

Colloque international dans le cadre du projet FNS  
'*Divina eloquentia*. La religion dans l'enseignement rhétorique à Rome entre République et Empire'

*DIVINA MENTE.*  
RELIGION ET REPRÉSENTATIONS DU DIVIN DANS L'ŒUVRE DE CICÉRON

07-08 mai 2026  
Université de Genève & Fondation Hardt (Vandœuvres)

Organisation : Alessandra Rolle (UNIGE)

**Andrea, Balbo (Università di Torino)**

« L'uso dei riferimenti al divino nelle orazioni di Cicerone dal 56 in avanti: linee di sviluppo e casi di studio »

Abstract: La relazione mira a mettere in luce l'uso della sfera semantica del divino e del religioso nelle orazioni dell'ultima parte della vita di Cicerone e si soffermerà soprattutto sui casi della Pro Milone e delle Philippicae e su alcuni termini come divinitus.

**Stephen, Blair**

« *Tagesordnung* : Making sense of the Etruscan science »

Abstract: In the sceptical second book of the *de divinatione*, the interlocutor Marcus Cicero argues that even if divination were reliable, it still would not be useful (*utilis*). If events occur at random, then divination has no value; but if they are determined and immutable, then, again, divination has no value (2.25). The tenor of book 2 has been seen to clash with Cicero's approach to divination elsewhere: for example, in the *de legibus*, where the same interlocutor confesses 'I believe divination exists' (*divinationem ... esse sentio*, 2.32) and in his proposal for religious laws emphatically insists on maintenance and cultivation of the Etruscan discipline (*disciplinam tenento*, 2.21). This apparent intra-Ciceronian tension has been explained as a result of the mismatch between traditional Roman praxis and theoretical Greek philosophy, a statesman's practical understanding of the Varronian *genus civile theologiae*, or Cicero's ability to 'code-switch' when speaking alternately to a superstitious public or to a private salon of enlightened thinkers.

But the *de divinatione*, which frames a debate on Roman divination as a clash between Stoic theology and Academic scepticism, gives a deliberately narrow picture of the rich discourse on divinatory science unfolding in Cicero's world. A look at the reception of the work on lighting by Cicero's friend, the prominent Etruscologist A. Caecina, shows a wide variety of epistemic approaches to divinatory subject matter and various attempts to reconcile the *disciplina* as a subject of antiquarian study or a semantic system of communication with the divine.

**Alfredo, Casamento (Università di Palermo)**

« Dei in azione. La presenza degli dei nell'oratoria ciceroniana »

Abstract: Il contributo analizza l'uso retorico e strumentale del richiamo agli dèi nell'oratoria di Cicerone, mostrando come l'Autore evochi la presenza divina non in modo ornamentale, ma per rafforzare l'autorità del discorso, legittimare la propria azione politica e orientare il giudizio di giudici e assemblea.

Particolare attenzione è poi dedicata a quei casi in cui tale richiamo sia condotto attraverso il ricorso ad alcuni dispositivi retorici, primi fra tutti l'enargeia e la personificazione come si dimostra attraverso vari

esempi. Si tratterà infine di dimostrare come per Cicerone il divino sia uno strumento flessibile e concreto di comunicazione politica, capace di unire parola, spazio e visione in una strategia retorica efficace.

### **Laila, Dell'Anno (Université catholique de Louvain)**

Challenging *religio*: Negotiations of Religious and Legal Borderlands in *De haruspicum responsis*

Abstract: *De Haruspicum Responsis*, together with *De Domo*, is first and foremost a defense of Cicero's property, his rights, and, ultimately, his political and social standing in Rome. As such, it serves not only as a means for the returning Cicero to respond to the charges brought against him, but also as a vehicle for launching an equally forceful counterattack against his opponent Clodius. This paper focuses on one of the key terms of the speech – one that already statistically stands out for its frequency – namely *religio*. It explores both its intrinsic semantic range (following previous studies such as Rüpke 2007) and the meanings imposed, invested, or inferred by its textual surroundings. Special attention will be paid to expressions of the violation of, or challenge to, *religio* in its different significations, with the aim of proposing a new perspective on this perhaps most protean concept in the study of ancient religion. It will be argued that *religio*, just like the semantic space it occupies, emerges as an extensive site of conflict: a terrain of both religious and legal negotiation.

### **Paolo, Desideri (Università di Firenze)**

« Elementi religiosi nel *De re publica* »

Abstract : Il sommario di storia costituzionale di Roma proposto nel II libro del *De re publica*, pur nella sua incompletezza, dà la possibilità di realizzare quali siano per Cicerone gli ingredienti religiosi fondamentali per la vita di una *res publica*. Si riassumono rapidamente: *auspicia* e luoghi di culto come momenti essenziali nella costruzione; apoteosi di Romolo come prototipo del destino del grande uomo politico (anticipazione del *Somnium Scipionis*); il re Numa e la struttura culturale della città; Tullo Ostilio e la *religio fetialis* come base dell'espansione imperiale. Bilancio complessivo, anche in funzione di un possibile confronto con le valutazioni di Polibio (6.56) circa la presenza del divino nella società romana.

