Introduction
The Work of Examples

0.1 Why This Book?

This book is about ancient Roman examples. By "examples" I mean specific instances that people adduce as evidence when making an argument: when they say "for example…" or "take the case of…," seeking to persuade others that some proposition is or should be true. The ancient Romans were enthusiastic users of examples – *exempla,* in Latin – and above all examples set by figures from the past who were famed for performing great deeds for the benefit of the community. Such exempla were persuasive thanks to their moral authority: they provided norms for others to accept as their own and models for them to imitate. However, they could only appear morally authoritative and persuasive in light of particular beliefs about how the present relates to the past – specifically, the belief that the past is accessible, understandable, and relevant to present concerns. Exempla, therefore, are rhetorical devices that effect persuasion; they constitute a form of moral discourse; and they evince a particular historical consciousness. It is no surprise, then, that they are found pervasively in the literatures of the Roman Republic and Empire, in Greek as well as Latin texts. The built and visual environment of ancient Rome was also shaped by the concern to produce and transmit exempla. One might say that exempla are everywhere in Roman culture, and that to study Roman examples is to pursue a particular perspective or range of perspectives – rhetorical, moral, and historiographical – on the entirety of Roman culture.[1]

My aim in this book is to show how exempla work in the thought, literature, and material world of the ancient Romans, a topic I call

[1] Ancient authors and modern scholars use the Latin word *exemplum* to refer variously to (1) the performer of a deed; (2) the deed performed; (3) a narrative or other monumental form relating or referring to a deed; and/or (4) the model or moral standard such a performer or performance sets. When my purposes require such distinctions, I use the formulations "exemplary actor," "exemplary action," "exemplary narrative," and the like.

"Roman exemplarity." Over the past decade or two, scholars have increasingly thematized examples in their investigations of Roman authors, texts, historical or legendary figures, monuments, and social practices. Some of my own earlier studies have contributed to this field, and have been widely cited. It seems timely and useful, at this point, to synthesize the results of all these investigations, and to place them within a general framework characterizing the operation of exempla in Roman culture. To this end I examine a series of exemplary figures from Roman legend and history, seeking to describe the social, ideological, and material building blocks out of which these figures are constructed. I further investigate how they are deployed and contested in persuasive rhetoric, how they generate moral standards that are potentially binding upon others, and what forms of memory and historical consciousness they instantiate and propagate. Ultimately, I hope that students of Roman history, literature, philosophy, and culture, along with anyone who is interested in examples and their cultural ramifications, will benefit from this study of how exempla work in ancient Rome.

This book builds upon my previous investigations and publications. Elements of Roller 2004 appear in the introduction and chapters 1 and 2, 2009a in the introduction and chapter 3, 2009b and 2013 in chapter 4, 2011 in chapter 5, 2010 in chapter 7, and 2015b in the conclusion. Some of these earlier studies appeared in collected volumes, and were framed to serve those volumes' needs; also, my ideas developed over time and key frameworks are present in these earlier studies only in preliminary and piecemeal form. Yet I undertook all this work with a view toward producing, eventually, a unified, synthetic study of Roman exemplarity in which all elements would all have their proper place. I have consequently reframed, revised, expanded, and updated all previously published material to reflect developments in the field and the evolution of my thinking in the years since the original publications. The introduction, along with chapters 3 and 4, contain especially large amounts of new exposition. Chapter 6 has never been published in any form. All this material, moreover, has been organized and extensively cross-referenced to achieve, I hope, a coherent exposition following the framework I lay out in the subsequent sections of this introductory chapter.

In what follows, then, I expound a general model of Roman exemplarity. This model seeks to account for the structure, operations, and cultural implications of exempla, focusing on their rhetorical, moral, and historiographical dimensions. While this model in its full elaboration

was the endpoint of my work on this topic, it appears at the beginning of this book to provide suitable structure to the chapters that follow. In this introduction I also discuss key themes and directions in the broader scholarship on exemplarity; and I describe in greater detail the topics, contents, and arguments of the successive chapters. To adumbrate the issues at stake, however, it is helpful (and singularly appropriate) to begin with an example.

0.2 An Example of a Roman Exemplum

The historian Polybius, writing around the middle of the second century BCE, describes for Greek readership the *ethismoi* – habits or customs – that enabled the Romans to rise from a regional Italian power to the dominant power in the Mediterranean in just over fifty years. Among the customs to which he points is the aristocratic funeral (6.53–4), in which the deceased is conveyed in a cortège to the rostra. A eulogizer, normally a scion of the family, recounts to the assembled public the dead man's virtues and the deeds he performed on behalf of the community. Other family members wear masks and costumes representing distinguished ancestors of the deceased, and once the eulogizer has finished praising the newly dead, he recounts the exploits of those ancestors as well. All this pomp, says Polybius, is socially efficacious. Young men who observe this spectacle are fired with the longing to endure and risk everything for the community, in order to win for themselves the renown that derives from performing splendid deeds. Polybius then provides an example of such a performance (6.54.6–55.4):

> (54.6) Many such stories concerning many men are related by the Romans, but one notable instance will suffice for the present, offered as an example and as proof. (55.1) It is said that one Horatius Cocles was fighting against two adversaries on the opposite end of the bridge over the Tiber that lies before the city. When he saw a large force of enemy reinforcements approaching, fearing that they would force a passage and storm into the city, he turned to those behind him and shouted that they should withdraw immediately and tear down the bridge. (2) While they did as he bid and tore it down, he stood fast, receiving a large number of wounds, and checked the onslaught of the enemy, his adversaries being astounded not so much by his strength as by his resolution and boldness. (3) Upon the collapse of the bridge, the enemy was prevented from attacking and Cocles, hurling himself into the river in his armor, purposefully gave up his life, reckoning the safety of his fatherland and the renown that would accrue to him thereafter more valuable than his current existence and the portion of his

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> life remaining. (4) Such, it seems, is the desire and ambition regarding noble deeds that is engendered in Roman youths by their customs (*ethismoi*).[2]

Polybius explicitly says that he is citing Horatius' great deed as an example (*hypodeigma*): an instance supporting his prior general statement that living Romans are stirred to perform great deeds when they contemplate the deeds performed by past heroes, and that they pursue similar renown for themselves. In Polybius' telling, Horatius himself foresaw that his deed would garner fame (55.3), and indeed the Romans often tell his story (54.6), presumably in a laudatory vein like this one, thereby creating narrative monuments commemorating the deed. The textual record bears out Polybius' suggestion that Horatius' story was resonant. More than thirty narratives of or references to this deed can be found in surviving Roman literature, whether in Greek or Latin. Sometimes, as in Polybius, there is a full-scale narrative, while other times his name is mentioned in passing, with the expectation that the reader can supply, from his preexisting store of knowledge, whatever details of the story are pertinent to the context. Several non-literary monuments to this hero also survive or are attested, as we shall see (ch. 1). Polybius thus shows his reader the social and moral ramifications of Horatius' deed – its embeddedness within a cycle of action, evaluation, commemoration, and imitation or norm setting, a cycle that itself constitutes one of the key Roman customs of which Polybius speaks.

0.3 A General Model of Roman Exemplarity

Roman exemplarity is, I suggest, a cultural phenomenon encompassing a particular set of social practices, beliefs, values, and symbols. These are organized and linked together by the cycle of four operations just mentioned: action, evaluation, commemoration, and norm setting, proceeding

[2] Polyb. 6.54.6–55.4: πολλὰ μὲν οὖν τοιαῦτα καὶ περὶ πολλῶν ἱστορεῖται παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις, ἓν δ' ἀρκοῦν ἔσται πρὸς τὸ παρὸν ἐπ' ὀνόματος ῥηθὲν ὑποδείγματος καὶ πίστεως ἕνεκεν. (§55.1) Κόκλην γὰρ λέγεται τὸν Ὡράτιον ἐπικληθέντα, διαγωνιζόμενον πρὸς δύο τῶν ὑπεναντίων ἐπὶ τῷ καταντικρὺ τῆς γεφύρας πέρατι τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ Τιβέριδος, ἣ κεῖται πρὸ τῆς πόλεως, ἐπεὶ πλῆθος ἐπιφερόμενον εἶδε τῶν βοηθούντων τοῖς πολεμίοις, δείσαντα μὴ βιασάμενοι παραπέσωσιν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, βοᾶν ἐπιστραφέντα τοῖς κατόπιν ὡς τάχος ἀναχωρήσαντας διασπᾶν τὴν γέφυραν. (2) τῶν δὲ πειθαρχησάντων, ἕως μὲν οὗτοι διέσπων, ὑπέμενε τραυμάτων πλῆθος ἀναδεχόμενος καὶ διακατέσχε τὴν ἐπιφορὰν τῶν ἐχθρῶν, οὐχ οὕτως τὴν δύναμιν ὡς τὴν ὑπόστασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τόλμαν καταπεπληγμένων τῶν ὑπεναντίων· (3) διασπασθείσης δὲ τῆς γεφύρας, οἱ μὲν πολέμιοι τῆς ὁρμῆς ἐκωλύθησαν, ὁ δὲ Κόκλης ῥίψας ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις κατὰ προαίρεσιν μετήλλαξε τὸν βίον, περὶ πλείονος ποιησάμενος τὴν τῆς πατρίδος ἀσφάλειαν καὶ τὴν ἐσομένην μετὰ ταῦτα περὶ αὐτὸν εὔκλειαν τῆς παρούσης ζωῆς καὶ τοῦ καταλειπομένου βίου. (4) τοιαύτη τις, ὡς ἔοικε, διὰ τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐθισμῶν ἐγγεννᾶται τοῖς νέοις ὁρμὴ καὶ φιλοτιμία πρὸς τὰ καλὰ τῶν ἔργων.

