

In *Philippics* 2, 3, and 13 Cicero critiques utterances made by Mark Antony, quoting from letters, edicts, and speeches. The way in which Cicero exploits and manipulates this material will be the subject of my paper. I shall relate several of Cicero's techniques to those outlined in *De Oratore* 2.218ff, where the effective use of wit and humor is treated, especially *dicacitas* ("banter"), on which see Hall (2002), 292-3. I shall also draw parallels to the senatorial debating tactic known as *altercatio*, especially in Cicero's demolition of Antony's lengthy letter quoted in *Phil.* 13—the longest extant piece of writing by Antony (540 words). Many of the snappy rejoinders employed by Cicero in *Phil.* 13 resemble the brisk banter between P. Clodius and Cicero in May of 61 (recounted in *Att.* 1.16.10). A major difference, of course, is that in 61 Cicero was sparring with a senatorial colleague who was present, and so Cicero had to react on the spot to whatever insults Clodius chose to hurl at him. In *Phil.* 13 of 43 B.C., by contrast, Cicero had the great advantage of controlling *both* sides of the verbal exchange, while making it appear that his opponent was speaking for himself.

Twice in *Phil.* 2 Cicero comments upon Antony's style without quoting him directly: at §20 where he remarks that Antony attempted to be witty (*facetus*) in turning against Cicero lines from Cicero's epic poem on his consulship, *De consulatu suo*, and once at §95, where Cicero asserts that the *mira verborum complexio* in a document purportedly drafted by Caesar in fact betrays the hand of Mark Antony (see Ramsey (2003), 191, 299). Elsewhere, Cicero goes so far as to claim that Antony would have done better to remain dumb than to utter words that no one can understand (*Phil.* 3.22). This feature of Antony's mode of expression is also criticized by his rival Octavian, who is quoted by Suetonius (*Aug.* 86.2) as asserting that Antony spoke to seem clever rather than to be understood. Some of the quotations from Antony's edicts and speeches in *Phil.* 3 amply illustrate this point: (§22) *Nulla contumelia est quam facit dignus*, where Cicero exploits the ellipsis of *contumelia* with *dignus* to put a very different meaning on Antony's words, and where he takes Antony to task for the archaism *contumeliam facere*—archaism being a feature of Antony's style criticized also by Octavian. On Antony's style overall, see Calboli (1997). Another bon mot singled out by Cicero from a *contio* speech of Antony (*Phil.* 3.27 *nisi qui vicisset, victurum neminem*) shows on the one hand Antony's striving to be too clever by half through the play on the latent ambiguity of *victurum* (*vivo, vinco*), and on the other hand, Cicero's devilishly clever manipulation of his opponent's words. The context of those words, as we know from *Att.* 15.22 of late June 44, where they are quoted, was some remarks by Antony on the need to avoid an outbreak of civil war with Sextus Pompey. In *Phil.* 3 (and in *Phil.* 5.21), by contrast, they are presented to make Antony out to be a bloodthirsty warmonger.

The bulk of this paper will discuss Cicero's deconstruction of Mark Antony's rhetoric and arguments in a letter written to Hirtius and Octavian in March of 43 in which Antony urged a rapprochement among the Caesarians. That letter was a potential bombshell because it came on the heels of two other letters (from Lepidus and Plancus) strongly urging the Senate to make peace with Mark Antony. Although Antony's letter was not the subject of debate, because it was not addressed to the senate, Cicero chose to introduce it and devote roughly half of *Phil.* 13 (26 out of 50 §§) to a line by line commentary. His aim, as he says (§48) was to convict his opponent by means of his own words.

