

An Opimian Myth: Cicero and the Language of *Concordia*

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Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* 1.8: *concordes* as derived from *cors, cordis*. Similarly, Varro, *Ling. Lat.* 5.10: *Concordia a corde congruente*. Here, Varro refers to the name of goddess, not the abstract noun.

Jal, P., 1961. “Pax civilis” – “concordia”, *REL* 39, 210-232

Curti, E., 2000. ‘From Concordia to the Quirinal’ in *Religion in Archaic and Republican Italy*, edited by E. Bispham & C. Smith, 77-91, esp. 80-83.

Thériault, G., 1996a. ‘L’Apparition du culte d’Homonoia’, *Les Études Classiques* 64.2, 127-150

--- 1996b. *Le Culte d’Homonoia dans les cités grecques*.

Momigliano, A., 1942. ‘Camillus and Concord’, *CQ* 36, 111-20, esp. 115-20.

Brown, R., 1995. ‘Livy’s Sabine Women and the Ideal of *Concordia*’ *TAPA* 125, 291-310 follows and develops E. Skard’s view that references to the importance of *concordia* prior to the mid second century are retrojections by later writers (‘Concordia’ in H. Oppermann, ed., 1967. *Römische Wertbegriffe*).

1. What ideas does Cicero associate with *concordia*?

Letters to Atticus 1.14.4 (SB 14) – 61 BC; cf. 1.17.8-10 (SB 17)

...de gravitate ordinis, de equestri concordia, de consensione Italiae, de in<ter>mortuis reliquiis coniurationis, de vilitate, de otio.

...on the gravity of the order, concord with the equites, consensus with Italy, the dying remnants of the conspiracy, the cheapness of grain, peace.

Letters to Atticus 1.18.3 (SB 18) – 60 BC

Sic ille annus duo firmamenta rei publicae per me unum constituta evertit; nam et senatus auctoritatem abiecit et ordinum concordiam diiunxit.

This past year destroyed two foundations of the republic which I alone had established: it threw away the authority of the Senate and tore asunder the concord of the orders.

de domo 17

...sic reditu ubertas agrorum, frugum copia, spes otii, tranquillitas animorum, iudicia, leges, concordia populi, senatus auctoritas mecum simul reducta videantur...

...so on my return I seem to be accompanied by agricultural bounty, grain in plenty, the hope of peace, tranquil minds, justice, the rule of law, concord among the people, and senatorial authority...

2. What sacrifices is Cicero willing to make for the sake of *concordia*?

Letters to Atticus 1.17.8-10 (SB 17) – 61 BC

Resists the removal of the immunity for equestrian jurors in cases of judicial bribery

Supports the cancellation of the Asian tax-farming contract

Letters to Friends 1.9.20 (SB 20) , – to Lentulus Spinther, 54 BC

Forgives the wrongs done to him by Crassus for the sake of *communis concordiae*

pro Balbo 61 – 56 BC

Supported legislation in favour of Caesar’s continuing his Gallic campaigns, so as to promote *concordia* (see also *de provinciis consularibus* 47 – 56 BC).

[Section continued on reverse.]

Cf. *de officiis* 2.78-82, where he applauds historical alternatives to agrarian reform implemented to create *concordia*; *pro Plancio* 94, which treats flexible policies, rather than tenacity of opinion, as the root of *concordia*; and *de re publica* 2.54, where Cicero recalls historical cases in which Romans supported popular measures to preserve *concordia*, ending with these words the Cicero's primary interlocutor, Scipio:

haud mediocris hic, ut ego quidem intellego, vir fuit, qui modica libertate populo data facilius tenuit auctoritatem principum.

This was a man of no mean ability, in my view, who, by granting to the people moderate freedom, more easily maintained the authority of the leading men in the state.

3. Temple(s) of Concordia

367 - Temple vowed by Camillus during the disputes over admitting plebeians to the consulship (Plut. *Cam.* 42 & Ov. *Fasti* 641-4) of

304 - Cn. Flavius, the son of a freedman, built an *aedicula* (a shrine) to Concord as Curule Aedile after alienating the *nobiles*, in part by publishing the calendar of days for legal proceedings and the civil law code (Livy 9.46.6 & Pliny *NH* 33.19)

218 - L. Manlius, while praetor in Gaul, vowed a temple if he should overcome the mutiny of his soldiers (Livy 22.33.7 & 23.21.7)

121 - L. Opimius built (or restored) the temple after the death of C. Gracchus (App. *B. Civ.* 1.26, Cic. *pro Sestio* 140, Plut. *C. Gracc.* 17.6)

4. The Historical Opimius

125 - Captures and destroys Fregellae as a praetor and is denied a triumph for this action (Vell. 2.6.4; Val. Max. 2.8.4)

121 - Becomes consul on his second attempt (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 11.4-5)

121 - Violently suppresses the C. Gracchus and his supporters (Plut. *C. Gracch.* 17.6-7, App. *B. Civ.* 1.26, Vell. 2.7.2-3)

120 - Tried and acquitted for the murders (Cic. *Sest.* 140)

116 - heads a commission of ten to Numidia (Sall *BJ* 16.2-3)

110/9 - charged with accepting bribes from Jugurtha and exiled under the *lex Mamilia* (Cic. *Brut.* 128)

6. The Ciceronian Opimius

Van Der Blom, H., 2010. *Cicero's Role Models: The Political Strategy of a Newcomer*, esp. 208ff.