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in approximately this order and then returning to the beginning. Toward gaining a more comprehensive and abstract understanding of this phenomenon, let us examine the four operations in greater detail.[3]

0.3.1 Action

Someone performs an action in the public eye – that is, an action witnessed by representatives of the larger community. This community consists of people who share with one another, and with the actor, a structured set of values, orientations, and beliefs. Romans ordinarily constitute the core community of witnesses, but non-Romans too, especially in military contexts, may be key witnesses to a Roman's action. In such cases, the non-Roman witnesses are presented as holding values and beliefs that overlap sufficiently with the Romans' values to allow them to judge Roman performances competently. Polybius calls these structured values *ethismoi;* in Latin texts they may be called *mos* or *mos maiorum,* "custom(s) / of the ancestors," which underscores the sanction conferred on them by past practice.[4] In Horatius' case, his action in the public eye is his solo fight on the bridge, in full view of the Roman and enemy armies on the opposite sides of the river. Polybius stresses that Horatius maintained verbal and visual contact with the Romans working to demolish the bridge, and he expressly remarks on the spectatorship of the enemy forces ("his adversaries being astounded …," 55.2).[5] Regarding the values he manifests, the enemy is astounded by his "resolution" and "boldness" (*hypostasis, tolma,* 55.2), and as readers we infer – in other texts it is clearer – that his Roman comrades agree with this judgment. In sharing a set of values with the actor, the witnesses may regard him as standing in a synecdochic relationship with themselves: the actor's performance is theirs; he or she embodies, or stands as a surrogate for, the community they represent.[6]

[3] The following schema refines and elaborates earlier versions presented at Roller 2004: 4–6 and 2009b: 216–17.

[4] Much has been written in the past twenty years on the nature and content of the *mos* (*maiorum*), and the values associated with this term: in particular, Bettini 2011[2000]; Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 218–31; Braun 2002; the various articles in Linke/Stemmler 2000 and Braun et al. 2000; Hölkeskamp 1996: 316–20.

[5] Other sources specify that the enemy army is Etruscan; see ch. 1.1. On "spectacular" episodes in Polybius, see Davidson 1991: 11–18.

[6] Synecdoche and surrogacy: Roller 2010: 126–7, 136–7, Vigourt 2001a: 128, Feldherr 1998: 81–123, Joplin 1990: 62–8. See further chs. 2.3, 7.3.1, 7.4.

0.3.2 *Evaluation*

These eyewitnesses, which I call the "primary" audience, evaluate the action's significance for their community, judging it good or bad in terms of one or more of their shared values and thereby assigning it to one or more moral categories. In Horatius' case, the relevant moral category is usually martial valor – *virtus* or *fortitudo* in Latin, *aretê* in Greek – in respect to which he is judged positively. Indeed, Polybius says that the positive report, *eukleia,* which Horatius expects to gain among his countrymen is what makes him willing to die in battle, and the enemy soldiers too, as just noted, vouch for his resolution and boldness. In other cases, audiences may determine (for example) that an actor displayed irreverence toward the gods, judging him negatively in the category of *pietas* (ch. 3.3.4); or that she violated an agreement or contract, judging her negatively in the category of *fides* (ch. 2.3), and so on. In its witnessing and judging, then, the primary audience picks one particular action out of the vast flow of human action, "marks" it as worthy of special attention, and defines its contribution to the collective good. These judges thereby imbue the selected action with social significance, converting it into a "deed" (*res gesta*) with implied or explicit normative force.[7]

0.3.3 *Commemoration*

This deed – that is, the action, its performer, and the evaluation(s) it received – is commemorated via one or more monuments. A monument is any sign capable of summoning the deed to recollection or creating awareness of it. Texts are an especially important monumental form thanks to the density of information they accommodate, their special capacity to transmit narrative, and their ability to circulate widely even in antiquity (and of course surviving texts are the chief vehicle through which we moderns know about Roman society). But many other media

[7] The "gaze" in Roman literature and art has received intensive scholarly attention in recent decades. This discussion has focused on the "erotics" of viewing, or on viewers' pleasure (e.g. Fredrick 2002). Morally evaluative viewing, such as I describe here, has not received systematic discussion, yet is omnipresent in Roman culture. For starting points on the moral gaze see Bartsch 2006: 191–208, Kaster 2005: 28–65, and Solodow 1979: 252–60. It is most intensively discussed by military historians and literary scholars who examine war narratives, as they consider how generals and other soldiers view, evaluate, and reward individual military performances. See e.g. Lendon 1999: 310–14, Feldherr 1998: 4–19 (and *passim*), Goldsworthy 1996: 150–63, 276–79, Davidson 1991: 14–18. But the moral gaze is not limited to military contexts.

also discharge monumental functions, and may reach much broader audiences at particular times and places than texts can: speeches or narratives in oral form, honorific statues or names, collections of spoils, commemorative inscriptions or paintings, built structures like temples or tombs or roads bearing names or other commemorative associations, toponyms or narratives attached to topographical features, wounds or scars or other bodily markings, rituals or other incorporated bodily practices, dramatic performances, and so on. Monuments include things purpose-made for specific commemorative ends, and preexisting things to which commemorative meanings come to be attached.[8] In Horatius' case, the narratives that Polybius implies Romans orally recounted to one other are monuments to his deed, as is Polybius' own narrative (further monuments to Horatius are examined in ch. 1.2). The aristocratic funeral, for its part, has a key monumental function in Polybius' account, as it commemorates the deeds by which Horatius himself was inspired. Monuments disseminate knowledge of an action and its ascribed value, transmitting that knowledge beyond the circle of eyewitnesses to people distant in space or time. People who learn of a deed by encountering a monument I call "secondary" audiences. It is through monuments, then, that a deed (i.e. an action and its evaluation) is inscribed into the structure of the *mos maiorum,* marking it as something "memorable." Actions not taken up into the witnessing-judging-monumentalizing process remain unmarked and are culturally "forgotten," as they lack a structure and context that can make them available and intelligible to people elsewhere and else*when*.[9]

[8] My use of "monument" requires sensitivity to the word's etymological relation to *moneo,* "to warn, advise, remind" (e.g. de Vaan 2008: 387, Maltby 1991: 392). This relation supplies the primary sense of *monumentum,* "a carrier of memory, spur to recollection, *aide-mémoire*" (*TLL* s.v.; the Latin word most commonly refers to statues, tombs, temples, and texts). The connotations of imposing appearance and durability that accompany the modern concept of "monument" are not essential to the Roman *monumentum:* these features may enhance, but are not prerequisite to, an object's capacity to "remind" and "advise." The bibliography on monumentality is vast; recent scholarship helpful to this project includes certain contributions in Nora 1992 and Stein-Hölkeskamp/Hölkeskamp 2006 (all on "lieux de mémoire / Erinnerungsorte"); also Morley 2011, Lentano 2007: 147–54, Thomas 2007: 168–70, Walter 2004a: 131–79, Hölkeskamp 2003 and 1996: 302–8, Hölscher 2001: 188–207, Späth 1998: 37–41, Feldherr 1998: 21–37, Jaeger 1997: 15–29 (and *passim*), Connerton 1989: 41–104, Assmann 1988a: 12–13 (expanded in other works).

[9] Ardener 1989: 24–6 contends that events become "memorable" by being "registered" into structure as they occur. "Unregistered" actions may, of course, be retained in the individual memories of actors and observers, as long as these individuals live. The "forgetting" entailed in defacing or obliterating monuments, which alters the valence of a memory that has already been registered into structure, is a different matter, but a valuable study in its own right: e.g. Flower 2006, Roller 2010: 144–66, Hedrick 2000: 89–130, and chs. 7.4–5.

0.3.4 Norm Setting

Audiences, both primary and secondary, are enjoined to accept the deed – now inscribed via monuments into the moral framework of the *mos maiorum* – as normative, i.e. as having a morally prescriptive or obligatory character. That is, the deed is taken to set or confirm a moral standard by which audience members should judge other actions they observe in their own time and place, or to provide a model that they themselves should imitate or avoid.[10] Horatius, according to Polybius, exemplifies the youth who is inspired to perform a great deed by learning during a funeral about great deeds done in the past; thus he is imitating, or instantiating a norm derived from, deeds commemorated in the monument he encountered (here a funeral oration). The acceptance of a deed as providing a standard for judging or a model for performing future actions therefore primes the pump for a return to operations (1) and (2), performing and evaluating actions in the public eye. Roman exemplarity's four operations are thus both sequential and cyclical: actions are observed, evaluated, and commemorated, creating standards and models that inspire and shape new actions; these are observed and evaluated in their turn, and so on, in an endless loop of social reproduction.