### **Luca, Fezzi (Università di Padova)**

« L'uso politico della religione, dalla *de domo* alla *de haruspicum responsis* »

Abstract: Tra il 57 e il 56 a.C., subito dopo il rientro dall'esilio, Cicerone si trova a dover combattere una battaglia giuridica e politica contro il nemico Clodio. Nelle orazioni *de domo* e *de haruspicum responsis*, la religione non è oggetto di una disputa filosofica ma arma di attacco e difesa. Nella *de domo*, Cicerone demolisce la validità della *dedicatio* operata da Clodio, definendola un atto di empietà mascherato da rito. Sostiene che non può esserci religione laddove vi è ingiustizia: un rito compiuto da un magistrato illegittimo è nullo. Nella *de haruspicum responsis*, chiamato in causa da Clodio per la profanazione di luoghi sacri, Cicerone accetta formalmente il responso degli aruspici ma sostiene che i veri profanatori sono Clodio e i suoi seguaci, elencando le empietà di Clodio, tra cui la profanazione dei misteri della *Bona Dea* e il disprezzo per gli auspici.

### **Charles, Guérin (Sorbonne université) & Romain Lorient (Université de Lyon 3)**

« *Divina ornamenta*: réflexions sur les usages esthétiques de la religion en contexte oratoire »

Abstract : La doctrine de la narration présentée par les *Partitiones oratoriae* (rédigées par Cicéron entre 54 et 44 av. JC) est originale à bien des égards. Rompant avec la logique purement démonstrative de la narration conçue par le *De oratore*, Cicéron s'intéresse alors à la dynamique narrative sous l'angle de l'intérêt et du plaisir discursif et met en avant des moyens qui ne sont pas simplement stylistiques mais constituent

des *ornamenta rerum* : attente, surprise et retournements... Or ce sont, parmi ces moyens de plaire, les ornements divins qui retiennent l'essentiel de son attention : signes, prodiges, oracles ou destinées fatidiques.

En replaçant cette spécificité des *Partitiones oratoriae* dans la tradition plus large de la théorie de la narration, cette communication à deux voix analysera la manière dont le "matériau divin" se trouve constitué par Cicéron en moyen narratif, et cristallise plus largement une réflexion sur la bonne manière de conduire une intrigue.

### **Giuseppe, Labua (La Sapienza, Università di Roma)**

« *Auctoritas deorum* (Quint. *Inst. Or.* 5.11.42): Religion, politics and art of persuasion in the formation of 'new Ciceros' »

Abstract : Religion is integral to Cicero's strategy of persuasion. As Quintilian notes (*Inst. Or.* 5.11.42), by exploiting religious places and symbols and recounting 'divine' episodes and stories, allegedly related to the *quaestio* and/or the actors of the trial, Cicero transforms religion into a powerful rhetorical *argumentum*. He wins the benevolence of this audience (and readership) through his self-portrait as a magistrate and citizen protected by the gods and cooperating with them for the safety of the civic community. This paper elaborates on this notion and draws attention to the 'instructional' approach to Cicero's use of religion in rhetorical education. It shows that, by interpreting Cicero's 'religious' passages as persuasion devices, Quintilian and late schoolmasters and rhetoricians instructed their students in making a correct and efficacious usage of religion in their speeches. Through imitation and emulation of Cicero's astonishing and unsurpassed capacity to adapt the transcendent idea of gods' will to the exigencies of the *causa* the 'new' Ciceros learnt how to manipulate religion as a means of achieving persuasion as well as a rhetorical and political instrument of self-fashioning. Within this context, the use - and misuse - of religion in Cicero's speeches also becomes a propagandistic tool. From the pseudo-Sallustian invectives to the *Pridie quam in exilium iret* to the medieval and Humanistic forgeries, the 'fake' Ciceros, well-trained in rhetoric, refashioned Cicero's self-portrait as a *pious* and devote man, not rarely ridiculed for his self-flattering modes. Not only as a technique of persuasion, religion also plays a key role in the reception of Cicero over the centuries. As a virtuous politician assisted from the gods, Cicero imparted a lesson of 'art of dissimulation'. But he also elicited questions about the significance of religion to the formation of new politicians and orators and, accordingly, to the construction of a 'rhetoric' of religion in modern times.

