis between the wicked and the righteous. Purgation of this internal disorder must be complete, and no traces of it can be left to reinfect the society. The correspondence between this image and the destruction of the scapegoat is too obvious to require comment.

If Catiline is the sickness which afflicts the state, then Cicero is the physician attempting to cure it. This metaphor, dramatizing the positive side of the dichotomy, develops in the course of the second and third orations. In one interesting passage Cicero announces that his function is to cure those conspirators who still are capable of being healed and to destroy those who are beyond the curative power of the state: "That which can be healed I will cure in some way or other, the members which must be cut off I will not allow to remain in the state" (II.v.11). Cicero thus appears as the ritual medicine man who not only treats symptoms but also eliminates the root

cause of disease. In the third oration the same metaphor occurs, but this time the Senate plays the role of physician (III.vi.14). The disease metaphor is a symbolic complement of Cicero's use of hyperbole. The dialectical opposition between good and evil parallels an equally antithetical contrast between the physician and the disease. The concept of sickness also emphasizes the internal nature of the disorder, and the purgation theme corresponds to the purification gained through destruction of the sacrificial victim.

The symbolism of redemptive identification still requires one last step—the merger of those purified by the death of the scapegoat. The bond created by this final union is readily expressed in terms of familial relationships: "Note also that the goat, as the principle of evil, would be in effect a kind of 'bad parent.' For the alienating of iniquities from the self to the scapegoat amounts to a rebirth of the self."[18] In other words, this form of identification completes itself metaphorically in terms of parentage and rebirth. Both themes appear in Cicero's orations.

The metaphoric significance of the parent arises from his role as creative force; the parent is the cause of something. If the offspring proves evil or corrupt, the parent shares the guilt. On the other hand, the author of sin is a sort of father himself, for his pollution is transmitted to others, and we have already noted how strongly Cicero warns his audience about the generative power of corruption. Extending the argument analogically, the state, which is the common parent of all, participates in the iniquities of all its citizens and is threatened by the evil citizen. The resulting sense of sin abstractly inheres within the polity and is shared by all its members. The externalization of such guilt becomes a matter of urgent concern.

Cicero's use of personification in making the state stand *in loco parentis* to Catiline indicates the extent to which Catiline's "sins" are projections of Cicero's own society. The middle sections of the first Catilinarian exploit this issue with striking force. Attacking his opponent for criminal activity against society, Cicero reasons that "if your parents hated and feared you and you could not be reconciled to them in any way, you would, I think, withdraw somewhere from their gaze. Now your native country, the mother of us all, hates and fears you and decides that you have had no single thought for a long time save for her destruction" (I.vii.17). The combination of hate and fear represents both the repugnance resulting from causing something evil and the anxiety created by the emergence of a corrupt rival competitor.

Cicero's argument is that the state despises Catiline in the same way that a parent hates a degenerate son. A state can only hate one of its citizens if its personified value system is threatened. This set of beliefs and values is internalized as the super-ego. If Freud is correct in asserting that whole civilizations have super-egos, we may conclude that the immoral behavior of any one member of society can cause a widespread sense of guilt similar to the conflict between ego and super-ego in the individual. When the society is particularly anxious or "neurotic," the guilt is dramatically heightened. Relief from the guilt is sought by projecting it into a single receptacle and by experiencing a rebirth when that receptacle is destroyed.

In one sense, Cicero's use of images of birth and conception does little more than restate the message conveyed by the parental metaphor. Again, the point is that the pollution of the conspiracy is internal. Witness this passage from *Pro Murena:* "Plans have been conceived in this state, gentlemen, for destroying the city, slaughtering the citizens, obliterating the name of Rome. I, in the garb of a citizen, with the assistance of you and all honorable men, by my foresight will dismember and crush this hideous thing which the state has conceived and is now bringing to birth" (xxxvi.80). In another sense, the conception metaphor is used to symbolize the culmination of the identification ritual. The joy and relief Cicero expresses at the capture and arrest of the conspirators is expressed in terms of a rebirth. He says that the occasion marks a day of rejoicing and that the days are "no less pleasant and illustrious in our sight on which we are saved than those on which we are born—because the joy of being saved is certain" (III.i.1). Much the same sentiment is revealed when, in a passage from the fourth speech already quoted, Cicero speaks of the union of the orders "consummated" in his consulship. Thus the ritual is completed.

