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Qui honoris causa nominatur

Form and function of third-party politeness in Cicero

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1. Introduction¹

This chapter addresses the phenomenon of third-party politeness in Cicero's speeches and letters, both from a theoretical viewpoint and by discussing three case studies. It is meant as a first step in the direction of a more systematic approach to third-party politeness (and, to some extent, impoliteness) within the larger field of Politeness studies. The aspect of third-party politeness in social interaction appears to be overlooked in most studies of politeness phenomena, which is why we first introduce the relevance of the phenomenon and delineate the various forms of third-party politeness, before we embark on a sketch of Cicero's use of third-party politeness in some of his letters and speeches.

It has been noted before that politeness strategies do not exclusively concern the addressee's face (Brown & Levinson 1987: 12). First, they pertain to the face of the speaker as well, who may also lose face.² Second, in (semi) public forms of discourse the faces of third parties may be also at stake. An obvious example of this type of discourse is the forensic or political speech, in which speakers publicly mention third parties. The faces of these third parties are often deliberately attacked, saved or enhanced by the speaker.³ But also the epistolary genre was a (semi) public type of discourse, especially in the case of the correspondence among members of the political elite.⁴ Cicero, for instance, knew that his letters to Caesar's friends would probably

¹ Thanks are due, first of all, to the editors of this volume for their excellent job in bringing out this volume and for bringing together Greek and Latin researchers on politeness phenomena in Antiquity. Secondly, we want to thank all anonymous reviewers, who have contributed to the form and content of our text in important ways.

² The concept of 'face' as an individual's public self-image was adopted into Politeness Theory from the studies of the sociologist Erving Goffman (cf. Goffman 1967). To a certain degree 'face' can be connected with the ancient concepts of *ethos* (Greek, 'character') and *persona* (Latin, 'role, (public) personality'), which play an important role in ancient rhetorical theory. A thorough study of *ethos* is Wisse (1989); for *persona* in ancient rhetoric, cf. e.g. Guérin (2009; 2015). Barrios-Lech (2016: 32-39) briefly discusses some culture-specific contents of the Roman face, while Unceta Gómez (forth.) offers a more general theoretical framework for analysing linguistic terms of politeness in Latin from an emic perspective.

³ Actually, the Romans were even rhetorically trained to do so with elaborate schemes of laudatory and invective tools. Invectives and eulogies could be aimed at both addressees (second person) and at third parties. The role of the audience as a witness is an essential ingredient of successful invective or eulogy. See Koster (1980), Corbeil (2002) and Smith & Covino (2011).

⁴ Cf. Hall (2009: 24–5), and Nicholson (1994: 58), who observes: 'In that age before newspapers, we hear again and again of letters being freely circulated among Cicero's circle, either the originals or copies which were made specifically for the purpose of spreading news'. This can be deduced from remarks which Cicero made himself, cf. e.g.: *Scire iam te oportet L. Caesar quae responsa referat a Pompeio, quas ab eodem ad Caesarem ferat litteras; scriptae enim et datae ita sunt ut proponerentur in publico. in quo accusavi mecum ipse Pompeium qui, cum scriptor luculentus esset, tantas res atque eas quae in omnium manus venturae essent Sestio nostro scribendas dederit.* (Cic. Att. 7.17.2, SB 141) 'You ought to know by now the reply which L. Caesar is taking back from Pompey and the letter which he is carrying from Pompey to Caesar, as it was written and dispatched for public

also be read by (or reported to) Caesar himself. This awareness complicated enormously the face requirements: also in letters, the faces of third parties needed to be taken care of and the faces of speaker and addressee became visible, and hence vulnerable, in the eyes of specific third persons, and often a larger audience as well.

Before systematically introducing some theoretical aspects of third-party politeness, we present three short examples to get a feel of the complexity of the various faces which are taken care of in certain letters and speeches. In a defence speech of Cluentius in the year 66 BC, Cicero attacks one friend (Lentulus) in order to defend another (Cluentius).⁵ We will not go into details, but the argument he needs to make is that Lentulus as a censor made a mistake.⁶ Such a statement is a highly face-threatening act for the positive face of the third person, Lentulus, in the eyes of, most relevantly, the larger audience. Cicero cannot avoid this argument, but he spends a whole section on politeness strategies to save the face of his friend and, equally important, his own, because publicly attacking a friend is also threatening for the speaker's positive face:

- (1) *A Lentulo autem, familiari meo, qui a me pro eximia sua virtute summisque honoribus, quos a populo Romano adeptus est, honoris causa nominatur, facile hoc, iudices, impetrabo, ut, quam ipse adhibere consuevit in amicorum periculis cum fidem et diligentiam tum vim animi libertatemque dicendi, ex hac mihi concedat ut tantum mihi sumam, quantum sine huius periculo praeterire non possim. A me tamen, ut aequum est, omnia caute pedetemptimque dicentur, ut neque fides huius defensionis relicta neque cuiusquam aut dignitas laesa aut amicitia violata esse videatur.* (Cic. *Cluent.* 117–18)

‘As for Lentulus, my friend, whom I name **in all honour** to his noble character and to the high offices with which he has been invested by the Roman people, he will readily allow me to draw upon that fund of loyalty and care, yes, and of strong feeling and free speech with which he is always ready to support his friends at need, exactly as much as I cannot fail to do if I am not to betray the needs of my client. None the less, as is only right, I shall speak throughout with caution and reserve that I may not be found either to have neglected my duty to him whom I am defending or in any instance to have wounded reputation or violated friendship.’

This example shows Cicero's concern with saving faces of his friends and himself while speaking in a forensic setting. The expression *qui a me honoris causa nominatur* (‘whom I name with due respect’) appears in a number of variants also in other speeches when Cicero mentions a third party to whom he apparently needs to publicly pay his respect. The formulaic nature of this

display. In my own mind I blamed Pompey, who is an excellent writer, for giving our friend Sestius the job of composing documents of such importance, which will come into general circulation.’

Texts and translations of Cicero's work are from Grose Hodge (1927) for the *Pro Cluentio*, Freese (1930) for the *Pro Roscio Comoedo*, Watts (1923) for the *Post Reditum ad Quirites* and Shackleton Bailey (2001), for the letters. ‘SB’ is used throughout this chapter to indicate the number which the letters have in the editions of the *Epistulae ad Atticum* and *Epistulae ad familiares* by Shackleton Bailey, whose text and translation are quoted.

⁵ For friendship among the Roman republican elite, cf. Brunt (1965) and Konstan (1997).