0.4 Supplemental Comments on the Model

Three supplementary comments on this model seem necessary. First, the looping character of the four operations entails that Roman exemplarity always has both a retrospective and a prospective logic. Any action in the public eye can be viewed, by the actor and/or the judging audiences, both retrospectively for its relationship to earlier performances that may have supplied it with models, and prospectively for the norms it may supply to future actors and judges. In either case, performers and audiences look beyond the current cycle of exemplary operations to cycles that

[10] On the morally binding quality of the *mos maiorum*, see Bettini 2011[2000]: 104–7, Hölkeskamp 1996: 318–20, Assmann 1988a: 14–15. By "norm" I mean a relatively specific form of action, evaluated within a category of moral value, that underpins a reasonably widespread belief that one "ought" to act like this. In the moral category of "martial valor," Horatius' exemplary performance may be regarded, depending on context, as setting the norm of "one should fight to the death" (in Polybius' version), or "one should not shrink from fighting against greater numbers," or "one should incur wounds in defense of the fatherland" (in versions where he survives), or "one should fight with the aim of gaining eternal renown," and so on; Horatius' name may be associated with any such norm when it is articulated or implied. My thinking is indebted to Flaig 2005: 209–10, 215 (borrowing some of his language) and Haltenhoff 2005: 92–4, 99–100; 2001: 214–15; 2000: 17–19 and n. 11.

were completed in the past or that will be carried out in the future. This looking-out beyond the current cycle commonly introduces a competitive dimension to exemplary performance. Social actors, as imitators attuned to the glory and prestige of prior performances, inevitably strive to be judged not just as matching, but as surpassing, those prior performances in their chosen arena. Furthermore, as we will see, these actors and their judging audiences are usually aware of the standards and models they themselves are setting for future actors, who of course will try to equal or surpass them in turn. Competition is thus inscribed into the logic of the system, and indeed is found pervasively in Roman exemplarity.

Second, if Roman exemplarity is understood as consisting of a set of practices, beliefs, values, and symbols, organized and linked in a particular manner by the operations just detailed, then we moderns are seriously hampered by being unable to observe these social practices as they occur, or to access directly the associated beliefs and values. We have access only to the *discourse* of exemplarity, or to its *logic,* which alone survives for us to interpret – the system of interlinked visual and verbal signs, ensconced in monuments of all sorts, by which Romans represented to themselves the relevant practices, beliefs, values, and their interrelations. From these discursive elements, the otherwise unobservable practices, beliefs, and values must be reconstructed – as I seek to do in this book. Indeed, the discourse itself, consisting of signs and symbols sedimented in monuments, is part of the practice of Roman exemplarity. But since this practice cannot be observed directly as the Romans carry it out, elements of it that escape symbolic representation are now lost forever.[11]

Third, Romans across a broad social spectrum participate in exemplary thinking and action. The evidence, to be sure, is biased toward elites. Certain monumental forms, such as buildings erected from war spoils, triumphs, and honorific statues, were created only by and for elites who had access to the magistracies that entitled them to hold military commands. Literary texts too were generally written by, and tend to address the concerns and interests of, the higher social strata. Thus the exemplary figures who feature in these texts tend to be aristocrats engaged in socially exclusive activities, like (say) victorious generals. Yet this bias does not exclude other Romans. It is literary texts, for example, that furnish information

[11] This semiotic articulation of "discourse" echoes aspects of the term's usage by Michel Foucault, Roger Chartier, and other post-structuralist theorists of culture. My own earlier discussions (Roller 2004: 4–10, 2009b: 216–17) did not distinguish carefully enough between discourse (a symbolic system) and practice or action (some dimensions of which escape symbolic expression), and the ways in which these different phenomena may be accessed.

about Siccius Dentatus, a non-elite who was among the most decorated and celebrated of all Roman soldiers; and Iulius Caesar's war narratives feature non-elite centurions as the principal vectors of traditional Roman military valor.[12] Certain other monumental forms, like scars and military decorations, commemorate the deeds of elite and non-elite actors without distinction. Funerary monuments survive in vast quantities from non-elite social strata, especially in the imperial age; these monuments' iconography and inscriptions – exposing the "epigraphic habit" of non-elite Romans – show such people engaging in exemplary thinking and behavior. Finally, monumental forms of every sort could be interpreted by secondary witnesses of any status. The import of a scar, triumph, honorific statue, and the like was patent to everyone. And even literary texts, which might be thought inaccessible to those of limited literacy, could be made accessible (along with any exemplary deeds they commemorate) through recitations and other types of performance.[13] The quantity, variety, and social accessibility of monumental forms thus suggests that actors of every status took care to submit their actions to judging audiences that were socially diverse and thereby represented the *entire* Roman community in whose interest these actions were performed.

0.5 Three Cultural Dimensions of Roman Exemplarity

I step back now from the particulars of the model to consider more generally the social and cultural work that exempla do in ancient Rome. First, exempla are central to Roman argumentation and persuasion, hence can affect how Romans actually behave. Second, they are a key component of

[12] Siccius Dentatus: Dion. *Rom*. 10.36–8, Val. Max. 3.2.24, Plin. *Nat.* 7.101, Gell. 2.11; see ch. 1.3 on Caesar's centurion Scaeva. Val. Max. 3.2.6 says that elites in the good old days fretted about being outdone in valor by people beneath them in social status. On forms of cultural production and ideologies that encompass elites and non-elites alike, see e.g. Lobur 2013: 317–19, Bell 1999: 273–6, Hölkeskamp 1996: 303–12, and Horsfall 1996: 109–114 (and *passim*). Elite and non-elite values overlap, but are not identical and may cohabit uneasily: see Horsfall 1999, Alston 1998, and Lendon 1997: 237–66 on the army as a distinct society and culture; also de Libero 2002: 179–85 and Leigh 1995: 200–5 on the class and status implications of wounding.

[13] Habinek 1998: 45–59 discusses literature as vehicle for elite acculturation, but Bell 1999: 264–7 (and *passim*) discusses how oral readings of literary texts may make them available to non-elites and even non-readers. Within literary texts, the audiences described as observing and judging an action are often representative of the Roman people as a whole: for instance, in Livy the observers of "spectacular" deeds are often the army in the field, the mob in the forum, or the voting tribes and centuries at the elections. These groupings include elites and non-elites. On the social range of exemplarity in general, Bell 2008: 14–19.

Roman moral discourse, hence to the establishment, reproduction, and modification of social values. Third, they presuppose a particular relationship between present and past, and so constitute a kind of historical consciousness. These functions may be closely interconnected. Persuasive rhetoric often involves moral discourse, and the morally freighted exemplary figures employed in Roman argumentation tend to be drawn from the past. Therefore Romans must make certain assumptions about how their present relates to the past, in order to be persuaded by moral arguments that depend on invoking past figures. These three dimensions of exemplarity – the rhetorical, the moral, and the historiographical – are thus central to the work that examples do in Roman culture, and all are pertinent, in varying degrees, to each case study presented in the chapters to follow. To clarify how they pertain, let me expand on these three dimensions in turn.

0.5.1 The Rhetorical Dimension

Exempla commonly appear in argumentative contexts, in which a speaker or author seeks to persuade an audience that some proposition is true or false, or urges the audience toward a particular course of action.[14] The fundamental rhetorical structure of the exemplum is a general statement followed by one or more particular examples that should affirm the general statement's correctness. Speakers or authors may adduce exempla *illustratively,* as particular instances that substantiate the general assertion. The passage of Polybius discussed earlier (ch. 0.2) illustrates this usage: Polybius seeks to persuade his Greek readers that Romans are inspired to perform great deeds when they learn of great deeds performed in the past, and he invokes Horatius as an example corroborating this general claim.[15] The operation of illustrative exempla is fundamentally logical, the argument being that any example adduced is typical and there are others like it. Norm setting (operation 4 as described above) takes a back seat in this deployment, since the immediate point is not primarily a moral one.

[14] The role of exempla in making arguments persuasive, particularly in deliberative or forensic speeches, is heavily theorized in ancient rhetorical treatises, and has received significant scholarly attention: e.g. *Rhet. Her.* 4.62; Cic. *Part. Or.* 96, *Inv.* 1.49, *Or.* 120, with recent discussion by van der Blom 2010: 65–72 and Bücher 2006: 152–5 (with full bibliography). The Roman theory partially overlaps with Aristotle's theory of the *paradeigma* as set forth in *Rhet.* 1356–7, 1393, 1398 and elsewhere: Bücher 2006: 152–5, Stemmler 2000: 152–5, Maguire 1982, Alewell 1913: 11–18.

[15] Polyb. 6.54.6 (quoted above): "One notable instance will suffice for the present, offered as an example and as proof." Modern argumentation is no different: here I have adduced a particular passage of Polybius to substantiate my general claims about the rhetorical structure of the example.

Alternatively, speakers or authors may adduce exempla *injunctively,* to urge a particular course of action they regard as efficacious or morally correct under the circumstances, or to furnish a moral standard for their audiences to adopt as their own when evaluating the actions of others.[16] The operation of injunctive exempla is fundamentally moral, defining "how things in general ought to be done" or, more pointedly, "what specifically ought to be done, or is acceptable to do, now." Typicality is not essential here, and indeed the "model" case may be highly distinctive (ch. 0.5.2). To adduce an exemplum in either the illustrative or injunctive mode, then – to make a claim about what is *likely* to happen or *ought* to happen – is to assume or project, for the purposes of persuasion, that present or future actions will be similar to actions performed, and outcomes that resulted, under similar circumstances in the past.[17]

But contestation arises around the matter of establishing just how similar those circumstances are, and therefore how well a particular exemplum "fits" the situation in which it is adduced – or, alternatively, how well a particular example supports the general heading under which it is marshaled. Establishing "fit" is pivotal to establishing how likely the future is to resemble the past, and hence to whether the argument is persuasive. Consequently, a speaker who adduces an exemplum in support of an argument always shapes it to maximize its congruence to the situation at hand. An adversary arguing the other side, conversely, may seek to discredit the exemplum by contending that the fit is bad. He may allege that the situations are different (perhaps leading him to invoke an alternative exemplum), or that the old story lacks credibility, or that the recommended action is badly rather than well done and is therefore contrary to the *mos maiorum* (i.e. that the performance is being evaluated within an incorrect or inappropriate moral category), and the like. In short, no invocation of an exemplum is ever "neutral." All are tendentious and partisan, as befits their argumentative context.[18] Rhetorical adversaries may also dispute what

[16] The terms "illustrative" and "injunctive" were suggested to me by Noel Carroll; for the distinction see Barchiesi 2009: 46, Harvey 1992: 195, 208. My discussion of this matter at Roller 2004: 52–3 is confused; Lowrie 2008: 165 n. 3 points to one gap. In Roller 2015a I develop this distinction further. For other taxonomies of exempla that meet other needs, see Chaplin 2000: 137–40, 162–5; Stemmler 2000: 158.

[17] Quint. *Inst.* 5.11.8 expressly asserts the future-orientedness of exempla invoked in deliberative situations, though the idea that the present and future are likely to look like the past is older (e.g. Thuc. 1.22.4, Polyb. 12.25b.2–3; discussion by Rüsen 2005: 11, Haltenhoff 2000: 25–6, Chaplin 2000: 197–200). For a real case, see Cic. *Phil.* 5.25–7, with van der Blom 2010: 109–14.

[18] Non-"neutrality" of exempla: van der Blom 2010: 62, Lowrie 2008: 173, and Dowling 2000 (foundational). Shaping examples to fit the immediate argumentative context long predates the Romans: see Alden 2000: 23–38 and Willcock 1964 for this phenomenon in Homer. Tendentious

specific performance, or aspect of a performance, a particular monument commemorates, or whether a given object is a monument at all; whether judging audiences have identified the implied norm correctly; whether a later action constitutes a proper imitation; and so on. They may even turn an exemplum to diametrically opposed ends in the selfsame debate.[19] In the chapters to follow, I will show how these and other strategies are put into action to affirm or deny the fit of an exemplum to the situation at hand, hence to dispute the vision of the present or future that the exemplum implies. Interpretive flexibility and rhetorical contestation are endemic to Roman exemplarity, and indeed are its lifeblood, as the relevance and implications of an exemplum adduced in a given situation – defining what happened in the original case, what is the same or different about the current case, whether this case has been brought under the correct general heading, and what may or should happen now or later – are argued from this side and that.

0.5.2 *The Moral or Ethical Dimension*

I remarked earlier that established social values, usually regarded as belonging to the *mos maiorum,* provide a structured moral framework, hence a set of categories, for sorting actions that an audience of community members has witnessed. This remark may seem to imply that categories defined by abstract values take epistemological and axiological precedence over the particular actions they subsume. In fact, in Roman culture the reverse is true. As many scholars have observed, Roman authors rarely discuss abstract values as if they were *a priori* givens, let alone derivable from universal laws or connected to broader doctrine. Rather, Roman authors tend to present values as being *implicit in,* or as *emerging from,* particular exemplary performances. If Platonic ethics, for example – or any other formalized philosophical "system" – asks, "What is the nature of the good,

shaping: Polybius says that Horatius Cocles died defending the bridge; yet in every other extant version he survives (usually wounded). I speculate that this death is Polybius' invention, introduced into the received tale to enhance its "fit" to his argument: ch. 1.2.5 and n. 43.

[19] Cicero says that an orator needs a good stock of exempla on hand, to support whatever kind of argument is required (*Part. Or.* 96). Quintilian offers strategies for undermining your opponent's exempla (*Inst.* 5.13.23–4). Recent scholarly discussions touching on "fit," and on the strategies for affirming or discrediting particular exempla, include Langlands 2011: 106–10 (and *passim*), van der Blom 2010: 103–28 (esp. 112–16), Bücher 2006: 322–5, Walter 2004a: 63–70, Flaig 2003: 77–81; further instances are analyzed by O'Gorman 2011: 272–7, Chaplin 2000: 39–40, Lyons 1989: 19 (on Erasmus), David 1980: 79–81. Ch. 7.4–5 offers detailed analysis of a rhetorical battle waged through competing deployments of exempla.

or courage, or love (etc.), and how is it manifested?", a Roman actor who embraces an exemplary moral outlook would declare, in the injunctive mode, something like this: "I must measure my own and others' performances against the standard of Horatius Cocles (who displayed courage)." Thus Roman values typically manifest a concrete-to-abstract movement, rather than the reverse, and are inextricably linked to specific actors and their concrete deeds.[20] Indeed, actions that seem most "pregnant" with some value – thematizing or highlighting it, appearing *notably* right or wrong in their manifestation of that value – tend to make the transition to exemplary status. It is these actions in particular that are plucked from the vast flow of human action, "marked" as significant, registered into the moral categories of the *mos maiorum,* granted commemoration (hence saved from oblivion), and so constituted as normative.[21] Such deeds and their performers assume their particular moral authority not despite, but precisely because of, their rarity and exceptionality.[22] In its moral dimension, then, Roman exemplarity privileges the concrete performance over the abstract value.

While one should not overstress the sharpness of the boundary between the formal, doctrinal ethics often associated with the late Classical and Hellenistic philosophical schools and the more casuistic ethics manifested by exemplarity and other "popular" styles of morality, it may nevertheless be said, with due caution, that doctrinal ethics provides an alternative to exemplarity, a different way of thinking about how values, actions, and social context interarticulate. I will say more about this alternative in the conclusion (ch. 8).[23]

Despite the foregrounding of particularity and contingency in Roman exemplarity, individual actions must be categorized according to values

[20] This is not to resurrect the false old generalization that Greeks think abstractly and Romans concretely (e.g. Kornhardt 1936: 20–1, 34). Indeed, Aristotle already rejects Plato's abstract, idealistic ethics in favor of a situational, applied approach (Hedrick 2009: 425–6). My point here is that idealizing philosophical ethics foregrounds the general, seeing the concrete as instances; while exemplary ethics foregrounds the concrete, seeing the general as emerging from the specific. Further discussion in Haltenhoff 2005: 86–91 and 2000: 22–7 (emphasizing Roman values' "Handlungsgebundenheit," or connectedness to action); also van der Blom 2010: 68, 77; Hölscher 2001: 199–200.

[21] See Flaig and Haltenhoff, cited n. 10 above. Warnick 2008: 35–9 likewise describes "the exemplary" as that in which some quality or value is particularly salient.

[22] Rarity of unusual displays: Lyons 1989: 32–3. On the *auctoritas* of an exemplum, see Cic. *Inv.* 1.49, further developed at *Ver.* 2.3.209; also *Rhet. Her.* 4.49.62 insists on the importance of naming the *auctor* of the exemplary performance. Discussion by van der Blom 2010: 65–6; Stemmler 2001: 224–6; 2000: 150–5.

[23] See Morgan 2007: 333–40 on this boundary, especially in relation to the moral discourse of fables and *gnomai* (which she considers, like exempla, to be forms of "popular morality"); also 15–17 on the "systematic" character of these popular moralizing modes.

that the community shares and deems significant, if the actions are to acquire meaning and have consequences for the community at large.[24] This categorizing, in fact, is what audiences do when they evaluate actions (the second operation) and assign them to moral categories. An exemplum, in other words, acquires social relevance only by being an example *of* a larger, more general, superordinate moral category. Without a superordinate category to provide organization, particulars are not "examples," but rather "cases" (in, for example, the psychoanalytical sense): occurrences or events, presented *seriatim*, from which patterns or organizing principles may, or may not, be inferred on a provisional and ever-shifting basis, subject always to revision in light of the next case in the series.[25] In assigning an action to a moral category, a judging audience renders the action comparable to and commensurable with other actions that have previously been assigned to the same category, and that already stand as examples of it. Moral categorization thus "flattens" the contingency and particularity of individual performances, rendering them *equivalent* insofar as they share the particular moral quality that the category predicates of them. Consequently, if a speaker presents an argument requiring an exemplary instance of some moral quality – say, *fortitudo,* of which Valerius Maximus (3.2) presents about forty discrete actors and actions – then any performance assigned to this category ought to serve equally well: each stands as a "typical" instance, equivalent in respect to this category with all other exempla assigned to the same category. This "typicality" of exempla, their propensity to be grouped with other exempla under rubrics corresponding to broadly accepted moral values, is the ultimate source of their moral content and social power. So while exempla are "unique" in the circumstances of their production (and, as I will argue, in the specific argumentative contexts in which they are invoked), they are "typical" in sharing with other

[24] The question of how humans abstract and generalize at all, since we live in a phenomenal world that confronts us only with discrete objects and events, has engaged philosophers from Plato, who articulated the theory of forms, to Derrida, who labels the whole question "exemplarism" (e.g. Hollander 2008: 1–2, 51–4). Cognitive linguists have pursued this question from a different perspective. On the "passage" of the exemplum from particularity to generality, see Barchiesi 2009: 45–7; Hollander 2008: 51–4; Harvey 1992: 199, 213–15.