### **Beatrice, Lietz (Université de Genève)**

« La fin d'un monde : autorité, éloquence et expertise sacerdotale dans le *Brutus* de Cicéron »

Abstract : Le *Brutus* de Cicéron, sans doute composé en 46 av. J.-C. dans le contexte sombre de l'après-Pharsale, a été justement lu par la critique moderne comme une entreprise mémorielle : en retraçant l'histoire de l'éloquence latine des origines à son époque, Cicéron répondrait au silence du forum déploré dès la préface, cherchant à préserver par l'écriture le lien avec un passé républicain désormais menacé de disparaître. En filigrane des portraits des orateurs, cependant, une autre présence jalonne le dialogue, sans avoir retenu l'attention des savants : il s'agit des membres des grands collèges sacerdotaux, comme les augures (dont Cicéron lui-même faisait partie depuis 53 av. J.-C.), les pontifes ou encore les flamines. Or, cette présence n'a pas d'équivalent dans les autres traités rhétoriques de la tradition latine entre la fin de la République et le début de l'Empire. Cette communication se propose de montrer qu'elle ne relève pas d'un simple hasard. Au contraire, elle permet à Cicéron de construire un discours spécifique sur le rapport entre auctoritas et expertise sacerdotale, qui s'articule à celui sur l'éloquence. Des figures des origines comme le flamen Carmentalis M. Popilius Laena jusqu'aux contemporains de Cicéron, l'appartenance aux grands collèges fonde une forme supérieure de sapientia romaine, indissociable à la fois de l'expertise juridique, de l'excellence oratoire et des codes de la sociabilité aristocratique républicaine. Garants du bon fonctionnement des institutions, les membres des grands collèges, et notamment les augures, voient leur autorité et leur prestige compromis par la victoire de César : au même titre que l'éloquence elle-même, c'est aussi ce passé républicain que Cicéron cherche à préserver, par l'écriture, du naufrage de son monde.

**Adalberto, Magnavacca (University of Cyprus/Université de Genève)**

« À la recherche de la vérité : le corpus théologique de Cicéron au miroir de la satire »

Abstract : La présence d'influences de la satire de Lucilius et de la satire ménippée de Ménippe de Gadara, ainsi que de sa continuation chez Varron, ou encore d'éléments et de modes d'expression propres à ces traditions, constitue un aspect qui nécessite encore d'être exploré. En prolongeant une analyse qui ne s'est intéressée qu'au *De Natura Deorum*, cette contribution examinera les rapports entre ce traité et les autres volets du triptyque théologique cicéronien, c'est-à-dire le *De divinatione* et le plus énigmatique *De fato*.

Grâce à une analyse minutieuse des stratégies employées dans la représentation des arguments théologiques, des modalités des discussions entre les interlocuteurs du dialogue, ainsi que des formes de « resposion » entre les trois œuvres, je voudrais montrer que la recherche et la discussion philosophiques autour du *uerum* chez le dernier Cicéron philosophe sont inextricablement liées aux modes d'expression de la satire : parler des dieux et du divin devient alors un moyen de poursuivre ce que Lucilius avait déjà tenté d'accomplir dans ses *Satires*, à savoir discuter de philosophie.

**Cédric, Scheidegger Lämmle (Universität Basel)**

« Ciceronian apotheosis between poetry and prose »

Abstract : It is a notorious fact that Cicero's autobiographical poems showed him interacting with the gods. The two most significant fragments of *De consulatu suo* (fr. 6 and 8 FPL), significantly both quoted by Cicero himself, show the poet-cum-protagonist in conversation with a Muse, receiving instruction and encouragement, and there is weighty testimony that either this poem, or the later *De temporibus suis*, included his presence at a council of the gods ([Sal.] Cic. 3, 7; Quint. *inst.* 11.1.24). Neither testimony, however, clearly distinguishes between the two poems, and the resulting uncertainty has attracted significant scholarly attention and remains a point of contention.

The proposed paper takes this uncertainty as a point of departure to argue for more continuity between the two poems than has hitherto been assumed. It suggests that the apologetic discourse in Cicero's *post reditum* speeches, not least the depiction of his return from exile in a triumphant procession, will have ensured continuity from *De consulatu* to the *De temporibus* and thus may stand behind the lack of distinction between the poems in our sources. Close attention will be paid to Cicero's flirtation with the idea of apotheosis, including the extravagant metaphor of Cicero's return as 'climbing the ladder to heavens' (*dom.* 74: *tamquam gradibus mihi videor in caelum ascendisse*; cf. *Mil.* 97) and its resonances in poetic discourse. Although this approach cannot resolve the textual conundrum of reconstructing Cicero's poems, it is hoped that such contextualisation may advance two larger debates: first, by clarifying the role of Cicero's poetry in the "rise of deification at Rome" (to borrow Spencer Cole's phrase); and second, by illuminating the intricate interactions and mutual entanglements of his poetic and prose writings.