⁶ The most explicit formulation of this mistake is still quite indirect (and, interestingly, also accompanied by third-party politeness; viz. the addition *clarissimi viri sapientissimique homines*, ‘most illustrious citizens and most wise men’), but nevertheless, it is clear that Gellius and Lentulus had made a mistake: *quos autem ipse L. Gellius et Cn. Lentulus, duo censores, clarissimi viri sapientissimique homines, furti et captarum pecuniarum nomine notaverunt, ei non modo in senatum redierunt sed etiam illarum ipsarum rerum iudiciis absoluti sunt* (Cic. *Cluent.* 120). ‘Those men, whom Lucius Gellius himself and Cnaeus Lentulus, the two censors, most illustrious citizens and most wise men, have animadverted on, and, in their reasons for their sentences, have imputed to them theft and peculation, have not only returned to the senate, but have been acquitted of those very charges by judicial sentence.’

expression of politeness is an indication that this type of third-party politeness was necessary and Moreau (2006) has shown that the public mentioning of persons who were in a higher social position than the speaker required such a redressive formula.⁷

The question whether we can effectively retrieve the politeness requirements of the elite Roman culture of the first century BC is, of course, challenging. We need to be aware of our own preconceptions about politeness in the 21st century in Western Europe and of the linguistic framework which is based on experiences and definitions which might be far from the Roman culture we study. In theoretical Politeness Studies a terminology has been introduced to distinguish between what members of the studied culture experience as polite (first order politeness) and what analysts (or lay observers) who are not themselves part of the culture analyse as polite (second order politeness).⁸

For Latin, especially the dialogical genres of comedy and correspondence contain reactions to other speakers' contributions, which may concern their degree of politeness. This kind of first order material offers rare but valuable evidence on the perceived politeness. For the formula *honoris causa nominare* such data is available in passages in which Cicero criticizes other speakers for using the formula inappropriately, i.e. without its full semantic value. For instance, in his defence of Quintus Roscius the Actor, Cicero observes the inconstancy of the opposing advocate Satrius in accusing Roscius, while at the same time mentioning his name 'with respect.'⁹

- (2) *nonne, quotienscumque in causa in nomen huius incidisti, totiens **hunc et virum bonum esse dixisti et honoris causa appellasti?** quod nemo nisi aut honestissimo aut amicissimo facere consuevit. Qua in re mihi ridicule es visus esse inconstans, qui eundem et laederes et laudares, et virum optimum et hominem improbissimum esse dices. Eundem tu et honoris causa appellabas et virum primum esse dicebas et socium fraudasse arguebas?* (Cic. *Rosc. Com.* 18–19)
'In this cause, as often as you had occasion to mention his name, did you not each time declare **that he was an honourable man and that you spoke of him with respect**—a compliment usually paid only to a most distinguished person or a most intimate friend? In this you seemed to me to be absurdly inconsistent, in praising and attacking the same man, in calling him at one and the same time a most excellent man and a thorough rascal. Did you mention the same man out of respect, call him most distinguished, and at the same time accuse him of having cheated his partner?'

Apparently, respect could and should be paid publicly to highly placed third parties, but there was a limit to the applicability of this form of politeness. If the speaker's personal evaluation of the third party was clearly and openly at odds with the respect formula, the hypocrisy became intolerable, at least according to Cicero.¹⁰

Our third and last example of third-party politeness concerns the well-known genre of letters of recommendation, the *epistulae commendaticiae*, the goal of which is to praise a third party who

⁷ See Moreau (2006) for more examples in Cicero's speeches.

⁸ See Haugh (2012 and 2018) for a thorough theoretical discussion of the possible approaches to politeness phenomena, especially in cross-cultural research.

⁹ Another example of first order comments on third party politeness is Cic. *Phil.* 2.30–31.

¹⁰ Cf. Hall's chapter 'From Polite Fictions to Hypocrisy' (2009: 78–106).

aims at a particular benefit, a job or protection, from the addressee.¹¹ The writer, addressee and third party form a complex triangle in which three relations are taken care of, and the face of each of the participants is violable in two pairs of eyes. Moreover, the laudatory content required by this specific genre should influence our interpretation of the actual politeness of the content. We know that the third party himself would often read the letter.¹² A short example of a recommendation letter is the following one of Cicero to Servius, dated circa 46–5 BC, in which a certain Hagesaretus from Larissa is recommended as a loyal friend of Cicero. The complexity of the three relations involved is visible when Cicero stresses in the last sentence that he hopes that the addressee will be clear about the weight of Cicero’s recommendation when he speaks to the recommended third party.

(3) *Cicero Servio S. Hagesaretus Larisaeus magnis meis beneficiis ornatus in consulatu meo memor et gratus fuit meque postea diligentissime coluit. Eum tibi magno opera commendo ut et hospitem meum et familiarem et gratum hominem et virum bonum et principem ciuitatis suae et tua necessitudine dignissimum. Pergratum mihi feceris si dederis operam ut is intelligat hanc meam commendationem magnum apud te pondus habuisse.* (Cic. *Fam.* 13.25, SB 291)¹³

‘From Cicero to his friend Servius greetings. Hagesaretus of Larisa received substantial favours at my hands when I was Consul and held them in grateful memory, paying me the most sedulous attention thereafter. I recommend him to you warmly as my host and friend, an honourable man who knows the meaning of gratitude, a leading member of his community, thoroughly worthy of your friendship. You will deeply oblige me if you make him sensible that my present recommendation has carried great weight with you.’

These examples clearly show that politeness conventions govern not only references to speaker and addressee, but also to third parties in discourse situations that are not strictly private. In this chapter we want to explore the notion of third-party politeness and discuss the question how we can structurally investigate it; in the concluding section, we will delineate some directions for future research. Key questions to us are:

- In which situations do we find third-party politeness items?
- Does third-party politeness function in the same way as addressee-related politeness, i.e. demonstrating respect or affiliation towards a high placed individual or social peer?
- Does third party politeness have a redressive function, and do we find other functions?

2. Methodological issues

¹¹ For recommendation letters, see Cotton (1981); Deniaux (1993); White (2010); Wilcox (2012). We also find Cicero himself commenting on the practice of this subgenre: thus, in 62 BC Cicero sends a letter to his former consular colleague C. Antonius, who is in his province Macedonia, in which he starts out by saying he had decided to send only *litterae commendaticiae* to him and only *ad familiares* because he did not want others (who asked him those letters) to know of their infringed friendship (Cic. *Fam.* 5.5.1, SB 5). See also Cic. *Fam.* 13.26.3 (SB 292).

¹² See, for instance, book 13 of Cicero’s *Epistulae ad familiares*, which consists completely of recommendation letters. Often it is clear that the letter is brought by the recommended man to the addressee of the letter, cf. e.g. Cic. *Fam.* 13.6A (SB 58), which begins with *P. Cornelius, qui tibi litteras has dedit, est mihi a P. Cuspio commendatus.* (‘P. Cornelius, the bearer of this letter, has been recommended to me by P. Cuspius.’)

¹³ ‘SB’ is used throughout this chapter to indicate the number which the letters have in the editions of the *Epistulae ad Atticum* and *Epistulae ad familiares* by Shackleton Bailey, whose text and translation are quoted.

The influence of third parties on politeness was mentioned already by Brown and Levinson (1987), who state in the introduction of the second, revised edition of their influential work that ‘one problem here is that we underplay the influence of other factors, especially the presence of third parties, which we now know to have much more profound effects on verbal interaction than we had thought’ (Brown & Levinson 1987: 12). Seen in this light, the influence of third parties on verbal interaction is a broad field of research; in this chapter, we will concentrate on one specific form, viz. third-party politeness in Cicero’s letters and speeches. Therefore, we will not discuss audience involvement, like example (4), in which a character in one of Plautus’ comedies apostrophizes the audience to refer to and comment on (in a not so very polite way) the behaviour of other characters; the particular setting of the comic genre, in which a fourth wall is sometimes broken down by a character, would need its own investigation in terms of third-party politeness and common ground between characters and audience.