[25] A series of cases may presuppose the existence of an organizing principle that is undiscovered or perhaps changeable. Alternatively, such a series may point to a form of knowledge that dwells only on the level of the particular and moves analogically from one case to the next, without ever adducing or presupposing a taxonomy in which a "general" subsumes the particulars. Such a form of knowledge constitutes another "outside" to exemplarity, and indeed to much of western metaphysics. See Lüdemann 2014, esp. 120–1; further reflection on taxonomies and relations of particular to general in Lowrie/Lüdemann 2015 (with other contributions in this volume), and Lyons 1989: 20–8 (earlier views).

exempla a predicate derived from a shared moral category. Their ontology is double in this way, and they exhibit the one face or the other depending on the circumstances under which they are adduced.[26]

In fact, individual examples of a given value once again show their "unique" faces as soon as they are adduced in a particular argumentative context. For the details of a specific exemplary performance relate to the details of the specific argumentative context – which is to say, the exemplum "fits" its context or frame – in a distinctive way that is unlike the fit any other exemplum would produce, even if drawn from the same moral category. An audience's perception of a given exemplum's "fit" to its context will affect how morally compelling and persuasive the overall argument appears to be. An exemplum may, for example, seem to fit badly by exceeding the framing situation, displaying elements or implications that go beyond the point notionally being argued or illustrated. Alternatively, the moral complexity that performances in their particularity often display – admitting positive evaluation in one category but negative evaluation in another, with different audience sectors offering divergent categorizations – may seem to vitiate the fit, and hinder the easy acceptance of the exemplum as providing a norm.[27] Finally, even within a given moral category, the particularities of specific exempla, or even the order in which a list of exempla is extruded, may create internal groupings or "speciation" linking some instances more closely together than others. I will point out instances of all these "particularity effects" in the chapters to come.[28]

Monuments present particular challenges to secondary audiences looking to derive moral information from them. Secondary audiences may

[26] Kornhardt 1936: 49 already observed that exempla partake of typicality and uniqueness; recent discussion by Barchiesi 2009: 46–7, Gelley 1995: 1–3, and the works cited next.

[27] On categorical disagreements see Langlands 2008: 172 and n. 49, and more generally Langlands 2011 on "situation ethics." Quintilian (*Inst.* 5.11.24) illustrates a simple form of categorical disagreement: you can try to discredit your opponent's exemplum by asserting that the deed he adduces was badly rather than well done. Examples in chs. 1.2.3, 3.3.4, 4.6, 5.3.1 below. Seneca offers a sweeping Stoic critique of the moral categories of Roman exemplarity and the criteria for assigning actions to those categories; see the conclusion (ch. 8).

[28] On the "excess" that examples display, see Goldhill 1994: 58–9, 70, Harvey 1992: 195–6, Lyons 1989: 34. This characteristic was noticed and concisely articulated around 30 CE by Velleius Paterculus: *non enim ibi consistunt exempla, unde coeperunt, sed quamlibet in tenuem recepta tramitem latissime evagandi sibi viam faciunt, et ubi semel recto deerratum est, in praeceps pervenitur* (2.3.4); see also Lowrie 2008: 173. Matters of "fit" and of moral complexity arise frequently in this book: see especially ch. 2.2, 3.4, 5.5, and 7.4–5. For the dynamics of exempla in lists, where interactions between particular items may produce effects that transcend or undermine the relations authorized by their shared predicate, see Roller 2015a: 87–90 (and *passim*); also Langlands 2008: 162–3, Belknap 2004: 6–8, 15–35, Harvey 1992: 196–206, 214–15; particular instance in ch. 1.3.

modify or reject entirely the judgments that they find sedimented in monuments created by primary audiences – deciding, perhaps, that an action should be evaluated negatively rather than positively (or vice versa), or placed in a different moral category, in order for it to impart a relevant standard or model to the present. Secondary audiences may further disagree among themselves or be uncertain about how to interpret a monument: that is, they may struggle to "reconstruct" from a monument an exemplary performance along with a norm or norms that seem pertinent to the present.[29] They may even disagree whether the object under discussion is a monument at all. Finally, secondary audiences commonly create further monuments to a deed: they may restore an old statue, erect a new one, or write a text that narrates the old deed anew (e.g. when invoking an exemplary figure to support an argument, as Polybius does with Horatius). In so doing they often make reference to the monument(s) by which they came to know of the deed in the first place, either confirming or altering the valuation they interpreted that monument as carrying.[30] All such debates about the moral value and significance of exempla, and about the meanings of monuments, not only contribute to the ongoing work of relating events in the phenomenal world to the moral categories that bestow social meaning, but also enable judging audiences to develop their faculty for making nuanced, defensible moral judgments and for distinguishing among moral concepts.[31]

0.5.3 *The Historiographical Dimension*

Exempla have a timelessness about them. The sequence of operations expounded earlier (ch. 0.3) presupposes that deeds performed in the past, together with the beliefs and values that motivated them, are comprehensible, morally compelling, and reproducible in the present. The looping of these operations further implies that deeds performed in the present will be similarly meaningful to future audiences. This assumption of eternal comprehensibility and relevance is a consequence of, and has implications for,

[29] On the "reconstructability" of monuments see Assmann 1988a: 13, 2011[1992]: 26–8; Bettini 2011[2000]: 118–19 (in different terms). Uncertainty about or errors in the interpretation of monuments: Jaeger 1997: 10–12, 121–3, Wiseman 1987a: 90–5, Keesling 2005: 49–57 (Greek example).

[30] Consequently, monuments often "cross-reference" one another: a text mentions an honorific statue or cognomen, an inscription reports a triumph, a temple dedicated by a victor contains a painting of the battle during which the temple was vowed, and so on. Many cases of cross-referencing are discussed in this book: see especially chs. 1.2.4–5, 4.4, 6.3, and 7.4.5.

[31] On moral conclusions that everyday moral actors may draw from their encounters with art (the form taken by many monuments discussed in this book), see Carroll 2002: 7–19, Mullin 2002: 144–8.

how the past as a whole is viewed. The past (and by implication the future) is taken to occupy a space of experience that is, if not identical to the present, then transparently continuous with or analogous to it, so that past and present actions can be compared and evaluated according to the same standards. The past is not separated from the present by ruptures or profound changes that would render the motivations and meanings of past actions opaque to present viewers. Viewing the past as "close" and easily accessible to the present is thus the condition of possibility for deploying exempla.[32] Conversely, to invoke and deploy exempla is to *project* the past as being close, accessible, and continuous or analogous with the present – even if those exempla are invoked in support of innovative, unprecedented courses of action. Romans are always on the side of the *mos maiorum,* and the rhetoric of following *mos* is more or less compulsory. This rhetoric serves to legitimate any course of action, even an innovation, by presenting it as sanctioned by exemplary precedents emerging from a "near," accessible past. Arguments *against* a given course of action, conversely, commonly assert that it is contrary to the *mos maiorum*.[33] To presuppose or project a past that is similar enough to the present that it can provide norms via exempla I will term the "exemplary" view of the relationship between past and present.

The construction and maintenance of the "exemplary" view depends upon a particular feature of monumentalization: namely, that a monument detaches an action performed under specific social and historical circumstances from the bulk of its original context. When a speaker or writer invokes an exemplum to support an argument, for example, the monumental form in which he presents the past deed is a "paranarrative," an inset narrative of or reference to events whose temporality, locality, and cast of characters differs from those in the surrounding material.[34] Once it

[32] Morgan 2007: 345–56 discusses how "popular" moral systems, including examples, presuppose societies that are stable over time; Bücher 2006: 320–2 remarks on the "closeness" of the exemplary past, and the absence of epochal distinctions that might render it unable to ratify the present; Koselleck 1985[1967]: 22 speaks of exemplary argumentation as melding past and present into a "continuous space of experience." See also Vlassopoulos 2011: 166, Hölkeskamp 2003: 233–4, 2001: 98, and Walters 1996: 80–8, 94–7. Knapp 1989: 124–34 examines the relationships of continuity and analogy that present interpreters may project onto the past, to make it serve present needs.

[33] For this rhetoric, van der Blom 2010: 81–2, Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 235–6, Walter 2004a: 66–7, Braun 2002, Bettini 2011[2000]: 107–113, Chaplin 2000: 156–62; more generally Warnick 2008: 116–17. Scholars have consequently remarked that, in Lévi-Strauss' terms, Rome is a "hot" society (one that experiences significant change over time) masquerading as a "cold" society (one that does not): see Bettini 2011[2000]: 113, Walter 2004a: 60–2, and Assmann 1988b: 107–10.

[34] For example, Polybius relates Horatius' deed not as part of a continuous narrative of the wars marking the birth of the Roman Republic (its "original" context: ch. 1.1), but as a "paranarrative" inserted into a description of the mid-republican aristocratic funeral. For the "paranarrative" quality of examples, see Lyons 1989: 30–1, Alden 2000: 1, 23–38.

is stripped of its original social and historical context and inserted into an entirely different one, the deed is liberated from limits on interpretation that the original context might have imposed, and can receive new meanings that accord with its new context. Visual monuments, such as honorific statues or inscriptions, function similarly in that they adduce and insert into any given viewer's contemporary context deeds performed by other people at other times and places. Indeed some inscriptions directly address their future readers, insisting on the relevance of the commemorated person or deed to that reader's own experience.[35] By their very deracination, then, monuments of all sorts stimulate and encourage their viewers to relate them to their present context, to ascribe meaning to them here and now, and to praise and blame the commemorated actions by the same standards they apply to actions they personally witness.[36] Hence the "timeless" character of exempla, the sense that through them the past speaks to the present in an eternally valid language of morality. The metaphor "time island" neatly captures this dynamic of de- and recontextualization: the monument is an isolated outpost of the past surrounded by the ocean of the present, where present viewers and judges encounter and seek to comprehend that past within their own frameworks of value and possibility.[37]

This "exemplary" view of the relationship between past and present may be contrasted with the "historicist" view, long dominant in the academy, which posits that societies undergo structural and moral change over time. Such change means that the social positionality and motivating values of past actors, who operate *ex hypothesi* within a different social and moral framework from present observers, do not necessarily lie open to

[35] On the temporal dislocation or decontextualization that enables exempla to stake out diachronic moral claims, see e.g. Lucarelli 2007: 296 ("Dekontextualisierung/Umkontextualisierung"), Kraus 2005 (on this phenomenon in narrative historiography), Walter 2004a: 46 ("zeitlos"), 411–12; Flaig 2003: 90–1, Engels 2001: 144 ("'zeitlos' … und leichter auf andere Situationen übertragbar"), Witzmann 2000: 78–9 (on inscriptions that address the reader), Späth 1998: 46 ("décontextualisés, comme significations abstraites"), Hölkeskamp 1996: 314–15, 323–4 ("metahistorisch"), Hampton 1990: 10–11 ("momentary universality"), Lyons 1989: 11–14. In this book, monuments to past heroes that are explicitly and systematically related to a later viewer's own present include Cloelia's statue as described by Seneca (ch. 2.2), Duilius' column as appropriated by Augustus (ch. 4.4) and the "statue of Cornelia" in the context of the porticus Octaviae (ch. 6.4).

[36] Scholars have observed that the stock of knowledge monuments provide about the past is morally binding on the present: Assmann 2011[1992]: 26–8, 1988a: 13 (on "cultural memory"), Hölkeskamp 2003: 233–4, Hölkeskamp 1996: 312–13. Yet it is the present that identifies this knowledge as such, and ascribes to it (hence imposes upon itself) its binding force. On the exemplary linkage of past to present and present to future see Assmann 2011[1992]: 17, Walter 2004a: 55–6.

[37] On "time islands" ("Zeitinseln"), see Assmann 1988a: 12. Jaeger 1997: 15–18 shows that temporal dislocation is constitutive of any encounter with a monument, and that Varro (*Lat.* 6.49) was already attuned to this dynamic.

the latter's immediate apprehension. The past, on its face, is strange and distant – a "foreign country," in David Lowenthal's famous formulation – and the present observer who seeks access to it must reconstruct, via scholarship and imagination, its social structures, value system, and horizons of possibility. While there may be certain diachronic regularities or features persisting from past to present, the historicist view remains fundamentally *relativist* in holding that an historical actor's actions and motivations must be interpreted in the context of the structural, material, and moral particularity of her own time and place, and that these differ from the observer's. The paramount importance of an action's original context, in the historicist view, forecloses the monumental dynamic described in the previous paragraph: that the action can be thought to give meaning to or receive meaning from its later contexts. According to the historicist view, past actions do *not* supply norms that posterity can immediately accept, and there is no simple or direct way to "learn lessons" from the past. An observer of past actions whose outlook is governed by historicizing assumptions is therefore not a "secondary witness" who feels called upon to accept those actions as normative, but rather is what we moderns would call an "historian." By the same token, the exemplary performer is not an "historical" actor. The moral import of an exemplary deed does not really require the deed to have been performed precisely as the monuments allege, or indeed to have been performed at all. The possibility of an historicist understanding thus constitutes another kind of boundary to exemplarity, an alternative epistemology providing a fundamentally different way of conceptualizing the present's relationship to the past. I will probe this boundary further in chapter 4.

A larger question thus arises regarding the relationship between the exemplary view of the past and actual events that occurred in the past. The sequence of four operations traced above exposes what Romans from the middle Republic onward took to be the normal way in which actions were performed and evaluated, and values thereby established and instilled. In some cases this sequence may describe the actual unfolding of an action in the public eye, its evaluation by a judging audience, and its transmutation into monumental and normative form. More importantly, however, Romans commonly *assumed* that the operations of exemplarity hung together in this way, and this expectation was so strong that any given element (or perceived element) in the sequence of operations could attract or spawn the other elements required to complete the sequence. For example, if an object looked as if it might be monumental, it was liable to get attached to a performance, whether already known or manufactured

ad hoc, that it could be regarded as commemorating. Each operation presupposes and implies the others; each finds its meaning in the context of the ensemble. The dynamics of exemplarity thus tend toward connecting elements that may not, in historical actuality, have been connected, and may even lead to the outright fabrication of actors, deeds, and monuments as required to fill out a sequence of operations. Regarding Horatius, even ancient writers questioned the veracity of this legend, but this doubt did not reduce his efficacy as an exemplum of military valor. Horatius is undoubtedly an exemplary performer, but probably not an historical actor.[38]

The distinction between "exemplary" and "historicist" views of the past was first articulated in the 1960s in pathbreaking essays by Reinhart Koselleck and George Nadel. These scholars argue that, from antiquity to the late eighteenth century, much historical writing turned the past to moralizing, didactic ends involving heavy use of exempla. Social actors in any given present could discover from the successes and failures of past actors what their own duties and obligations were, and how to fulfill them. Renaissance and Enlightenment writers, in fact, often used classical quotations – particularly the Ciceronian tag *historia magistra vitae,* "history [is] life's teacher" – to authorize their moral and pedagogical deployment of the past, and to align their own historiographical practice with what they took to be that of the ancients. The "historicist" approach, meanwhile, crystallized within German Romanticism of the early nineteenth century (though its roots are older), and was central to the development of history as a modern academic discipline.[39] For this book's purposes, I employ the Koselleckian "exemplary"/"historicist" distinction. Other scholars, however, have presented alternative taxonomies of historical consciousness to

[38] Examples of "backstories" assembled or fabricated for the sake of a compelling exemplum include the explanation for the cognomen Cocles (ch. 1.2.4), details about Fabius Cunctator's childhood (ch. 5.6), and the occasion for the erection of the "statue of Cornelia" (ch. 6.3); Solodow 1979: 261–4 provides fundamental discussion of the phenomenon. Horatius' plausibility doubted: Livy 2.10.11; Flor. *Epit.* 1.4(10).3. On the irrelevance, within the logic of exemplarity, of whether exemplary deeds were actually performed, see Felmy 2001: 78–81, Späth 1998: 47, Hölkeskamp 1996: 320–3. On the extent to which the actual past matters for the claims that the present makes about the past, see Knapp 1989: 123–4.

[39] Koselleck 1985[1967], Nadel 1964; early reflection on Koselleck's problematic by Stierle 1972 (esp. 183–6), and more recently by various contributors to Lianeri 2011 (especially Burke, Vlassopoulos, Morley, and Grethlein); also Kinneging 1997: 91–100, 306–8. Hedrick 2006: 1–7, 48–57 provides a lucid overview of the exemplarity/historicism distinction. For *historia magistra vitae* see Cic. *De Or.* 2.36. Other commonly cited classical authorities for exemplary historiography include [Dion.] *Rhet.* 11.2 and Polyb. 1.1.1–3.

meet other needs.[40] Furthermore, the exemplarity/historicism distinction is not absolute, but reflects only an overall orientation. In fact any discourse about the past, in any era, displays some admixture of these outlooks. First, there can plainly be no "pure" historicism in which a past is known to the present exclusively on its own terms, without any imposition of present frameworks or concerns. For no historian can avoid posing and answering questions from within her or his own horizons of possibility and value, which *ex hypothesi* differ from those of the past under investigation. Thus any discussion of the past is always pre-infused with present purposes.[41] Second, a "pure" exemplary outlook that regards past and present as absolutely identical is equally impossible. Even before the advent of historicism as an articulated philosophy of history, certain changes over time were obvious to all observers.

Indeed, as I will argue, Roman historical consciousness does allow for (limited) change over time, but only in ways compatible with an exemplary outlook. For example, narratives of moral improvement or moral decline are omnipresent in Roman historiography, as is the idea that changing fortune (*fortuna*) elevates or abases individuals and groups in alternation. These narrative trajectories undeniably acknowledge change over time, as they present particular performances as exceeding or falling short of prior models. But the underlying, long-accepted categories of action and value persist; actors and actions past and present are always commensurable within this unchanging set of categories. Such change is entirely compatible with the logic of exemplarity (chs. 4.5, 5.2). A more fundamental challenge to exemplarity arises from change over time *in the*

[40] E.g. Rüsen 2005: 9–39 elaborates a fourfold taxonomy of historical consciousness, of which one category is labelled "exemplary." Rüsen's taxonomy is collapsed to three categories by Walter 2004a: 51–63, 84–89, 319–29. Knapp 1989: 124–34 adduces "continuity" and "analogy" as modes of relating present to past, in contrast to a concern for "the actual past." Some scholars stratify the past into distinct epochs that relate differently to the present. Thus Feeney 2007: 68–107 and others posit a more recent "historical" epoch and a more distant "mythical" one, each with a distinct epistemological and rhetorical status, and separated by a "floating gap." However, Roman exemplarity processes all performances similarly, regardless of temporal distance, and presupposes no stratification of the past into epochs (so Felmy 2001: 78–80; Purcell 2003: 33–4 and Gehrke 1994: 247–9 also reject the myth/history distinction). Assmann offers a stratified theory of memory, distinguishing a current and recent realm of "communicative memory" from a remoter realm of "cultural memory," separated again by a "floating gap" (1988a: 10–16, 2011[1992]: 34–41). But Assmann's taxonomy fits awkwardly with ancient Rome, where features of both these memory realms can be found at every temporal distance (see ch. 6.6; also Bücher 2006: 106–9; Hölkeskamp 2005: 259–60, 2003: 233–4; Fraas 2000: 38; Borsdorf/Grütter 1999: 4–5; Späth 1998: 42–6).

[41] Theorists of historical method have long sought to understand and characterize the inescapable presentism of historicism: e.g. Gadamer 1979: 152–60, 2004[1960]: 291–306, Ricoeur 1981, and Ricoeur 1976 discuss the historian's encounter with the past as a hermeneutic process.

moral categories themselves – change that might render the motivations of past actors opaque to present observers and hinder the exemplary transmission of norms. While such change might seem capable of generating an historicizing outlook, it does not typically seem to do so (ch. 4.6). For even moral change, if its scope is limited and it unfolds incrementally, may be accommodated within a fundamentally exemplary outlook – for instance, a modest, evolutionary expansion in the scope of a single moral category (ch. 5.4), or a change in the kind of actor regarded as a legitimate performer in a particular category (ch. 2.3–4). Such evolution may tug at the *mos maiorum,* modifying its structure slowly and incrementally. But no values are created or destroyed; the present always has access to all the moral resources it requires to evaluate and extract norms from past performances.

0.6 This Book's Contribution

The great variety of practices, beliefs, values, and symbols that constitute or participate in Roman exemplarity, and the diversity of texts and other monumental forms by which exemplarity is accessed, make the phenomenon difficult to grasp and analyze as a whole. By the same token, scholarship in many different fields of classical studies (and other fields) impinges upon one or another of its aspects, and any investigation of exemplarity impinges in its own turn on these varied fields of inquiry. Here I describe some of the fields with which this study connects, as well as those with which it does not connect (i.e. defining where its limits are), and I offer some justification for the structure this study manifests.

Within Classics, large and ever-growing bodies of scholarship address such topics as the role of spectacle in Roman civic culture, the memorial dynamics of various cultural products and practices (texts, genres, built structures, triumphs, funeral processions, etc.), the construction and validation of value systems (like the *mos maiorum*), the deployment of exemplary figures in specific Roman literary genres or texts and in other monumental types, and the place of examples in ancient rhetorical theory. The semantics of particular words or phrases pertinent to exemplarity have also been examined.[42] As just seen (ch. 0.5.3), philosophers of history

[42] Key Latin terms that have received useful semantic studies include *exemplum* / *exemplar*, *monumentum*, *documentum*, *mos* (*maiorum*), *primus*, *res gesta* / *rem gerere, laudo* / *laudatio, existimo* / *existimatio, intueor, sequor, imitor,* and the value categories of *virtus, pietas,* and *fides*; in some cases corresponding or overlapping Greek terms have also been studied.

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have described different forms of historical consciousness; while in the burgeoning field of memory studies scholars have considered how societies (Roman and other) preserve and transmit their past in the service of the present. Scholars of medieval and early modern literatures have reflected on the moral and rhetorical dimensions of exempla in the texts they study, which sometimes offer illuminating parallels to Roman practice. And contemporary philosophers have investigated the dual ontology of examples as simultaneously unique and typical, along with the issues of singularity, representativeness, inclusion, and exclusion that this ontology entails (ch. 0.5.2). If I may use the parable of "touching the elephant," all such scholars, while pursuing other questions, have put their hands on some part of the ungainly beast that is Roman exemplarity, and have done much to trace its contours. This book, however, attempts to see this elephant whole – to present these varied objects of scholarly investigation as aspects of a single cultural phenomenon. One aim of this book, then, is simply to make the case that this phenomenon constitutes a reasonable object of investigation – to contend that this elephant exists, or at least is useful to believe in for certain purposes.

A second and more interesting aim, supposing I achieve the first, is to pursue a fine-grained investigation of how Roman exemplarity actually works. I elucidate how the various practices, beliefs, values, and symbols work together to constitute this system; I discuss in greater detail the workings of the four operations; and I probe more systematically how exempla function as building blocks of Roman argumentation, morality, and historical consciousness. Such a study could be organized in a variety of ways. Chapters might, for instance, be devoted to specific moral values such as *virtus, pietas,* and *fides*, investigating the kinds of performance and monumentalization through which these values are constituted and transmitted. Or the discussion might be organized according to specific monuments or monument types; one would then ask what kinds performance and value are associated with (say) scars, or the Capitoline hill, or honorific statuary, or funeral orations. Alternatively, the organizing principle might be how exemplarity is represented and deployed in particular authors or texts.[43]

[43] Studies organized around values: McDonnell 2006 (*virtus*), Hölkeskamp 2000 (*fides* and related terms). Around monuments: Stein-Hölkeskamp/Hölkeskamp 2006 (many specific locations and associated events), Walter 2004a (monument types), Hölkeskamp 2001 (*forum, comitium, capitolium*). Around authors or texts: e.g. van der Blom 2010, Bücher 2006 (exempla in Cicero); Chaplin 2000, Feldherr 1998 (in Livy); Mayer 1991 (in Seneca); Tipping 2010 (in Silius); Lucarelli 2007, Engels 2001, Weileder 1998 (in Valerius Maximus).

In this book, however, I have chosen to organize my study largely around individual exemplary figures, to whom individual chapters are dedicated.[44] In each chapter I consider how the four operations of exemplarity apply to the figure under discussion: how an actor and his or her actions are constituted as exemplary by the primary judging audience, what judgments are passed upon them, what monuments commemorate them, and what norms posterity infers from these monuments, leading to further judgments or imitation. Furthermore, I examine the argumentative contexts in which exemplary actors are invoked, to elucidate their role in persuasive rhetoric; I analyze how audiences judge and act in light of these exempla, to grasp their moral dimensions; and I consider the relevance, replicability, and comprehensibility of past performances in the present, to grapple with the historiographical dimensions of exempla. Not every figure illuminates every operation and dimension of exemplarity equally: the discussions to follow vary considerably in their focus. Taken together, however, I hope that these discussions will richly illustrate and elaborate the features of exemplarity adumbrated so far, and more to boot.

These chapters do not constitute "biographies" of the figures they discuss. Most of these figures (allegedly) lived and performed their deeds in the early to middle Republic, yet virtually all texts and other monuments that survive to the present – by which we moderns are informed about these actors and their deeds – date from the late Republic to the high Empire, postdating the deeds they depict by anywhere from a generation to many centuries. Such late and often derivative evidence is far from optimal for historians seeking to reconstruct actual lives and events of the past. Yet exemplarity, by its nature, bridges long temporal gaps, and this same evidence demonstrates that these figures were vibrant moral and conceptual touchstones, of considerable rhetorical and moral power, for centuries after their alleged deeds. Indeed, as noted earlier (ch. 0.5.3), it is generally irrelevant to these figures' impact as exempla whether they existed at all, and whether their exemplary performances happened as the monuments allege. The evidence rarely allows consideration of how biographically or historically "true" these representations may be, nor do my purposes as a student of exemplarity require such consideration.[45] My interest is in

[44] Other studies so organized: Briquel 2007, Barzanò et al. 2003, Coudry/Späth 2001, Hölkeskamp/Stein-Hölkeskamp 2000. In my book the exceptions to this organizational schema are chapter 7 and the conclusion (see summaries, ch. 0.7 below).

[45] It is questionable whether real people existed under the names Horatius Cocles and Cloelia (chs. 1–2), let alone performed the deeds associated with these names; likewise for the "kingship-aspirant" figures adduced by Cicero (ch. 7). Conversely, no one doubts that historical persons existed under

how these figures are constituted as exempla, and how they function in an exemplary mode, in the eras from which monuments survive to attest these exemplary operations.

Furthermore, the temporal and cultural span of these monuments define the limits of this study. As just noted, most texts and other monuments attesting the figures under discussion range from the late Republic to the high Empire. As late as the fourth and early fifth centuries CE, the historians Ammianus, Eutropius, and Orosius, along with commentators like Servius and the Latin panegyrists of the later emperors, still mention these exempla. However, most Christian writing is silent about these figures. To be sure, early Christian literature is awash in exemplarity, which closely resembles the exemplarity discussed in this book. But the values that exemplary Christian performances instantiate are those of early Christian ethics more generally – ascetic self-deprivation, the endurance of physical suffering, and humility (albeit spectacularly displayed) – which align awkwardly, if at all, with classical values. Furthermore, the performers of these deeds are "holy men" such as saints, martyrs, abbae, apostles, biblical figures, and Christ himself. While my study does not broach this cluster of performers and values, the model of exemplarity developed in this book would, I believe, illuminate early Christian exempla no less than the classical exempla that are its primary object of investigation.[46]

0.7 Plan of This Book

This book's organization is fairly modular, entailing that its chapters may be engaged individually and discontinuously as the reader's interests dictate. The exemplary figures discussed here appear in the chronological order that the Roman historical tradition assigns to them. Chapter 1, which treats Horatius Cocles in greater detail, follows directly upon this introduction, where Horatius has already been thematized. Chapter 2, which examines Horatius' younger contemporary and imitator Cloelia, follows chapter 1 logically as well as chronologically. For the remaining chapters, however, chronological order does not coincide with thematic

the names Appius Claudius Caecus, Gaius Duilius, Quintus Fabius Maximus "Cunctator," and Cornelia "the mother of the Gracchi" (chs. 3–6). But it is unknowable how these people and their actual biographies relate to the exemplary figures and performances subsequently attached to their names. Ch. 5.6 offers explicit reflection on the gap between exemplary figure and historical person.

[46] Petitfils 2016: 141–252 offers a study of exemplarity in several early Christian texts along precisely these lines; Brown 1983: 15–21 is foundational.

development, and is not critical to the overall analysis of the operations and dimensions of Roman exemplarity. The reader's experience will not be compromised by reading selected chapters, or reading out of order. Only the conclusion, which examines Seneca's searching philosophical critique of the moral logic of exemplarity, presupposes a deeper familiarity with the system. It is best read after digesting at least one or two of the core chapters.

The figures examined in each chapter, and the chief themes that each examination brings to the surface, are as follows.

Chapter 1 pursues the investigation of Horatius Cocles, the bridge-defending hero some of whose exemplary functions have already been discussed. Richly endowed with monuments, and having his share of imitators, Horatius offers a particularly suitable vehicle for examining in depth the dynamics of commemoration, monumentality, and norm setting that lie at the heart of Roman exemplarity. Indeed, as the first military hero of the Roman Republic, Horatius assumes an ideological priority that marks him, one might say, as an "exemplary exemplum."[47] Nevertheless, we will see many cases in which the Horatius exemplum is tendentiously shaped to "fit" a certain context, or in which its meaning and value are disputed, or in which debate arises about whether a particular attempt at imitation is successful or unsuccessful, virtuous or vicious. Such polemics and contestation attest to the liveliness of this particular exemplum from the late Republic onward, while adumbrating the hermeneutic challenges and rhetorical contestation that are central to Roman exemplarity in general.

Chapter 2 considers Cloelia, a girl sent as a hostage to the Etruscans to secure a truce. The legend holds that she courageously escaped, swam the Tiber, and returned to Rome. She is commonly presented as Horatius' imitator, and as displaying *virtus* – military valor or, etymologically, "behavior appropriate to an adult male (*vir*)." However, her gender and age raise categorical questions that complicate the interpretation of the texts and other monumental forms commemorating this hero, and require that audiences (primary or secondary) engage in nuanced moral reflection. Specifically: what does it mean to be a "manly maiden," a *virgo* who displays *virtus*? How can an underage, unmarried female be heroic, let alone

[47] First hero of the Republic: Livy 2.10 (also other narrative accounts of the Republic's foundation); Val. Max. 3.2.1 (first example of *fortitudo*); ch. 1.1. Both Polybius (see above) and Sen. *Ep.* 120.7 (ch. 8.3) present him as an example – maybe the *best* example – of a Roman exemplum. I do so as well, on their authority.

behave like an adult male? What norms might she provide for persons of various sexes and ages? Further complicating the moral evaluation of her deed is that, valorous though it may be, her escape abrogates the terms of a truce and potentially tars the Romans as perfidious. Certain texts relating her deed explore this complexity, illuminating this exemplum's rhetorical versatility. Another key dimension of this exemplum is its tendency to depict Cloelia as vividly "present" to secondary audiences in later times – as if they were primary audiences observing her deed and its immediate consequences, or as if she were projected forward into a later time to (re) perform for secondary audiences in their own day. This manifestation of exemplary "timelessness" seems to be localized around one specific monument: a conspicuous and well-known equestrian statue of a woman in the Roman Forum that was identified as representing Cloelia.

Chapter 3 deals with Appius Claudius Caecus, a prominent political figure of the late fourth to early third centuries BCE. The tradition ascribes to him important public works, high-stakes military activity, oratorical prowess, and various reforms of the state's constitutional, legal, and ritual infrastructure. Yet every area of his activity is represented as profoundly controversial, spurring both positive and negative evaluations from contemporary and later judging audiences. I dwell particularly on Livy's and Cicero's representations of Appius. Livy makes him an incompetent general who is forced to pursue alternative arenas of activity and achievement, while Cicero presents him as a "good old Roman" who instantiates upstanding, conservative moral values and who imposes a familial rebuke upon his louche, violent, impious descendants in Cicero's own day. These contrasting portrayals, I argue, may be ascribed not only to the differing rhetorical needs of these authors' works, but also to bifurcated moral judgments that are integral to this exemplum. Sandwiched between these author-centric analyses is discussion of the key monuments associated with Appius, which themselves display striking moral bifurcations: either contradicting the judgments sedimented in other monuments, or receiving contradictory evaluations in and of themselves. Overall, the figure of Appius is one around which contradictory and competing evaluations swirl, as his deeds receive both positive and negative evaluations from judging audiences and can be invoked as models either for imitation or for avoidance.

Chapter 4 treats Gaius Duilius, a consul and naval commander in 260 BCE who is credited with winning Rome's first victory at sea. The figure of Duilius insistently raises the question of change over time within an exemplary framework: how (and whether) the logic of exemplarity accommodates such change, and when (and if) such change spurs the emergence

of an historicizing perspective. I consider Duilius' performance in relation to the rhetoric of the "first" (*primus*), as he is regularly said to be the "first" Roman to achieve one or another feat. I also consider his place in a particular narrative of moral improvement over time, a narrative that Octavian/Augustus constructed as he sought to ratify his naval victory over Sextus Pompeius in 36 and to present it as rivaling or surpassing Duilius' achievement. A general consideration of moral improvement and decline as models of change over time leads finally to the question of moral change. Is it possible that the inability of later judging audiences to agree about the moral value of a past performance signals a break in the continuity of the moral values themselves? Is an historicizing perspective then necessary to bridge the gap between the old and new configurations of values? Close examination of a famous but morally contested monument associated with Duilius – his torch-and-flute escort – suggests that moral obscurity does not cause observers to assume an historicizing perspective, but spurs them to strive all the harder to construct an exemplary framework into which the anomalous monument can satisfyingly be fit.

The subject of chapter 5 is Fabius Cunctator, who allegedly pursued a distinctive strategy of military non-engagement, or "delaying," during the Hannibalic war. According to legend, Fabius was sharply criticized for cowardice until his strategy was vindicated by events, whereupon he was glorified for his foresight and concern for the commonwealth's safety. This striking revaluation of a performance from "bad" to "good" within a single moral category (*gloria*) comes about because Fabius is presented as recognizing a particular moral nuance in the circumstances of the Hannibalic war that none of his contemporaries recognize – namely, that seeking to display valor in battle does not, for the moment, support the long-term survival of the commonwealth. One key effect of the Fabian exemplum, then, is to give judging audiences the opportunity to distinguish more accurately among related but distinct moral concepts (especially *gloria* and *virtus*), and so to refine their capacity for judging what kinds of actions are in the community's interest. This refinement has crucial rhetorical consequences, as generals and statesmen thereafter invoke the Fabian norm to justify disregarding traditional values and practices when they believe circumstances require it.

Chapter 6 is devoted to Cornelia "the mother of the Gracchi," a matron of the second century BCE. Cornelia's chief monument is her epithet *mater Gracchorum*, a phrase that pervasively shapes how she is deployed as an exemplum. In particular, the "mothering" spotlighted by this epithet is manifest in her exemplary pedagogy and rhetorical prowess, as she reared

her sons Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus to be great men and great orators. It is also manifest in the fortitude she displayed in dealing with her sons' deaths, and in her virtuoso display of traditional sexual mores. A second key monument to Cornelia is a bronze statue on an inscribed base that stood in the porticus of Octavia from the early Augustan age onward, and was thought to have been erected by her own contemporaries to honor her maternal performance. Augustus, appropriating preexisting elements of the Cornelia exemplum and tailoring them to fit his own needs, made Cornelia (represented by her statue and its inscription) into an exemplary precedent for and pendant to his own sister Octavia; and made the two of them jointly into paradigmatic vehicles for the gendered values that he otherwise sought to promote during his reign. Cornelia as an exemplary maternal mourner of dead children also found resonance in Augustan ideology and in later consolatory contexts.

Chapter 7, investigating in greater detail how social performers use exemplary figures to authorize their own current or prospective actions, differs in structure from the chapters preceding. I examine a particular episode in the life of Marcus Tullius Cicero: the demolition of his house after he fled into exile in 58 BCE, and the consequences that followed. In the speech "On his house" (*De Domo Sua*), delivered upon his return in 57, Cicero reveals that his enemy Publius Clodius has assimilated him to three "aspirants to kingship" who are traditionally dated to the early Republic, namely Spurius Cassius, Spurius Maelius, and Marcus Manlius Capitolinus. These figures, evaluated negatively by judging audiences for seeking to overthrow the *res publica,* are said to have been executed and their houses demolished. Two additional negative exempla who also figure into the discussion, Marcus Vaccus and Marcus Fulvius Flaccus, were punished similarly though their transgressions differed. Cicero strenuously denies that these malefactors' situations and actions "fit" his own – he claims, in other words, that he himself is no "kingship aspirant" – and he turns these exempla against Clodius instead. He also adduces additional exempla in the effort to authorize his prior actions and tarnish those of Clodius. An analysis of the monumental structures erected on Cicero's and an adjacent house site reveals how a bitter, high-stakes political dispute can be waged partly in terms of exemplary models drawn from the past, and testifies to the persuasive and moral force such exempla were thought to possess.

A contemporary critique of Roman exemplarity is offered by Seneca the Younger, and it is his Stoic assessment of the system that has the last word in this book. Seneca is principally concerned with the moral or ethical

dimension of exemplarity, as befits a moral philosopher. He contends that observing individual actions performed by individual actors provides insufficient grounds for judging the actors' moral status overall. First, a judge evaluating a single action may mistake a virtue for a vice, and so misjudge the moral state of the actor. And second, since Stoic ethics places a high value on consistency, a person's true moral state becomes evident only over time and in the performance of many actions in many contexts; no single action (no matter how glorious) provides sufficient information to ground a valid moral judgment. These Stoic critiques impinge heavily upon the four operations of Roman exemplarity, invalidating operation 2 entirely and substantially vitiating operations 1 and 3. A Stoic form of exemplary morality is still possible, however, subject to appropriate revisions in the four operations. Seneca's critique reveals that "conventional" exemplarity as described and analyzed elsewhere in this book was by no means uncontested, and shows how formal, theorized philosophy can supply coherent principles to support a modified, alternative exemplary morality.