THE POLITICS AND POETICS OF CICERO'S *BRUTUS*

Cicero's *Brutus* (46 BCE), a tour-de-force of intellectual and political history, was written amidst political crisis: Caesar's defeat of the republican resistance at the battle of Thapsus. This magisterial example of the dialogue genre capaciously documents the intellectual vibrancy of the Roman republic and its Greco-Roman traditions. This book is the first study of the work from several distinct yet interrelated perspectives: Cicero's account of oratorical history, the confrontation with Caesar, and the exploration of what it means to write a history of an artistic practice. Close readings of this dialogue – including its apparent contradictions and tendentious fabrications – reveal a crucial and crucially productive moment in Greco-Roman thought. Cicero, this book argues, created the first nuanced, sophisticated, and ultimately "modern" literary history, both crafting a compelling justification of Rome's oratorical traditions and also laying a foundation for literary historiography that abides to this day. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

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The Invention of Literary History

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