- (4) MERC. *Nimis hic scitust sycophanta, qui quidem meus sit pater. observatote <eum>, quam blande mulieri palpabitur.* (Plaut. *Amph.* 506–7)
 ‘He’s a terribly clever impostor; after all, he’s my father. Watch how coaxingly he’ll soothe the woman.’¹⁴

Similarly, we will not go into other potentially relevant phenomena such as bystander deixis, which refers to the effects which the presence of third parties may have on the forms and the degree of formality of linguistic expressions, and which actually has been investigated,¹⁵ nor discuss the honorific uses of third person expressions of address like German *Sie* and Spanish *Usted*, or metaphoric expressions such as English *Your excellency* or Latin *tua maiestas* ‘your highness’.¹⁶ Likewise, we exclude cases in which e.g. a threat, request or risky advice is mitigated by not directly referring to the addressee but using general ‘anyone,’ which is understood to be the addressee—cf. the use of *qui* in example (5):

- (5) *Tu<or>um consilium ꝥquiaꝥ verum est. nam qui se medium esse vult, in patria manet; qui proficiscitur, aliquid de altera utra parte iudicare videtur.* (Cic. *Att.* 10.10.2, SB 201)
 ‘Your friends’ advice is very sound. For a man who wishes to take neither side stays in his country; to leave it suggests that he is passing judgement on one side or the other.’

Leaving these types of phenomena aside, our working definition of politeness, which includes third party politeness, runs as follows:

Being linguistically polite involves speaking to and about people appropriately in the light of their relationship to the speaker and to the addressee. (adapted from Holmes 2001: 268 by adding ‘and about’ and ‘and to the addressee’)

The notions of face and face-work need to incorporate the specific relationships between speaker and addressee in positioning themselves vis-à-vis third parties.

¹⁴ Text and translation are taken from the Loeb edition by De Melo (2011).

¹⁵ For bystander deixis, see e.g. Rijkhoff (1998). The notion of bystander is taken from Goffman (1981), who distinguishes in his study of ‘forms of talk’, among others, ‘(ratified) participants’ and ‘bystanders’.

¹⁶ For this type of third person references, cf. Jekat & Hohenstein (2012); for Latin, Dickey (2002: 152–9) discusses a number of ‘words for positive qualities’ and ‘words for reputation’ used in addresses. In his letters, Cicero uses vocatives such as *mea lux* ‘light of my eyes’, *meum desiderium* ‘my darling’ to address his wife Terentia; *tua maiestas* is found in a letter from Vindolanda, in which someone begs the governor for mercy (T. Vindol. 344).

At this point, it is useful to briefly analyse the various faces that are involved in the case of third-party politeness. Apart from the speaker and the addressee, we must distinguish between specific ‘third parties’ and an (anonymous) ‘audience’ (cf. Figure 1). (INSERT FIG.1 AROUND HERE) In the case of speeches, the audience consists of the people that are present at the occasion (in the *forum*, in the *curia*, in court, etc.), or read a published version of the speeches afterwards, but are not directly addressed.¹⁷ In the case of letters, the audience may consist of anonymous readers who might get hold of the letter but are not involved in its content. These two types of audience must be distinguished from what we call ‘third parties.’ By the latter we exclusively mean:

- in case of speeches: those members of the audience that are explicitly mentioned as third persons by the speaker or writer (‘present third party’); or third parties that are mentioned in, but are not present at the speeches involved (‘absent third party’);
- in case of letters: third parties, and their social alliances, that are mentioned and that could be expected to read the letters themselves, or be informed about their content.

Note that there are ‘face relations’ between all parties mentioned above, in the sense that the faces of speaker, addressee and third parties are all involved, in different ways, and that politeness may have different effects on all three of them, and on the audience. Figure 2 shows how the face of speaker, addressee and third party may be at risk, and in whose eyes, depending on whether the genre is private or public. (INSERT FIG. 2 AROUND HERE) As this figure indicates, it cannot come as a surprise that third parties incur face threats or that speaker and addressee incur them in the eyes of third parties. Politeness is supposedly needed to counter face-threatening acts or to keep up the aristocratic appearances towards third parties.

In the Roman context of Cicero’s letters,¹⁸ Hall (2009) has distinguished three, sometimes overlapping, functions of politeness towards the addressee in the elite Roman culture at the end of the Republic: ‘politeness of respect,’ ‘affiliative politeness,’ and ‘redressive politeness.’ Politeness of respect (*verecundia*) concerns the art of knowing your proper place in a social transaction.¹⁹ Hall’s redressive politeness is aimed at compensating for face-threatening acts (FTA). Politeness of affiliation is used to cultivate friendship between two members of the elite who *present themselves* as intimately linked to one another.

In our corpus of speeches and letters, we have found many instances of third-party politeness that can be analysed in terms of these three concepts, or a combination of either politeness of respect or affiliative politeness with redress. Thus, in example in (7) below, as we will see, Antony cleverly combines ‘ordinary’ affiliative politeness (i.e. aimed at the addressee) with third-party politeness, while (1) above is not only a good example of politeness of respect for its own sake,

¹⁷ Cf. Goffman (1981), who distinguishes between ‘addressed’ and ‘unaddressed participants’; cf. also O’Driscoll (2009: 86–8) and Sidnell (2009: 140–9), who critically discuss the various ‘participation roles’ distinguished by Goffman. An addressed participant is ‘the one to whom the speaker addresses his visual attention and to whom, incidentally, he expects to turn over his speaking role,’ while unaddressed recipients constitute the rest of the official hearers, who may, or may not be listening (Goffman 1981: 133).

¹⁸ The first study in which politeness theory is applied to the correspondence of Cicero is the paper by Roesch (2004), who shows that Cicero employs many of the (positive and negative) politeness strategies that are outlined by Brown & Levinson (1987).

¹⁹ Cf. also Hall (2005). For the concept of *verecundia*, see Kaster (2005: 15).

but also illustrates how it may serve a redressive function. An interesting next question, however, is whether we can analyse third-party politeness *exhaustively* in terms of these existing theoretical concepts. The main tenet of our paper will be that these concepts are indeed relevant and very useful, but must be supplemented with strategic, rhetorical functions which third-party politeness can also have.²⁰

This can be illustrated with the following passage (6), taken from the speech which Cicero gave after his return from exile; relevant expressions are in bold:

(6) *Numquam de P. Popilio L. Opimius, fortissimus consul, numquam de Q. Metello non modo C. Marius, qui erat inimicus, sed ne is quidem, qui secutus est, M. Antonius, homo eloquentissimus, cum A. Albino collega senatum aut populum est cohortatus. (...) Kalendis vero Ianuarii postea quam orba res publica consulis fidem tamquam legitimi tutoris imploravit, P. Lentulus consul, parens, deus, salus nostrae vitae, fortunae, memoriae, nominis, simul ac de sollemni deorum religione rettulit, nihil humanarum rerum sibi prius quam de me agendum iudicavit.* (Cic. *Post red. Quir.* 11)

‘That gallant consul, Lucius Opimius, never urged the senate or the people to interest themselves in the case of Publius Popilius; nor was this done for Quintus Metellus, I will not say by Gaius Marius, who was his opponent, but even by Marius’ successor, the eloquent Marcus Antonius, and Aulus Albinus his colleague. (...) But on the first day of January, when the widowed republic had appealed for succour as to its legal protector to the new consul, Publius Lentulus, the parent and divine restorer of my life, my fortunes, my remembrance, and my name, had no sooner made the customary religious proposal, than he carried out his conviction that all other human measures should be postponed to one dealing with myself.’

In this passage, positive politeness is expressed to various persons for different reasons. While Lentulus was probably actually present, Opimius, Marius and Antonius were not—they were already dead. The motivation for Cicero’s complimentary description of Lentulus in terms of an affective and climactic series of two laudatory tricola is perfectly clear: it was Lentulus who, as a consul, made it possible for Cicero to return to Rome from exile, which is the very occasion for this speech before the Roman people. The references to Lentulus in terms of deeply felt affiliation and obligation are, in all probability, sincere expressions of gratitude; they are directed to the audience but intended to enhance Lentulus’ positive face in the eyes of the Roman people.²¹ We can conclude that this third-party politeness functions as a public manifestation of intimate bonds of friendship, in Hall’s terms ‘politeness of affiliation.’

The motivation for paying compliments to Lucius Opimius, on the other hand, seems to be primarily rhetorical: by contrasting Lentulus’ actions on behalf of Cicero with the lack of action of Opimius in a similar situation in spite of his being a *fortissimus consul* (‘gallant consul’), Cicero magnifies the merits of Lentulus and hence enlarges the compliments given to him. So we suggest that it is not third-party politeness which is involved here in the honorific description of Opimius, but strategic amplification of a contrast in conduct between two otherwise comparable consuls. A similar rhetorical motivation could be involved in his complimentary mention of

²⁰ As we said before, the rhetorical practices of eulogy and invective in particular genres need to be taken into account whenever we analyze third party politeness or impoliteness. In fact, for future research it might be rewarding to further integrate rhetorical studies on praise and blame with sociolinguistic approaches to politeness.

²¹ On compliments as a positive politeness strategy in Roman comedy, cf. Unceta Gómex (2016). For the use of *parens* (and similar kinship terms, such as *pater*) as a polite or affectionate address, cf. also Dickey (2002: 120–3).

Marcus Antonius homo eloquentissimus ('the eloquent Marcus Antonius'), although it seems reasonable to adduce two additional reasons. First, the epithet could be analysed as an elegant way to distinguish this *Marcus Antonius orator* from his namesake and grandson, who was Cicero's contemporary (and his future enemy). Secondly, we know from Cicero's rhetorical dialogues that he indeed highly esteemed the *orator* Marcus Antonius, who played a central role in the dialogues of his rhetorical treatise *De oratore*. In sum, we propose to analyse the honorific reference to this Mark Antony as a third party variant of 'politeness of respect.'

In the following letter, example (7), Antonius expresses affiliative third-party politeness for Caesar (*Caesare meo*, 'my friend Caesar')²² to accompany affiliative politeness directed at the addressee Cicero (*mihi neminem esse cariorem te*, 'no one means more to me than you'). In this letter of 49 BC, the year in which the conflict between Caesar and Pompey would escalate to Civil War, Antonius warns Cicero implicitly not to leave Rome and follow Pompey.

(7) ANTONIUS TR. PL. PRO PR. CICERONI IMP. SAL.

(...) *sic enim volo te tibi persuadere, mihi neminem esse cariorem te excepto Caesare meo, meque illud una iudicare, Caesarem maxime in suis M. Ciceronem reponere.* (Cic. Att. 10.8A, SB 199A)

'Antonius, tribune of the people and propraetor greets Cicero, imperator.

(..) For I wish you to persuade yourself that no one means more to me than you except my friend Caesar, and that at the same time I believe Caesar gives M. Cicero a place among his most particular friends.'

The formal salutation at the head of the letter, including their public positions (*tribune, propraetor, imperator*) shows the formality of their relation. By means of this letter, Antony aims to ask Cicero to bow to Caesar's wishes, an FTA which he tries to redress by using exuberant politeness of affiliation, also on Caesar's behalf towards Cicero. At the same time he positions his own affection for Caesar (third-party affiliative politeness) on an even higher level. Cicero forwards this letter to his friend Atticus with the comment that he received *odiosas litteras* ('disagreeable epistle') from Antony.²³ The politeness of affiliation had had no effect on the master of rhetoric himself.²⁴

In this theoretical section, we have narrowed down our definition of third-party politeness, discussed how the faces of speaker, addressee and third party may play a role and outlined the possible functions of third-party politeness. In the next section, we will present three case studies, which point at possible patterns or social codes which underlie third-party politeness in the upper classes of late republican Rome.

3. Case studies

²² For the emotional use of Latin possessive pronouns, cf. e.g. Dickey (2002: 214ff) and De Melo (2010).

²³ The negative qualification (*odiosas litteras*, 'a disagreeable epistle') of the content of Antony's letters is not meant for other eyes than those of Atticus, and cannot be labelled as third-party impoliteness. In the case of public speeches or (semi)public letters, however, negative qualifications are an immediate threat to the face of the target of such qualifications.

²⁴ Hall (2009: 87–93) analyzes in more detail this letter and Cicero's reaction. The conclusion is clearly that politeness of affiliation and respect was required, especially among aristocrats with a potentially troubled relation. At the same time, this implies that signs of affection need to be regarded with cautiousness and even suspicion!

In terms of third-party politeness, the most interesting examples are found between communicative partners who have neither a straightforwardly friendly relation nor a continuous enmity. Cicero's long public life in a period of political turbulence, which is documented in speeches, private letters and (semi)public letters, provides us with an excellent corpus to illustrate the relevance of third-party politeness. In the following case studies, we present examples of third-party politeness and connect them to three problematic relations: Cicero and Vatinius, Cicero and Appius Claudius, and Cicero and Dolabella.

3.1. *From foe to friend: the case of Vatinius*

Vatinius and Cicero exchange a number of polite letters some four years after the Civil War between Caesar and Pompey.²⁵ In July 45 BC, Vatinius asks his friend Cicero to support a *supplicatio* for him, a religious ceremony in Rome to honour a general after an important victory. Cicero is in Rome, where decisions about *supplicationes* are taken at meetings of the senate, while general Vatinius writes from his military camp. In this period, Caesar has an increasingly dominant position in the senate, much to Cicero's disappointment. Vatinius had always been under Caesar's protection, but apparently on this occasion, Vatinius cannot count on Caesar as he would wish. In one of his letters to Cicero, preserved fragmentarily, Vatinius complains about Caesar.

- (8) <VATINIUS CICERONI SUO S.> *Caesar adhuc mi iniuriam facit. de meis supplicationibus et rebus gestis Dalmaticis adhuc non refert, quasi vero non iustissimi triumphi in Dalmatia res gesserim. nam si hoc expectandum est, dum totum bellum conficiam, viginti oppida sunt Dalmatiae antiqua, quae ipsi sibi adsciverunt amplius sexaginta. haec nisi omnia expugno si mihi supplicationes non decernuntur, longe alia condicione ego sum ac ceteri imperatores.* (Cic. Fam. 5.10C, SB 256)

'From Vatinius to his friend Cicero greetings. Caesar is treating me badly so far. He is still not putting the motion about my Supplications and my Dalmatian successes. One might think I had not done fully enough in Dalmatia to entitle me to a Triumph! Or am I supposed to wait until I have finished the whole war? Dalmatia has twenty towns of ancient foundation, more than sixty adopted later into the confederacy. If no Supplications are decreed me until I take them all, then I am on a very different footing from other generals.'

Vatinius' reference to Caesar seems a risky example of third-party impoliteness. As we discussed in the Introduction, it was not inconceivable that this type of correspondence between political friends could, intentionally or not, reach readers other than the addressee. For fear of letters being intercepted, Cicero remarks in a letter to Atticus his avoidance of too explicit references, even to himself, in future correspondence.²⁶ But sometimes letters were purposefully 'written and dispatched for public display,' as Cicero writes to Atticus about a letter written by Pompey

²⁵ Cf. also Van Gils (f.c.) on Cicero's complicated relationship with Vatinius.

²⁶ (In a letter to Atticus, written in 59 BC): *Sed haec scripsi properans et mehercule timide. posthac ad te aut, si perfidelem habebo cui dem, scribam plane omnia, aut, si obscure scribam, tu tamen intelleges. in iis epistulis me Laelium, te Furium faciam; cetera erunt ἐναίνυμοις.* (Cic. Att. 2.19.4, SB 19) 'But I write this in haste and I am really afraid of saying too much. In future letters I shall either put everything down in plain terms, if I get hold of a thoroughly trustworthy messenger, or else, if I write obscurely, you will none the less understand. In such letters I shall call myself Laelius and you Furius. The rest shall be in veiled language.'

to Caesar.²⁷ In Vatinius' letter to Cicero (8), there is no sensibility to the face wants of the third party Caesar, which may mean two things. On the one hand, it could be the case that the writer counts on Caesar feeling pressed by this indirect accusation; in that case, it would be an interesting case of strategic third-party impoliteness. Another interpretation would be to regard this letter as an example of malicious talk; in that case, it might be also strategic in the sense that Vatinius shows Cicero that he trusts him enough to send him this impolite reference to the mightiest man of the moment.

Unfortunately, we do not have the complete correspondence between Vatinius and Cicero, but the selection we have is interesting enough. At a certain point, Cicero sends the following letter to Vatinius Imperator.

(9) *M. CICERO VATINIO IMP. S.*

Grata tibi mea esse officia non miror; (...) Quod mihi feminam primariam, Pompeiam, uxorem tuam, commendas, cum Sura nostro statim tuis litteris lectis locutus sum ut ei meis verbis diceret ut, quicquid opus esset, mihi denuntiaret; me omnia quae ea vellet summo studio curaque facturum. (Cic. Fam. 5.11, SB 257)

'From M. Cicero to Vatinius, Imperator, greetings.

It is no surprise to me to find you appreciative of my good offices, (...) As soon as I had read your letter, in which you commend to me your excellent lady Pompeia, I had a word with our friend Sura and asked him to tell her from me to let me know of any service she might require, and to promise that I should give my most sedulous endeavours to perform her wishes.'

In the first sentence Cicero refers both to the duties he has fulfilled (*mea officia*) and the fact that Vatinius is grateful (*grata tibi*). In fact, Vatinius' gratitude is the theme of the opening section and it appears to be a motive for Cicero to be loyal to Vatinius also in the future. The next request was already made: Vatinius' wife Pompeia was apparently in need of help and Cicero immediately (*statim*) after he had read the request takes action. However, as White (2010: 19–20) notes, a personal visit to Pompeia would have been the easiest and most polite response; instead, Cicero talks to Sura and gives him the message (which is less valued than a letter, White notes) that Pompeia should ask him if she needed help. We find many hyperbolic expressions in his assent.²⁸ But the flattery (one could perhaps say 'overpoliteness of affiliation') towards lady Pompeia is redressive in this case: the FTA contains a refusal camouflaged as assent.

The last letter we have from Vatinius to Cicero was written one month later. The exchange of favours has developed further, and Cicero seems to have added another request: the central part of the letter is *de Catilio*, a criminal who had been captured in the province of Vatinius. To Vatinius' embarrassment, Cicero had asked him to intervene in Catilius' favour. Vatinius could have executed him, but seems to conform to Cicero's request for a trial but not without protesting and limiting his help explicitly to permitting a trial where a pupil of Cicero (Volusius) will defend Catilius. We do not know how this trial ended.

(10) 'From Vatinius to his friend Cicero greetings. I trust you are well, as am I and my army. (...)

²⁷ Cic. Att. 7.17.2, SB 141 (see note 4).

²⁸ Note *statim* ('immediately'), *quicquid opus esset* ('any service she might require'), *omnia quae vellet* ('everything she wishes'), *summo studio* ('most sedulous endeavours').

You write me what reads like a very earnest intercession on behalf of Catilius. Get along with you, and our friend Sex. Servilius too! Upon my word, I think a lot of him, as you do. **But is this the kind of client and case you people take on—a monster of savagery, who has murdered and kidnapped and ruined all those freeborn men and matrons and Roman citizens, and laid whole districts waste? This ape, this worthless ruffian**²⁹, bore arms against me, and I took him prisoner of war. But really, my dear Cicero, what can I do? Upon my word, I am anxious to obey your every command. My own right to inflict condign punishment upon him as my captive, which I was going to exercise, I forgo in deference to your request. But what am I to say to those who demand redress by process of law for the plunder of their property, the seizure of their ships, the slaughter of brothers, children, and parents? Upon my word, I could not face it out, not **if I had the impudence of Appius**,³⁰ whose shoes I wear. Well then, I shall spare no pains to meet your wishes, as I know them. He is defended by Q. Volusius, a pupil of yours—perhaps that circumstance may rout the other side. There lies the best hope. You will defend me in Rome, if need arises.’ (Cic. *Fam.* 5.10A, SB 259)

With various arguments, including clear impolite (and witty) references to Catilius (*simius, non semissis homo*, ‘This ape, this worthless ruffian’), and to Appius (*si os Appi haberem*, ‘if I had the impudence of Appius’), Vatinius shows Cicero the impertinence of his request while at the same time explicitly giving in to it.

The exchange of challenging requests and favours between Vatinius and Cicero is full of compliments and explicit dedication to the other, but also with positive and negative references to third parties. Unfortunately, we do not have first order evidence on the presence of politeness or impoliteness in this letter, so we must be careful in drawing conclusions. However, from beginning to end the letters seem to contain strategies to save the face of the other in the context of potential face-threatening acts like requests and refusals.³¹ Moreover, we assume that the negative references of Vatinius to Caesar, Catilius and Appius are socially risky, because all three are part of Cicero’s network: Vatinius consciously puts himself in a vulnerable position by confiding in Cicero’s reticence. Third-party politeness, like the energetic affiliative politeness towards Vatinius’ wife, as well as impolite references to Caesar’s indifference, to Catilius’ criminal behaviour and to Appius’ impudence, seem to function mostly as a way to strengthen the bond between Vatinius and Cicero.

Doubts about the stability of the bond between Cicero and Vatinius are supported by much earlier evidence: eleven years before this intense letter exchange, politeness had not exactly been the hallmark of their interaction.³² During a cross-examination of Vatinius as a witness in a trial of 56 BC, Cicero heavily abused Vatinius’ physical deformity in a personal attack (cf. Cic. *Vat.* 15). Cicero’s invective against Vatinius had achieved the desired effect. Cicero’s client Sestius won the case and Vatinius, already friend of Caesar at that time, publicly lost his face. In sum,

²⁹ For reasons of space we quote this letter in translation and provide, in this footnote and the next one, only the Latin text of the passages in bold, with the exact reference: *sed huiusce modi vos clientis, huius modi causas recipitis? hominem unum omnium crudelissimum, qui tot ingenuos, matresfamilias, civis Romanos occidit, abripuit, disperdidit, regiones vastavit? simius, non semissis homo (...)*. (Cic. *Fam.* 5.10A.1, SB 259).

³⁰ *si mehercules Appi os haberem* (Cic. *Fam.* 5.10A.2, SB 259).

³¹ We admit that we base our analysis on the idea that requests and refusals are face-threatening in a universal sense (or at least, in Roman culture similarly to our culture).

³² And earlier, in the spring of 59 BC, Cicero writes to Atticus about his stay in Antium which has as its biggest advantage that it is ‘a place close to Rome where many have never laid eyes on Vatinius’ (Cic. *Att.* 2.6, SB 26).

Cicero had treated Vatinius like a public enemy, just like he had done with Verres, Catiline, Clodius, Piso and Gabinius before, and like he would do with Mark Antony.

The invective against Vatinius and the subsequent reconciliation some time afterwards, have been, both in Antiquity and in modern scholarship, a source of discussion on Cicero's *inconstantia* ('inconsistence').³³ In fact, when Lentulus hears about Cicero's defence of his former enemy Vatinius, he asks Cicero to explain this incredible move. And in the letter *ad familiares* 1.9, Cicero elaborately responds to this question (11).³⁴ This famous letter about the Ciceronian way of doing politics in times of oppression, provides us with some relevant first-order politeness insights on the use of third-party politeness.³⁵

(11) *M. CICERO S. D. LENTULO IMP.*

(...) *certiorem te per litteras scribis esse factum me cum Caesare et cum Appio esse in gratia teque id non reprehendere adscribis; Vatinium autem scire te velle ostendis quibus rebus adductus defenderim et laudarim. quod tibi ut planius exponam, altius paulo rationem consiliorum meorum repetam necesse est.* (Cic. Fam. 1.9.4, SB 20)

de Vatinio autem, primum reditus intercesserat in gratiam per Pompeium, statim ut ille praetor est factus, cum quidem ego eius petitionem gravissimis in senatu sententiis oppugnassem, neque tam illius laedendi causa quam defendendi atque ornandi Catonis; post autem Caesaris ut illum defenderem mira contentio est consecuta. cur autem laudarim, peto a te ut id a me neve in hoc reo neve in aliis requiras, ne tibi ego idem reponam cum veneris. tametsi possum vel absenti; recordare enim quibus laudationem ex ultimis terris miseris; nec hoc pertimueris, nam a me ipso laudantur et laudabuntur idem. (Cic. Fam. 1.9.19, SB 20)

'From M. Cicero to Lentulus, Imperator, greetings,

(...) You write that you have heard by letter that I am in good relations with Caesar and Appius, and you add that you have nothing to say against that. But you intimate that you would like to know my reasons for defending Vatinius and speaking to his character. To give you a clear explanation I must trace the principles of my political conduct a little further back. (...)

To take Vatinius then, Pompey originally arranged a reconciliation between us immediately after his election to the Praetorship, although I had made some very strong speeches in the Senate against his candidature—not so much to damage him as in support and compliment to Cato. Subsequently Caesar made a tremendous point of my undertaking his defence. As for why I spoke for his character, I appeal to you not to ask me that question about Vatinius or any other defendant, otherwise I shall ask you a similar question when you come home. For that matter I can ask it while you are still abroad. Just call to mind the men for whom you have sent testimonials from the ends of the earth—don't be afraid, I do the same myself for the same people and shall so continue.'

Cicero admits he was pressed first by Pompey to lay aside his enmity with Vatinius (he talks about a *reditus in gratiam*, a 'reconciliation') and next pushed by Caesar (*mira contentio* 'a tremendous point') to take up Vatinius' defence. This example contains a valuable first order perspective on the expected level of praise and blame in particular contexts. That Cicero praised Vatinius on that occasion is only part of the game, he explains to Lentulus: praise in speeches

³³ Cf. e.g. Fuhrmann (1992: 104) for Cicero's 'unbalanced state of mind' at the time.

³⁴ We met Lentulus already as a friend of Cicero in 66 BC in the quote from the *Pro Cluentio* (example (I)), and the correspondence between Lentulus and Cicero is filled with information about the alliances of the members of the Roman elite.

³⁵ See introduction @@ for the note of first order politeness.

should not be taken literally, but it is part of the genre, just like Lentulus praises his friends in recommendation letters. Similarly, attacking someone may be part of a politeness strategy towards a third party, as Cicero argues about his support of Cato. In other words, this metapragmatic dispute between Lentulus and Cicero about the acceptability of third-party praise after having publicly attacked the same party reveals that on the one hand, an explanation was needed in terms of the speaker's consistency, but on the other that pressures from influential friends (like Pompey) and contexts (genre) were considered valid reasons for such a radical change.

3.2. Caught in the middle: the case of Appius and Dolabella

In this second case study, we focus on Cicero's relation to Appius. This relation has been problematic from the start because of third parties which either link or separate them: Appius is the brother of Cicero's personal enemy Clodius, but also a friend and family of Cicero's friends Pompey and Brutus, and during Cicero's fragile *amicitia* ('political friendship') to Appius, the latter is attacked for *maiestas* (i.e. *maiestas laesa* 'high treason') and *ambitus* ('corruption') by Dolabella who in the same period becomes Cicero's son in law. And finally, Appius is Cicero's immediate predecessor as governor in the province of Cilicia and Cicero is anxious to obtain relevant information, for instance about the location of the Roman armies.³⁶

Pompey is apparently the strongest link between the two correspondents and he is frequently referred to with the highest esteem. It is not improbable to even think of Pompey as a third-party destination of Cicero's letters to Appius: in fact, in example (12) Cicero explicitly states that Pompey has sent him a letter asking him to respect Appius and Cicero replies directly to Appius, stating that Pompey's request was unnecessary, because he considers Appius as his *amicissimus*, but that in case of the contrary, he would have obliged him immediately. This instance reminds us of example (7)—*Caesare meo* ('my friend Caesar')—, in the sense that the speaker explicitly states how feelings of respect or affiliation for a third party surpass the already high esteem for the addressee. The third-party politeness takes precedence in both cases over the addressee-related politeness. Apparently, the desire or need to praise a third party may be at odds with the desire or need to praise the addressee. This tension between two possible targets of politeness evokes a scale of respect or affiliation and the speaker in this case puts the third person (Pompey, Caesar) on a higher level than the addressee (Appius and Cicero, respectively). To what extent this is impolite towards the addressee is a question we cannot answer within this paper, unfortunately, but further research hopefully finds answers based on first order evidence.³⁷

(12) *huius igitur filius cum sit gener tuus cumque praeter hanc coniunctionem adfinitatis quam sis Cn. Pompeio carus quamque iucundus intellegam, quo tandem animo in te esse debeo? cum praesertim eas ad me is litteras miserit quibus, etiam si tibi, cui sum amicissimus, hostis essem, placarer tamen totumque me ad eius viri ita de me meriti voluntatem nutumque converterem.* (Cic. Fam. 3.10.10; SB 73)

'Well, Pompey's son is your son-in-law; and apart from that connection I am well aware how dear and delightful a friend you are to him. What then should be my feelings towards you? Add

³⁶ Cf. also the discussion by Hall (2009: 139ff) and White (2010: 52–3) on Cicero's correspondence with Appius and its tricky negotiations.

³⁷ See Culpeper 1996 and 2016 for a general discussion of impoliteness in terms of scalar politeness.

that he has sent me a letter, which, even if I had been your enemy, as I am so sincerely your friend, would have disarmed my resentment and rendered me obedient to the wishes, the very nod, of the man to whom I owe so much.’

Writing about a common *amicus* like Pompey requires third-party politeness in a relatively straightforward way; writing about a friend who is considered an enemy by the addressee, however, is a much more complicated matter. This is the case of Dolabella. Dolabella has been defended by Cicero and is publicly known as his friend when he decides to attack Appius on charges of *maiestas* and *ambitus*. Appius has confronted Cicero with the behavior of his friend Dolabella in a non-preserved letter and Cicero apparently is required to explain to Appius whether he will remain loyal to Dolabella or to Appius. Cicero wants to do both without offending anyone, a challenging rhetorical exercise which becomes even harder when Dolabella and Cicero’s daughter Tullia engage. In a letter to Atticus (13), Cicero describes his embarrassment in plain terms:³⁸

(13) *Ego dum in provincia omnibus rebus Appium orno, subito sum factus accusatoris eius socer.*
(Cic. Att. 6.6.1; SB 121)

‘Here am I in my province paying Appius all manner of compliments, when out of the blue I find his prosecutor becoming my son-in-law!’

Cicero uses a number of rhetorical strategies to maintain his delicate tie of friendship with Appius without declaring enmity to Dolabella. First of all, he tells Appius that he continues to publicly support him (Appius).³⁹ Second, he avoids the name Dolabella, but uses vague references to speak about his actions against Appius as if his name is not relevant.⁴⁰ Thirdly, when the aggressive actions themselves need to be mentioned, Cicero qualifies them as reckless behavior, malice or silly and childish, not as public attacks or hostile deeds.⁴¹ And lastly, Cicero at first defines his relation to Dolabella in terms of an old tie based on forensic services, not as personal friendship, withholding, as it were, the due politeness of affiliation to the third party Dolabella.⁴² And when Dolabella becomes his son-in-law, he writes to Appius about the engagement to Dolabella in distanced terms and stresses that he had nothing to do with it.⁴³ Minimizing the burden of third-party impoliteness seems to be Cicero’s diplomatic solution to the awkward situation in which he is trapped. Again, first order evidence on this kind of ‘scalar’

³⁸ See also Cicero’s letter *Fam.* 2.15 to Caelius in which he thanks his friend for the congratulations for the engagement, while referring in evasive terms to his difficult epistolary relationship with Appius.

³⁹ *Neque enim de meo erga te studio dubitare debes neque id est obscurum cuiquam in provincia nec Romae fuit.* (*Fam.* 3.10.5, SB 73). ‘And indeed you ought not to have any doubts about my sentiments towards you; they are plain to everyone in the province, and were no less so in Rome.’

⁴⁰ *qui tibi negotium facesseroent* (*Fam.* 3.10.2, SB 73), ‘the troublemakers’; *eo adulescente cuius ... defendi* (*Fam.* 3.10.5, SB 73), ‘a young man whom I have twice ... defended ...’

⁴¹ *Temeritas* (*Fam.* 3.10.1 and 3.10.5, SB 73), ‘reckless behaviour’; *hoc invidorum consilio* (*Fam.* 3.10.1, SB 73), ‘this piece of malice’; and *sermo stultus et puerilis* (*Fam.* 3.10.5, SB 73), ‘silly, childish talk.’

⁴² *Cuius ego salute duobus capitibus iudicis summa contentione defendi* (*Fam.* 3.10.1, SB 73), ‘whom I have twice most strenuously defended on capital charges,’ and *veterem coniunctionem* (*Fam.* 3.10.5, SB 73), ‘an old tie.’

⁴³ *Ea quae gesta sint ab aliis esse gesta* (*Fam.* 3.12.1, SB 75), ‘what has been done has been done by others,’ and *causam difficiliorem* (*Fam.* 3.12.3, SB 75) ‘a more awkward case.’ For a detailed reconstruction of Cicero’s actual involvement in the arrangement of this marriage, see e.g. Collins (1952). Cf. also Shackleton Bailey (1971: 125–7) on this embarrassing situation, who remarks: ‘The composition of a letter to Appius needed finesse, but Cicero’s was adequate to the occasion’ (Shackleton Bailey 1971: 126).

strategies of politeness and impoliteness would be needed to decide to what extent this kind of examples was felt to be polite or impolite.

3.3. *The go-between: Dolabella, Cicero and Caesar*

Dolabella interests us here not only as a third party in the correspondence with Appius, but also with regard to the role he played in the complex political triangles during the Civil War, as a go-between between Cicero and Caesar.⁴⁴ A good example of his intermediary role is found in the only letter by Dolabella in the corpus of letters (*Fam.* 9.9, SB 157), commonly dated in May 48 BC. In this letter he advises Cicero, who at that moment is in Pompeius' camp, to finally change sides and join Caesar's side, or at least to leave Pompeius. Dolabella's use of third-party politeness concerning Caesar, who is described in terms of his *humanitas* ('kindness') in (14), as well as third-party impoliteness directed at Pompeius, whose lack of power and control are emphasized in terms of humiliation in (15), are plainly strategic, aimed at getting Cicero to change sides:

(14) *quaecumque de tua dignitate ab imperatore erunt impetranda, qua est humanitate Caesar, facillimum erit ab eo tibi ipsi impetrare, et meas tamen preces apud eum non minimum auctoritatis habituras puto.* (Cic. *Fam.* 9.9.3, SB 157)

'Any concessions that you need from the Commander-in-Chief to safeguard your dignity you will yourself obtain with the greatest ease from so kindly a man as Caesar; but I believe that my petitions will carry more than negligible weight with him.'

(15) *Animadvertis Cn. Pompeium nec ... gloria neque etiam clientelis, quas ostentare crebro solebat, esse tutum, et hoc etiam quod infimo cuique contigit illi non posse contingere, ut honeste effugere possit, pulso Italia, amissis Hispaniis, capto exercitu veterano, circumvallato nunc denique, quod nescio an nulli umquam nostro acciderit imperatori.* (Cic. *Fam.* 9.9.2, SB 157)

'You see Cn. Pompeius' situation. Neither the glory ... nor yet the kings and nations of whose dependence he used so often to boast can protect him. Even the door of an honourable retreat, which humble folk find open, is closed to him. Driven out of Italy, Spain lost, his veteran army taken prisoner, he is now to crown all blockaded in his camp, a humiliation which I fancy has never previously befallen a Roman general.'

Dolabella is at that moment already Cicero's son-in-law, which, in addition to his close connection with Caesar, makes him very suitable for his role. Dolabella's intermediary capacities had been stressed already in an earlier letter (49 BC) from Caesar himself to Cicero, which is quoted by Cicero in a letter to Atticus; here, too, Caesar's use of third-party politeness is clearly strategic and aims at persuading Cicero:

(16) *CICERO ATTICO SAL.*

⁴⁴ On Cicero's correspondence with Dolabella, see also Bernard (2013: 373-404). White (2010: 34-5; 39-40) offers a useful overview of the letters exchanged between Cicero and Dolabella that have been published in *ad Familiares*, as well as those that are referred to, but were not published in the surviving edition. For lack of space, we will leave aside here the many—very interesting—instances of the third-party impoliteness that we find in the *Philippicae* in the period that Dolabella had changed sides to become an ally of Mark Antony, and even was declared enemy of the *Res Publica*: the use of third-party impoliteness in *invectivae* deserves a separate paper.

Cum quod scriberem ad te nihil haberem, tamen ne quem diem intermitterem has dedi litteras Caesarem Sinuessae mansurum nuntiabant. ab eo mihi litterae redditae sunt a. d. vii Kal., quibus iam 'opes' meas, non ut superioribus litteris 'opem,' exspectat. cum eius clementiam Corfiniensem illam per litteras collaudavissem rescripsit hoc exemplo: Tu velim mihi ad urbem praesto sis ut tuis consiliis atque opibus, ut consuevi, in omnibus rebus utar. Dolabella tuo nihil scito mihi esse iucundius. hanc adeo habebō gratiam⁴⁵ illi; neque enim aliter facere poterit. tanta eius humanitas, is sensus, ea in me est benevolentia. (Cic. Att. 9.16.1-3, SB 185)

‘Cicero to Atticus. Though I have nothing to say to you I am sending this letter in order not to miss a day. They tell me that Caesar will stay the night of the 27th at Sinuessa. A letter from him was delivered to me on the 26th in which he now counts on my ‘resources,’ not, as in his former letter, on my ‘help.’ I had written applauding his clemency at Corfinium and he has replied as follows:

“As for yourself, I hope I shall find you at Rome so that I can avail myself as usual of your advice and resources in all things. Let me add that I find your son-in-law Dolabella the most delightful of company. I shall owe him the more on this account—he will not be able to do otherwise; his kindness of heart, his good feeling, and his good will towards me guarantee it.”

However, Dolabella’s marriage with Cicero’s daughter Tullia does not last, and they are divorced in 47 BC, which temporarily results in a cooling down of personal relationships between Dolabella and his former father-in-law. In this period, Cicero privately expresses his negative feelings about his former son-in-law in a letter to Terentia, which is plain loathing and gossip, and not in any sense strategic (or for that matter, in view of the strictly private nature of this letter, third-party impoliteness):⁴⁶

(17) *Quod scripsi ad te proximis litteris de nuntio remittendo, quae sit istius vis hoc tempore et quae concitatio multitudinis ignoro. si metuendus iratus est, quiesces. tamen ab illo fortasse nascetur. totum iudicabis quale sit, et quod in miserrimis rebus minime miserum putabis id facies. Vale. (Cic. Fam. 14.13, SB 169)*

‘As regards what I wrote in my last letter about sending notice of divorce, I don’t know how powerful he [i.e Dolabella] is at the present time nor how excited the state of popular feeling. If he is likely to be a formidable enemy, don’t do anything—perhaps he will take the initiative even so. You must judge of the whole position and choose whatever you think the least of evils in this wretched situation. Good-bye.’

Later, however, and especially in the chaotic situation after Caesar’s death, their political relation improves, and Cicero praises Dolabella’s efficient and powerful public measures during riots, both in letters addressed to Dolabella himself⁴⁷ and in letters to others, resulting in abundant third-party politeness. An example is found in the following letter to Cassius (May 44 BC), referring to Dolabella’s suppression of the riots after Caesar’s death:⁴⁸

⁴⁵ In this letter, *hanc gratiam* (translated as what Caesar ‘owes’ him) refers to the success which Caesar expects that Dolabella will have in persuading Cicero to meet Caesar in Rome.

⁴⁶ And more implicitly, to Atticus (Cic. Att. 11.23.3, SB 232), where Cicero lists Dolabella’s political and marital missteps which made the divorce inevitable; cf. also Shackleton Bailey (1971: 175–6) on this period.

⁴⁷ Cf. Hall (2009: 183–5), who states that ‘Cicero rather clumsily attempts to court Cornelius Dolabella’ (p. 183), and quite extensively discusses Cicero’s letters to Dolabella, in which he tries to take a share in Dolabella’s success. Hall analyzes these letters in terms of affiliative politeness, in a chapter on ‘Politeness and political negotiation.’

⁴⁸ Cf. also his praise in a private letter to Atticus, that starts off with: *O mirificum Dolabellam meum! iam enim dico meum; antea, crede mihi, subdubitabam. magnam ἀναθεώρησιν res habet: de saxo, in crucem, columnam tollere, locum illum sternendum locare! quid quaeris? heroica.* (Cic. Att. 14.15,1-2, SB 369) ‘My wonderful Dolabella!

(18) *Finem nullam facio, mihi crede, Cassi, de te et Bruto nostro, id est de tota re publica, cogitandi, cuius omnis spes in vobis est et in D. Bruto; quam quidem iam habeo ipse meliorem re publica a Dolabella meo praeclarissime gesta* (Cic. Fam. 12.1.1, SB 327)

‘Believe me, Cassius, I never stop thinking about you and our friend Brutus, that is to say about the whole country, whose only hope lies in you both and in D. Brutus. I myself now feel more optimistic after the splendid performance of my dear Dolabella.’

All in all, it is interesting to see in this series of letters, how political, strategic use of politeness, discussed by Hall for addressee-directed politeness, is quite similarly found in the form of third-party politeness.

4. Conclusions

Third-party politeness, we may conclude, seems to have been a relevant factor in upper class Roman interactions, and we believe it explains linguistic behaviour in many more types of interaction, including other social classes and other periods. This first exploration of the phenomenon, based on Politeness Studies, both general and focused on Latin correspondence, and on three case studies in Ciceronian letters and speeches, seems to support the following conclusions:

- In public, upper class, Roman interactions, there were social conventions with regard to the mentioning of third parties with a high social profile, as well as conventional expressions for third-party politeness, like e.g. *honoris causa nominare*;
- politeness of respect (*verecundia*) directed at third parties could be used to compensate for FTAs, such as criticizing, publicly accusing, or refusing to help someone from your own social network (*amici* ‘political friends’): both the face of the speaker and of the third person involved apparently were in need of such a redress;
- affiliative politeness is found also with respect to third parties, when they are related to both the speaker and the addressee;
- maintaining affiliative relations with third persons seems to have been particularly urgent in conflict situations;
- in addition to the above-mentioned functions, *verecundia* and, especially affiliative third-party politeness, could be a strategic tool in persuading the addressee to behave in a certain way.

We hope that this first investigation will lead to more studies of this phenomenon, and we would like to suggest some directions for future research which would support or nuance our findings. We expect it would be revealing to study:

- public references to third parties in lower class Roman interactions (e.g. in Plautus and Petronius);

Now I call him mine—before, I can tell you, I had lurking doubts! This affair really gives people something to think about! Over the Rock with them, on to the cross with them, away with the pillar, contract for paving the site! Why, it’s Homeric!’

- absence of third-party politeness in spite of a potential FTA (in Cicero and his correspondents);
- instances of ironic or negated third-party politeness of affiliation (in Roman correspondence and speeches).

The second and third points would be direct follow-ups of the line of research in this chapter: as with our case studies, Cicero's correspondence and speeches would be a good corpus, but instead of the interaction between two correspondents, the case studies would focus on specific third parties about which Cicero and his correspondents speak. The references to, for instance, Caesar could be analysed as cases of polite, impolite, ironic, strategic, or neutral references. If Romans expected third-party politeness as a convention in the case of highly placed individuals, as our case studies seem to suggest, the mere absence of explicit politeness formulas should be interpreted as a form of impoliteness.

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Figure 1: Third parties possibly involved in face-matters

interaction type	examples	speaker's face in the eyes of:	addressee's face in the eyes of:	third party's face in the eyes of:
private	private letters (e.g. to Atticus, Terentia, Tiro)	addressee	speaker	-
semi-private	recommendation letters	addressee, 3 rd party	speaker, 3 rd party	speaker, addressee
public	public letters; speeches; invectives; comedy	addressee, 3 rd party, audience	speaker, 3 rd party, audience	speaker, addressee, audience

Figure 2: Faces involved in (semi-)public dialogue about a present third party