The journey from Freud and Burke to Cicero and Catiline now is completed. What we have discovered is simply that the Burke/Freud theory of guilt and redemption provides special insight into the rhetoric of Cicero's Catilinarian orations. Such an approach, of course, does not preclude more traditional and less fanciful readings of the text. Nor does it argue for universal application of this one method. It does point to a fruitful direction for the rhetorical critic. The records of argumentative discourse in a society exist as historical documents. They may be culled for information about a past era and used to clarify issues of fact. These documents, however, also tell us something about men's thoughts and attitudes; no one can make a serious argument without saying a great deal about himself.

Critics have long understood that the spirit of an age is reflected in aesthetic works, but the potential of polemic or practical discourse as a cultural index has not been effectively exploited. There is a temptation to concentrate on the text of the debate or oration or pamphlet in order to witness the practical conflict of one idea set against the other; we become so absorbed in the ideas themselves or in the process by which they are argued that it is easy to forget that these data may be applied to a wider field. Certainly the critic must undertake a careful analysis of the text, but that text once had life and once expressed its message under the pressure of the historical and psychological urgency of human needs. The critic, then, must face two realities, that of the document and that of the theory which explains the document in humane terms. The theory of redemptive identification can assist the critic in bringing these realities together.

▇ Notes

[1] See E. G. Hardy, *The Catilinarian Conspiracy in its Context: A Re-study of the Evidence* (Oxford, 1924). In general, I have followed Hardy in reconstructing the events of the conspiracy. Among the other important studies are: Lester Hutchinson, *The Conspiracy of Catiline* (New York, 1967); R. E. Smith, *Cicero the Statesman* (Cambridge, 1966); Gaston Boissier, *La Conjuration de Catilina* (Paris, 1905); Torsten Petersson, *Cicero: A Biography* (New York, 1963): 240–286; and E. D. Eagle, "Catiline and Concordia Ordinum," *Phoenix* 3 (1949): 15–31.

[2] Louis E. Lord, *Cicero: The Speeches with an English Translation: In Catilinam I-IV–Pro Murena–Pro Flacco–Pro Sulla* (London, 1964): vii. Unless otherwise noted all quotations from the speeches of Cicero are taken from this translation.

[3] Kenneth Burke, "Freud and the Analysis of Poetry," in *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action* (New York, 1957): 221.

[4] Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York, 1962): 81.

[5] Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 61.

[6] Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 83.

[7] On redemptive identification, see Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives* (Cleveland, 1962): 555–556. For the concept of the scapegoat which underlies the theory of redemptive identification, see *A Grammar of Motives*, pp. 406–408; *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose* (Los Altos, Calif., 1954): 14–17; "The Rhetoric of Hitler's 'Battle,'" in *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, pp. 164–190. A summary and interpretation of Burke's concept of redemption is provided by William Rueckert, *Kenneth Burke and the Drama of Human Relations* (Minneapolis, 1963): 145–153.

[8] Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, p. 406.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] See Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939).

[11] Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, trans. S. A. Handford (Baltimore, 1963): Section 10.

[12] Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, Sections 5 and 14.

[13] Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. C. Day Lewis (New York, 1953), VIII, pp. 665–669.

[14] Seneca, *The Suasoriae of Seneca*, trans. W. A. Edward (Cambridge, 1928), VI, p. 26.

[15] Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, p. 44.

[16] Cf. M. Cary, "Rome in the Absence of Pompey," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, ed., S. A. Cook, F. A. Adcock, and M. P. Charlesworth, IX (Cambridge, 1965): 506. On the policy of *concordia ordinum* in general, see Hermann Strassburger, *Concordia Ordinum* (Leipzig, 1931).

[17] Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, p. 42.

[18] Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, p. 407.

MAXIM 4 ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇

CRITICISM RARELY TRAVELS A STRAIGHT LINE TO ITS END