84 - Fregellan traitors pleading their case before Opimius (*de Inv* 2.34)

63 - The swiftness with which Opimius carried out the Senatorial direction (*In Cat.* 1.4)

'But we, for these twenty days have been allowing the edge of the senate's authority to grow blunt, as it were.' *at vero nos vicesimum iam diem patimur hebescere aciem horum auctoritatis.*

57 - Opimius' failure, even as a *fortissimus* consul, to speak publically on behalf of P. Popillius, the suppressor of Tiberius Gracchus, even after his restoration from exile by tribunician action (*Post red. Ad Q.* 11)

56/5 - Opimius as an example of man treated with ingratitude by the state he saved (*Sest.* 140, *Pis.* 95)

55/4 - Opimius' trial and acquittal as a case study in types of oratorical arguments (*de Orat.* 2.106, 132-34, 165, 169, 170; *Part. Orat.* 104, 106)

54 - Suggests Opimius' salvation of the state should have saved him from the later charges (*Planc.* 69, 88)

52 - Compared with Ahala, Nasica, Marius, himself and Milo as men cleared by conscience (*Mil.* 8, 83)

51 - Opimius as an example of man treated with ingratitude by the state he saved (*De Rep.* 1.5)

46 - Opimius as an example of man treated with ingratitude by the state he saved (*Brut.* 128)

43 - Opimius as a model to be followed (*Phil.* 8.14)

A total of 20 references over the whole Ciceronean corpus, cf. 137 for the Gracchi, 9 for Servilius Ahala, 17 for P. Nasica

Farney, G., 1997. 'The Fall of the Priest C. Sulpicius Galba and the First Consulship of Marius', *MAAR* 42, 23-37.

7. Is the idea of *concordia* compatible with social inequality?

de re publica 1.49 (from Scipio's summary of the arguments in favour of democracy)

Facillimam autem in ea re publica esse concordiam, in qua idem conducat omnibus; ex utilitatis varietatibus cum aliis aliud expediat, nasci discordias.

It is said that it is easiest to obtain concord in affairs of state when everyone has the same interests; discord arises from differing advantages, when each individual has separate desires.

de re publica 2.69 (Scipio uses musical harmony as a metaphor of concord in the state)

...sic ex summis et infimis et mediis interiectis ordinibus ut sonis moderata ratione civitas consensu dissimillimorum concinit; et quae harmonia a musicis dicitur in cantu, ea est in civitate concordia, artissimum atque optimum omni in re publica vinculum incolumitatis...

...so from a mingling of the highest, lowest, and middle orders, with reasoned moderation, like musical tones, is a state harmonious, its different parts in agreement; and what musicians call 'harmony' in singing is 'concord' in a state, the strongest and best bond of security in every republic...

in Catilinam 4.15

Quid ego hic equites Romanos commemorem? Qui vobis ita summa ordinis consilique concedunt ut vobiscum de amore rei publica certent; quos ex multorum annorum dissensione huius ordinis ad societatem concordiamque revocatos hodiernus dies vobiscum atque haec causa coniungit.

Why do I now recall the Roman equites? Those who concede to you greater status and deliberation still join you in a love of our republic. After many years of dissension, these men are recalled by this day and this cause to fellowship and concord with our order. [The text goes on to recount the patriotism of each portion of Roman society, in descending order of status.]

8. Other relevant scholarship not incorporated above:

Clarke, A.J., 2007. *Divine Qualities. Cult and community in Republican Rome.*

Eagle, E.D., 1949. 'Catiline and the Concordia Ordinum', *Phoenix* 3, 15-30.

Hardie, A., 2007. 'Juno, Hercules, and the Muses at Rome', *AJPh* 128.4, 551-592.

Kelly, G. P., 2006. *History of Exile in the Late Republic*, esp. p. 9-13 argues for the concept of concordia as static, guiding principle of Roman republican politics, but very treatment of the 'real' Opimius in his appropriate historical context.

Levick, B., 1978. 'Concordia at Rome' in *Scripta Nummaria Romana*, edited by R.A.G. Carson & C.M. Kraay, 217-233.

Temelini, M. A., 2006. 'Concordia and the failure of the *rogatio Servilia agraria*' *CEA* 43, 49-60.

Vasaly, A., 1993. *Representations: Images of the World in Ciceronian Oratory*, esp. 35, 66-7.

There are also two, as yet, unpublished dissertations of which I am aware, but have not read:

Temelini, M., 2002. *Cicero's concordia: the promotion of a political concept in the late Roman republic* (McGill).

Lobur, J. A., 2004. *Consensus and concordia in the formation of the Roman principate and their resonance in early imperial prose.* (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor).