Introduction

In the French novel *Le roman bourgeois* of 1666 an imaginary book in four volumes is introduced which offers a complete discussion of literary dedication. The curious reader, fobbed off with no more than its table of contents, learns that the second chapter is entitled ‘whether dedication of a book is absolutely necessary. This question is answered in the negative, against the view of several ancient and modern authors’. Although it is true that dedication of a book was not absolutely necessary in antiquity, most ancient authors (and readers) would consider it normal, indeed essential, for literature immortalizes both the author and the addressee, as Pliny states, to give just one instance. That is the reason why the ninth-century encyclopaedist Photius in his *Bibliotheke*, a large collection of summaries of literary works, pays much attention to the question if a book was dedicated to someone. Accordingly, a great many ancient authors dedicated their works to someone, especially to emperors and other notable persons.


2. Plin., *nat. proef.* 25: “Apion quidem grammaticus … immortalitate donari a se scriptis ad quos aliqua componebat”; also e.g. Lact. *epitoma inst. proef.* 1: “tibi epitomam fieri, Pentadi frater, desideras, credo ut ad te aliquid scribam tuumque nomen …celebretur …”.

3. The following, about Phrynichus and his (lost) work *Sofistik® paraskeuß*, is a typical example: *Bibliotheke* 158: ‘(he) flourished during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus, to whom the work is dedicated and inscribed, “Phrynichus to Commodus Caesar, greeting”. In the preface he exhorts Commodus to the pursuit of learning, at the same time praising his own work, of which he says that he had already composed thirty-seven books and dedicated them to the emperor … In spite of his assertion that he dedicated the work to the emperor, he appears to have inscribed the separate books to different persons. Thus, the first, second, and third books are addressed to a certain Aristocles, in the hope that it may serve as an amusement and source of recreation for him on his birthday; the fourth to a certain Julian, a fellow-citizen and friend. The author adds that he had at first intended to dedicate the whole to Aristocles, but after by the royal decree he became a member of the great council at Rome, he decided to adopt Julian instead as
works are dedicated to someone: my provisional list of ancient dedications counts a few hundred books while leaving out many late authors and virtually all Christian ones.

Ancient and modern books do not only differ in the frequency of their dedication, there is a qualitative difference as well: Gérard Genette distinguishes between dédier, dedicate a work to someone, and dédicacer, to dedicate a single copy. In modern books the dedication of a work is generally characterized by typographical convention as paratexte, something outside the ‘real’ text: it is the only text on an otherwise empty page; yet this dedication is part of the (printed) book, reproduced by the printing process in every copy of one edition. We may inscribe a particular copy of the text to a particular friend. Recently a writer in a letter to the editor asked what to do when you notice one of your books being offered in an internet auction extra expensive because it bears your personal dedication to an old friend who is still alive. In antiquity this situation would not have been possible: although the dedication of an ancient work may be either part of the text itself or paratexte, the relation between single copy and work is different without the printing press. I will return to this point. In other respects, however, there are similarities between ancient and modern practice: ancient dedication, too, is done before the text gets underway, or at least in its beginning, mentioning a name is essential, and dedication is a public gesture even without the printing press. For, in a certain sense, the dedicatee is co-author of the work; this is a point made by Genette, and it is especially true of antiquity: the

his friend and associate in his labours and to make use of his services as the judge and critic of his writings. In spite of this promise, he dedicates the fifth book to a learned friend of his, named Menodorus, who had previously censured him for not having adequately investigated the inflexion of words... (tr. by J.H. Freese (1920), cf. http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/photius_03bibliotheca.htm). Many aspects mentioned here will recur in the following, such as the dedicatee as judge, the dedication as an exhortation, multiple dedication, dedication of lost works etc.


5 He was advised to buy the book and offer it to this friend a second time, now inscribing it with the wish that his financial problems would soon be over, see De Groene Amsterdammer of 01.VII.2005, p. 45.
work is for someone and it is for him because it is also “by him”, he inspired it, or must approve of it, or will inspire it.6

The aim of this contribution is just to offer some general information concerning ancient dedication of texts: when, why and how did classical authors dedicate, what works, to whom and in what terms? Thus I hope to sketch a background for the more detailed studies on the dedication of Latin works and motets in the sixteenth century which form the real subject of this book. On the one hand I will try to give a general picture, on the other hand, I will draw attention to variation and complication. In this I shall concentrate on the Roman world, and focus on Latin literature, if only because almost all relevant material is from the first century BC and later — though much of it is actually written in Greek; the origins of classical dedication, however, lie in classical Greece.7

Ways to dedicate

Basically an author can dedicate a work in one of three ways: by naming the dedicatee, by presenting him with the work, or by asking him for correction. These devices are often combined, but every single one is enough to convey to dedicatee and public: “this book is for so-and-so, for he is a special person”. The author must put this into writing (for otherwise the dedication could not be known and is useless to the dedicatee), and he may do so by 1) addressing the dedicatee and stating that

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6 Genette, Seuils, p. 126. Him, for I do not know a book dedicated to a woman in antiquity (the love elegy is a different matter).

he presents him with this work and/or 2) that he requests criticism of his draft, or 3) by just mentioning the dedicatee’s name in the beginning of his work.

In addressing the dedicatee and presenting him with the book the author will use the terminology of dedication — unless he just mentions the name in the vocative. Unexpectedly perhaps, the Latin word *dedicare* is relatively rare in dedications, just as its Greek example ἀνατίθεναι. Dedicare is first used by Phaedrus to dedicate the third book of his *Fables* (probably somewhere in the thirties A.D.) to Eutychus, then also by Pliny the Elder and by Statius in a prose-letter. The quotation from Martial which is the title of my paper (Mart. 5.2.2) is actually not quite what we mean by dedication. *Dedicare* is, in fact, a technical expression for parting with an object on behalf of a religious instance and inscribing that object with the details of this cession, so its use in dedicating books is a rather violent metaphor. Apart from deifying the dedicatee, the word expresses at the same time that the author gives up his work, that it is not his any more, and indeed, by formally dedicating their work ancient authors did cede their ‘copyright’. Similar terms are *emittere*, to send away, and *mittere* (Greek πέμπειν, ἀποστέλλειν), also *ferre*, *edere* (Greek φέρω, ἐκδιδόναι), publish, but in fact ‘let go’, *publicare*, make public. But *dedicare* also means that the author makes a present of his work (or pays his debts), and words like *dare*, *donare* (Greek δοναί), *donum*, *munus* are frequent.

The other method of dedicating is, as I said, addressing someone. Greek προσφέρειν, ‘to address, direct’, is frequent: Photius uses it virtually exclusively. Cicero in his Letters once has the noun *prosfénxis* in the sense of ‘dedication’ and elsewhere the Latin translation

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8 See *ThLL* V1 260, 60 ff. Not all forms of the word fit the hexameter, but enough of them do. On ἀνατίθεναι, see Graefenhain, *De more*, pp. 6, 29, 31.


10 RE IV 2356-2359 (Wissowa).

The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφειν πρὸς correspond to Latin scribere ad, which is probably the most common Latin term, regularly used by Cicero, like tibi scribere. The Greek terms ἀναγράφειν and especially γράφει

Even just mentioning a name in the form of address, is enough to ensure that a book is dedicated to someone: in the first place, it is unclear what else this vocative could mean if not a dedication, but that mere address is a signal of dedication is proved by the elder Cato’s famous phrase, repeatedly quoted in Latin literature Orator est, Marce fili, vir bonus dicendi peritus. The late lexicographer Nonius Marcellus (who dedicated his own work to his son) informs us that the book to which this sentence belonged was actually called On oratory to his son (Ad filium ... de oratore). The use of the vocative case is also the point of an anecdote told by the younger Pliny: during a recitation the poet Passennus Paulus, a remote descendant of Propertius, opened a poem with the words Prisce, iubes, whereupon a certain Iavolenus Priscus cried out: ‘I don’t ask anything!’. This was a ridiculous remark, according to Pliny, who even doubts Priscus’ mental sanity. Obviously Paulus had wished to dedicate a poem to Priscus, who failed to understand this social convention. Longer poems and books of poetry often bear dedication in this form.
On the other hand, not every address means dedication — apart from the general address to the reader, which is obviously a different matter anyhow. In the beginning of Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, the author announces his desire to tell (μυθησαμην) true things to his brother Perses, and somewhat further on he addresses him, but only in order to admonish him, for, as the poem makes clear, the two brothers had fallen out. In this case there can be no question of dedication, perhaps also because in archaic Greece dedication of a work of literature to an individual is less probable: dedication presupposes a certain level of literacy in society and a view of author and reader as individuals rather than as part of society or members of a group. Genette draws attention to addressing the Muses as an opening device from Homer onwards, but for the older period this does not represent a dedication: rather the archaic Muse is omniscient, inspires and dictates the work. Finally, we must distinguish between the dedication of single poems, such as that to Priscus for instance, and of books of poetry: many individual poems in Horace and the elegists, and even more in Statius and Martial are addressed and dedicated to a patron, but the book as such can be dedicated to one of them only, generally in a clear way.

Two speeches or pamphlets by Isocrates, *Nicoles* and *Euagoras*, composed around 370 BC, may be seen as the earliest dedications: they address the ruler, the king of Cyprus, by name, at the outset, in a kind of introduction, and speak of giving and receiving and, at the end, of honouring. The oldest special dedicatory device is probably the letter to the dedicatee: among the earliest examples of dedication after Isocrates are the letters preceding the book on *Conics* by the mathematician Apollonius of Perge, written around 245 BC and addressed to King Eudemus of

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16 I accept the reading Πέρση, dative, in 10, not Πέρση, vocative, as it is in 27.
17 Although there is some relationship between inspiration and dedication, see Genette, *Seuls*, p. 126. On the differences between dedicating or addressing a poem and dedicating a book, see Nauta, *Poetry for patrons*, pp. 91 ff., 106 ff., 128-129, 279 ff., and below.
18 Ruppert, *Quaestiones*, pp. 8-16 in discussing the origins of dedication finds its first example in an elegy by Dionysius Chalcus addressed to a certain Theodorus (around 450 BC), preserved in Athen. 15.669D. However, longer and more formal dedications, to a superior or an equal, rather seem to be Hellenistic in origin, see Isocrates *Nicoles* (*Orat.* 2) 1.1: “When men are in the habit, Nicoles, of bringing to you kings garments or brass or wrought gold … 22.2 Now, I thought that it would be the noblest and most profitable gift (δοσονος) and one most becoming me to give and you to receive (δοους, λαβειν)… (end of the work: 54) Now I have exhorted you to the extent of my knowledge, and I honour you by these means” (tr. J.A. Freese, my italics: HJvD), *Euagoras* (*Orat.* 9) 1.
DEDICATION IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

Pergamon (the first three books) and his successor Attalus, and those which the physicist Archimedes attached to some technical treatises, addressed to a certain Dositheus and to Gelo II tyrant of Syracuse around 220 BC. 19

Such a letter of dedication may originally be a separate text, sent (or rather, presented) together with a copy of the work, which became attached to and copied together with the text. Or, more often, the author himself began his work with a short preface in the form of a letter and then, after a concluding formula like ἔρωσο or vale, continued with the ‘real’ subject. These different formats cannot be discerned any more in our textual tradition. Moreover, there is no essential difference between dedicatory preface (praefatio) and dedicatory letter as far as content or topoi are concerned; such a preface may, or may not, take the form of a letter. On the other hand, there is a difference in kind between dedication and preface: both introduce a work, but a preface concentrates on why and how, a dedication on whom; a preface may but does not have to include a dedication. 20

A given text can be called a letter if it has an opening formula such as “Greetings”, or “Dear so-and-so”, secondly the name of the addressee (in Latin letters this is often combined by a superscription in the form: A to B, A greets B), thirdly if it is in the form of an address (vocative case, 2nd person verbs), and fourthly if it ends with a formula. 21 In practice, either the opening or the closing formula or both may be left out in dedicatory letters. A metrical treatise by Servius, the commentator of Vergil, is introduced by a short letter with address and valediction. But some books have only an opening, such as those of the elder Seneca

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19 De quadratura parabolae and Arenarius / Psammites.
20 “pourquoi et comment”: Genette, Seuils, pp. 182 ff. In this respect my aims and scope are different from that of Janson in his Latin prose prefaces: Janson’s corpus consists of prefaces defined as ‘the introductory part of a long text…’ and only of those in prose (pp. 9, 12-13), without distinguishing between those prefaces which are dedications and those which are not. Thus he recognises two main types of prefaces, the epistolary and the rhetorical, either of which may or may not be dedicatory (pp. 14-23). As a matter of course the texts we study overlap, just as some strategies and topoi do, but see his p. 117: “the dedication is not treated here as a section of its own, and what little I have to say of the problems connected with it will appear below”. Dramatic prologues, which have no dedication, are ignored by me, but included by Janson. On prologues and prefaces, see also Felgentreu, Claudians praefationes, chapters 1-2.
21 Cf. e.g. Paolo Cugusi, Evoluzione e forme dell’epistolografia latina nella tarda repubblica e nei primi due secoli dell’impero, con cenni all’epistolografia preciceroniania (Roma: Herder, 1983), pp. 47-67.
addressing his sons, or the work on prescriptions by the first-century pharmacist Scribonius Largus dedicated to L. Cornelius Balbus, or that of the third-century encyclopaedist Solinus. This is also true of the well-known, elaborate letter by which the elder Pliny dedicated his *Natural History* to the Emperor Titus, with only the formula *Gaius Plinius Secundus Vespasiano suo Salutem*, but no formal ending. Pliny himself does qualify the text as a letter twice, in the beginning, and at the end when he states that he has added a table of content ‘to this letter’, in order to save the Emperor the trouble to read the book. The earliest Latin letter of dedication, written by Aulus Hirtius, the author of the eighth book of Caesar’s *De bello gallico*, on the other hand, ends on *Vale* but has no opening formula, merely the vocative ‘Balbe’.22 Openings may well have been lost in our manuscripts; on the other hand, corrections may unduly normalize. Thus sometimes *vale* is added, unnecessarily, at the end of the dedicatory letter belonging to Avianus’ *Fables* (early 5th century), which lacks a formal opening as well.23

A collection of letters can, of course, also be dedicated by a letter (just as a collection of poems may be dedicated by its opening poem). Such is the case with Pliny’s Epistles, dedicated to his friend Septicius Clarus, praetorian prefect under Hadrian.24 On the other hand, Seneca’s twenty books of letters are all written to Lucilius, but not one book is dedicated to him. Every letter has an addressee, but some longer letters, texts which stand on their own, are also dedicated in a certain sense: epistolary
treatises addressed to one person, such as the letters of Epicurus, to Herodotus on Physics and to Pythocles on Meteora, and similar technical treatises. Here also belong the long verse-epistles of Horace on poetry, Epistles II 1 and II 2 to Augustus and Florus, and especially of course, the Epistula ad Pisones, all of them with epistolary characteristics.25

If we do accept these epistolary treatises, these single letters, as dedications, arguing that they combine address to a specific person with the wish for larger circulation, that would imply that in this case the whole text can be seen as dedication, that the dedication is not paratexte, nor part of the texte, but nothing but text.

The earliest letters to introduce collections of poetry are those in Statius’ Silvae, and Martial’s Epigrams, much later. Those of Statius especially, had a great vogue in late antiquity with poets like Ausonius, Sidonius, Venantius Fortunatus and Ennodius, and thus influenced renaissance prefaces.26

**Dedications and addressees**

Let us now survey a number of dedications and make some observations; in the appendix I have collected and tried to group according to ‘genre’ (not in a technical sense of the word) a fair number of dedications.27 As we see, dedication has its beginnings in hellenistic literature, and does become an important factor in the Greco-Roman world of the first century BC and later. The main reason for its popularity is the Roman system of patronage, which includes the Emperor and the court as patrons.

A first observation is that dedication is especially popular in didactic and technical literature. Thence the frequency of words for explaining and teaching such as δεικνύειν, used by Archimedes, for instance, or docere.28 Up to the second century AD didactic poetry is more prominent, whereas in the second century and later technical prose takes over. Here we find many works which few classicists ever read nowadays, but which were very popular as long as ancient knowledge was still topical. A common topos in those dedications, but also in the dedications of

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26 See Pavlovskis, ‘From Statius to Ennodius’ and below; and on renaissance prefaces, Verbeke, ‘Ad musicae patronos’, I, 18 ff. and below.
27 The reader should keep in mind the reservations I made in the introductory paragraph.
28 Archim. *Arenarius* 1.3: “ἐγὼ δὲ πειρατοῦμεν τοι δεικνύειν”. 
rhetorical and philosophical work, is that the dedicatee is eager to learn: ‘I have written this book because you want to know everything’ says Lucius Ampelius to his dedicatee Macrinus (perhaps the man who became emperor in 217), and according to Vegetius the emperor should know everything, and he hastens to add that, in fact, the emperor already does know it all.29

Some kinds of text do not lend themselves well to dedication: drama is the genre of showing, and although Quintilian speaks of prefaces in which Seneca and Pomponius discussed dramatic technique, I do not see that dedication could have played a part here.30 Didactic poetry lends itself more easily to dedication than epic, but some epics do start by addressing the emperor. However, in this paper I will sidestep the intricacies of Silver epic and the dedicatory quality of their prooemia which praise the emperor and at the same time refuse to write a poem on him (recusatio).31

Who dedicates to whom and why? Given the underlying thought that literature makes one famous, there are roughly speaking two groups: one circle of peers, aristocrats, gentlemen, such as the Ciceronian circle where dedication is an industry, with people asking for and receiving books, as a tribute to their learning, or proof that they are one of the boys. Or also that of Sidonius and his friends in the fifth century, who are dedicating extremely elaborate and far-fetched literature to each other, in an attempt to keep the barbarians at bay, at least psychologically.32 Most authors of

29 Ampel. Prol.: “Lucius Ampelius Macrino suo salutem. Volenti tibi omnia nosse scripsi hunc librum memoriam, ut noris quid sit mundus…..”, Veg. mil. Praef.: “… neque quemquam magis decet vel meliora scire vel plura quam principem … non quo tibi, imperator invicte, ista videantur incognita …”.
30 Quint. inst. 8.3.31. What kind of prefaces they were is debated. Spalding’s old commentary on Quintilian leaves it open (on the stage or in “editions”), Janson, Latin prose prefaces, p. 111 concludes that they were “epistolary prefaces in prose (or possibly in verse)”, Elaine Fantham (Roman Literary Culture. From Cicero to Apuleius (Baltimore-London: Johns Hopkins Press 1999), p. 149) claims that they were “spoken introductions to recitations of their plays”, see also Nauta, Poetry for patrons, p. 282 with n. 91.
31 For a recent discussion, see Ruurd R. Nauta, ‘The recusatio in Flavian poetry’, in Ruurd R. Nauta, Harm-Jan van Dam, Johannes J.L. Smelenaars (eds.), Flavian poetry (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 21-40. Note that invocation of/ dedication to the emperor and dedication to someone else occur in one and the same poem, Vergil’s Georgics. The letter which Statius wrote about his Thebaid may have been a dedicatory one, see Stat. silv. 4. praef., 17-8.
technical prose are aristocrats. The other group is that of clients and patrons — although the word *clientes*, is hardly ever used; the terminology is always that of friendship. Patrons are aristocrats, kings and emperors, but it is good to realize that the poets themselves are rarely poor (Phaedrus is an exception): the Augustan poets are all of equestrian status, and Statius and Martial were not at all poor. The highest goal was, of course, to reach the Emperor, who was in a different range from both client-authors and aristocrats, and writers sometimes thank their patron for their brokerage, as Scribonius Largus does. It is remarkable that, though the Golden Age of Patronage is, of course, the time of Augustus and Mæcenas, we do find quite a number of dedications to Emperors who are less popular with historiographers, such as Tiberius and Commodus. There is one other large category: modern books, especially scholarly ones, are sometimes dedicated by sons and daughters to their father. This is relatively rare in antiquity, whereas the reverse is frequent: Cicero dedicated *De officiis* to his son Marcus, Plutarch an essay on the *Timaeus* to his two sons, the elder Seneca and Artemidorus addressed several books to their sons, as we shall see, and Sidonius the eighth book of his Letters, to mention just a few.

Dedications of prose-works are sometimes repeated over and over: in each preface, the elder Seneca presents another famous orator from the past to his sons. In a similar but less sophisticated way Columella, writing on agriculture, addresses his neighbour and dedicatee Publius Silvius in every new book, from the second book onwards by just mentioning his name in each first sentence without ever using new dedicatory words.

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35 To Tiberius: Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus, Germanicus’ *Arate* to Commodus: Oppian’s *Halieutica*, Pollux’ *Onomasticon*, Phrynichus’ *Sophistikè paraskeuè* (only in epitome, but see note 3). For the proverbial Augustan age of patronage cf. the poem written by Robert Frost for the inauguration of J.F. Kennedy on 20.I.1961, entitled *Dedication*: “… The glory of a next Augustan age... / A golden age of poetry and power / Of which this noonday’s the beginning hour”.

36 Perhaps Livy dedicated one or more philosophical works to his son, see Quint. *inst.* 10.1.39 and Sen. *epist.* 100.9.
topoi — except for book X, the poem on gardening, in which he addresses his friend both in the prose-preface and in its first hexameter. In this last respect he is a trendsetter: he is imitated by the late agricultural writer Palladius who dedicated De insitione, the fourteenth and last book, in verse, of his prose-work on farming to a certain Pasiphilus both in the preface and in the first line of the poem. This technique of the prose dedication followed by a verse dedication is typical of Ausonius and Sidonius, and this in its turn could well be a major influence on the renaissance practice of ever-expanding prefaces and combinations of letter and poem.

Other authors are less profuse: Quintilian addresses Marcellus Vittorius in three prefaces out of twelve books, but also at the end of the whole work: “this was, Marcellus Vittorius, what I had to say about …”. This kind of repetition of the dedication in an epilogue occurs elsewhere too: Phaedrus, having dedicated his 3rd book of fables to Eutychus, comes back to him in its last poem, Ad Eutychum, and there explicitly asks for a reward, saying ‘and make it snappy, please, for I could be dead otherwise’, thus revealing his low social status. Propertius does this more subtly: his first poem, about Cynthia, is addressed to Tullus; the epigram on which the book ends is a sphragis, a seal or signature, in which the author tells something about himself. In this sense, the sphragis may be considered as the counterpart to the dedication: the poet opens with and

37 Colum. 1 \textit{praef.}: “… Quas ego causas, Publi Silvine,…”, 2 \textit{praef.}: “Quaeris ex me, Publi Silvine, quod ego sine cunctatione non recuso docere, cur priore libro …”, 3 \textit{praef.}: “Hactenus arvorum cultus, ut ait praestantissimus poeta. Nihil enim prohibet nos, P. Silvine, …”, 4 \textit{praef.}: “Cum de vineis conserendis librum a me scriptum, Publi Silvine” etc etc., 10 \textit{praef.}: “Faenoris tui, Silvine, quod stipulanti spoponderam tibi, reliquam pen-siunculam percipe …” (beginning of the poem)  Hortorum quoque te cultus, Silvine, docebo”. Repeated dedication also: Vegetius to Theodosius I: each of his four books on the military, and the end of 1, 3 and 4, Firmicus Maternus: almost all books of his Mathe-sis to his Friend Lollianus Mavortius, also: the end of books 6-8.


on behalf of his patron, but he ends with himself. Propertius, however, combines the *sphragis* with the concluding dedication, for this poem, like the first one, is addressed to his patron Tullus. The most sophisticated repetition of naming the dedicatee at the end is that in Horace’s *Odes*, where Maecenas, addressed in 1.1, is not named in 3.30, the last poem of the volume, which is, again, a *sphragis*, but where the *metre* of 1.1 is repeated for the first and only time.40

Finally, consecutive books of a work may be dedicated to different persons: Varro, over eighty years of age, promised three books on agriculture to his wife Fundania, but after the first he changed his mind and addressed the second to an otherwise unknown cattle-farmer Turranius Niger, and the third to a Pinnius.41 Multiple dedication could be advantageous to poor or ambitious men, as the example of Phrynichus shows.42 However, sometimes it rather seems to suggest bad planning, as in the case of the famous Dreambook by Artemidorus: the first and second book are dedicated to Cassius Maximus (perhaps the sophist Maximus of Tyre), in the preface to the third book the author explains to Cassius that he had thought to have fulfilled his wishes (!) in two books, but then discovered there was more to be said; this (short) third book however, which is again dedicated to him, fills all the gaps. Then, in the fourth book, Artemidorus addresses his son, saying that people tell him his book is incomplete and shallow; therefore he composed this addition especially for his son. At the end of this book he writes: “son, this is all there is to say. Now I add another book” (!). And this fifth book is, again, for his son.

**Themes and topoi**

In dedications the author may tell something about the genesis of his work and explain what it is all about and how it should be read. This is prefatory rather than dedicatory material. Apart from that, in dedications we meet with various *topoi* about the relationship between dedicator and...
dedicatee and about the contents. A prominent theme is self-disparagement by the author, frequently by playing down the importance of the book. Since Catullus’ dedicatory poem to Nepos, literary works are coyly designated as ‘a booklet’ (*libellus*), ‘trifles’ (*nugae*). The word *libellus* returns for instance in Phaedrus and Luxorius, and no poet has it more often than Martial; in one of the first presentation-poems of book 4 he flaunts his imitation of Catullus. Vegetius and Palladius even call their large prose-treatises short *libelli*, in imitation of the elder Pliny, as I suspect, who explicitly quotes Catullus and refers to his own massive encyclopaedia as *nugae* — surely tongue in cheek. In Ausonius the word *libellus* occurs over 20 times, and in the dedication of his *Eclogae*, he quotes Catullus’ opening literally (one of the few identified quotations in Latin literature), capping it immediately by qualifying his own book as an ugly rough *libellus*. Most critics agree that Catullus’ dedicatory poem for Cornelius Nepos cannot have introduced all of his poetry as we know it, for that would have made a bulky book indeed by ancient standards; but even if this poem originally was the dedication of a slim volume, a real *libellus*, it is clear that we must not believe the poet’s self-disparagement: the confident prayer for immortality of the last lines alone is enough to prove that. Indeed, we do not take any of these authors at their word in their pseudo-modesty and self-humiliation. Statius in his prefaces claims to be afraid that critics will condemn his poetry as unimportant, for the poems are *trifles*, the work of a hasty hack. However, in his first preface he puts himself on a par with Homer and Vergil, who also composed *lusus*, trifles. Moreover, in his fourth preface he states that this

43 Catull. 1.1-4: “… libellum/… namque tu solebas / meas esse aliquid putare nugas, … 10 plus uno maneat perenne saeclo”, Phaedr. 4 praef. 14: “(Ad Particulonem) quatuor libellum cum vacabat perleges”, Mart. 4.10: “Dum novus est nec adhuc rasa mihi fronte libellus,/ pagina dum tangi non bene sicca timet, / i, puer, et caro perfer leve munus amico / qui meruit nugas primus habere meas”. Statius Silvae 1 Praef.: “Diu multumque dubitavi, Stella (see Cicero in n. 15), … an hos libellos, qui mihi subito calore et quadam festinandi voluptate fluxerunt… dimitterem”, Luxorius Ad Faustum 10 (PLM vol. 4, 441 Baehrens), Sidon. epist. 9.16.1.


45 Auson. ecol. 1.1-5: “‘Cui dono lepidum novum libellum?’ / Veronensis ait poeta quondam / inventoque dedit statim Nepoti. / At nos inlepidum, rudem libellum, / burras quisquillas ineptiasque, / credemus gremio cui fovendum?”.
book counts more poems than earlier books, in order to teach his unfair critics a lesson. The word *ludere*, to write unimportant things, also occurs in the dedication of the Pseudo-Vergilian *Culex* to Octavius / Octavian / Augustus, and a general attitude of humility towards the rich patron or Emperor is common: the author of *Ciris*, addressed to Messalla, adduces his youth and inexperience as an excuse for his poor poetry, nevertheless the result of endless, even nightly, labour. Again, the elder Pliny, scholar, statesman and friend of the emperor calls himself mediocrem surely insincerely.46

Another dedicatory theme is that of inspiration, frequent in poetry: the old view that the Muses and Apollo or other gods of poetry inspire the poet remains in existence: after his dedication to Octavianus, the author of the *Culex* claims that Apollo will inspire him47. Manilius goes somewhat further: in dedicating his astronomical poem to the Emperor Tiberius he also claims that Tiberius gave him the necessary strength; then he goes on to address Mercury for inspiration.48 Another direction


47 The poem *Aetna* is not dedicated, but does claim Apollo as an inspirator: 4 ff.

48 *Culex* 12 ff.: “Latoneae magnique Iovis decus, aurea proles,/ Phoebus erit nostri princeps et carminis auctor”, Manilius *Astronomica* 7 ff.: “hunc mihi tu, Caesar, patriae princepsque patereque, qui regis augusit parentem legibus orbem / concessumque patri mundum deus ipsi mereris, / das animum viresce facis ad tanta canenda.… 30 tu princescceptauctorque sacri, Cyllenie, tanti ….”
was taken by Germanicus in his Aratea, his translation of the Greek Phainomena by Aratus, which the prince dedicated to his adoptive father Tiberius. Aratus began his poem with the words “Let us begin with Zeus”, one of the most popular quotations of antiquity (even in the New Testament: Acts 17:28). Statius alludes to these words when in the preface of his fourth book of Silvae he states that he never began any work without invoking the divinity of the Emperor. Germanicus may well be the source of this conceit, for he boldly states: “Aratus began with Zeus, but I adore you, father, you are my beginning, your divinity will inspire and help me”.

In a similar way Ovid, in the first book of his Fasti, presents his dedicatee Germanicus as his Apollo (the God of Clarus), his divine inspiration. This brings us to a last item, or rather, a complex of factors, that is the relation of dedication to publication. As we saw, one signal that a work is dedicated is a request for criticism; moreover, dedicating means relinquishing all your rights — that what we would call ‘copyright’, which did not exist in antiquity. The words of ‘sending’ and ‘giving’ which we have seen mean that, in offering a manuscript, the author also gives the dedicatee the right to put his work into circulation. For anyone had the right to multiply a text, and authors were careful to ensure that incorrect texts or texts they did not want to divulge were corrected or taken back. Thus Cicero repeatedly asks his friend Atticus to make corrections in books, in his own and other people’s copies, and to make it known that the text was changed, with various results: some of them have entered our manuscript tradition, others have disappeared. Apollonius of Perge in his

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49 Statius silv. 4 praef.: “reor equidem aliter quam invocato nomine maximi imperatoris nullum opusculum meum coepisse”. Germ. 1 ff.: “Ab iove principium magno deduxit Aratus, in carminis at nobis, genitor, tu maximus auctor, te veneror, tibi sacra fero doctique laboris / primitias, probat ipse deum rectorque satorque … pax tua tuque adiuncta / opus et timide derige navis iter, / … devoto nomine dexter ades./ … adnue conanti per laudes et tuorum / deque meo pavidos excute corde metus./ da mihi te placidum, dederis in carmina vires / ingenium volto statque caditque tuo. / pagina judicium docti subitura / prae cei prince, ut Clario missa legenda deo”, Tib. 2.1.35: “Huc ades aspira me mihi” (= Messalla), Val. Max. 1.1: “Te igitur huic coepto… certissima salus patriae, Caesar, invoco”. Lact. inst praef.: “opus nunc nominis tui auspicio incohamus, Constantine imperator maxime”; see also n. 56.

50 In Att. 12.6a.3 (SB 243) Cicero asked Atticus to change “Eupolis” into “Aristophanes” in Orator 29, in his own and other peoples’ copies, and this was done; similarly his wish (Att. 13.2.3 = 251,3) that inhibitere were changed back into sustinere in Academica 2.94 was fulfilled, but his mistake in pro Ligario 33, where Corfidius’ presence is mentioned although he was already dead, lives on in our texts in spite of his request to Atticus to delete the name (13.44.3 = SB 336,3).
Conics already complained that “… it happened that some persons also, among those who I have met, have got the first and second books before they were corrected”. In other words, books could be distributed by a book-seller / publisher, when the author had given him his master copy, but they could also be dedicated to a friend or patron instead, who would show the work to his friends and multiply it, in order to give away copies — if he liked it. Publishing by way of patrons or friends, such as Cicero’s friend Atticus, is the older method. Cicero often sent manuscripts to Atticus, and in his letters he made it clear whether it was to be reproduced without more and brought into circulation, or whether he wished to have a look at it first.51 When the patron brought the book into circulation by copying and handing out manuscripts, he included the letter of presentation or dedicatory poem, for all the world to see. This is true of the letters preceding Statius’ Silvae: the first addressing his friend Stella is incomplete, but the letter preceding the second book, to Atedius Melior, ends on a telling phrase: if Melior dislikes the poetry, nobody will read it. Ausonius in the introduction to his Cento closely imitates it. That is to say publication, of the work depends on, or rather, amounts to, circulation of copies of this one copy which is dedicated to Melior. By taking care of this Melior changes the dedication of one copy to dedication of the work as a whole, in Genette’s terms: what was dédicacer becomes dédier, just as the poet had intended all along. 52

Sometimes a poet asked his patron or friend for correction before publication, something we can only know if the request lives on in our textual tradition: thus Martial’s book six opens with a poem requesting Julius Martialis to correct the epigrams with his fine ear before the book is ready

51 Cic. Att. 13.21a.1(SB 327): “scripsi enim ad librarios ut fieret tuis, si tu velles, describendi potestas. Ea vero continebis quad ipse te videam; quod diligentissime facere soles cum a me tibi dictum est”, 13.22.3 (SB 329): “scripta nostra nusquam malo esse quam apud te, sed ea tum foras dari cum utrique nostrum videbitur”, Att. 15.1a.2 (SB 378): “Brutus noster misit ad me orationem suam habitam in contione Capitolina petivitque a me ut eam ne ambitiose corrigerem ante quam ederet”.

It is possible that he did correct the poems, and that we are reading the result, but in other cases it is clear that we cannot take these requests at face-value, for example when there would be no time for it before what we know to be the moment of publishing. So this request is in most cases fictional and just part of the standard vocabulary of modesty. Authors did not really think that their fine dedication copy, trimmed and rubricated, would be returned to them by a displeased patron; and they could also use the topos that the patron had pressed them for a book, or asked for information. Apart from the examples above, there is Quintilian’s letter to the bookseller Trypho, who is asked to provide a perfect edition of the *Institutio oratoria*. Actually, this seems to be an anomaly for it is made clear in this letter, and in the book itself, that the *Institutio oratoria* is dedicated to Vitorius Marcellus and not to the addressee of the letter; although the letter contains several dedicatory topoi of modesty. Here we have a case where an opening letter does not represent a dedication, and we should expect that Quintilian had not wished to include it. However, Sidonius may imitate Quintilian by dividing dedication and edition between two persons, which would suggest that in the fifth century already the letter to Trypho was included in Quintilian’s text. The reverse may be true for Cicero’s *Academica* which

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53 Mart. 6.1: “Sextus mittitur hic tibi libellus, / in primis mihi care Martialis: / quem si terseris aure diligenti, / audebit minus anxius tremensque / magnas Caesaris in manus venire”.

54 See Nauta, *Poetry for patrons*, pp. 123-128, who shows that Martial’s requests for correction in 5.80 and 12 praef. 22-6 are fictional. For other requests for correction, see, for instance Iustin. *praef.* 5: “ad te non cognoscendi magis quam emendandi causa transmissi”, Sidon. *epist.* 1.1: “sed scilicet tibi parui tuaeque examinationi has non recensendas (hoc enim parum est) sed defaecandas, ut aiunt, limandasque commissi”.


56 Sidonius dedicated the first book of his letters to his friend Constantius in 469. Only when he published his collected letters in 7 books, in 477, did he dedicate the whole work to his friend, by including a final letter (7.18) beginning with: “a te principium, tibi desinet” (a quotation from Verg. *buc.* 8.11, see also n. 49). Book 8 begins with a dedication to Petronius who ‘commanded’ Sidonius to publish more letters: “… etiam scrinia Averna petis eventilar… morem geremus inunctis”. In its last letter, however, 8.16, Sidonius explains that Petronius did the correction of this book, but that Sidonius dedicates it to Constantius all the same: “… perveniretque in manus vestras volumen istud alieno periculo, obsequio meo”. At the end of book 9 Sidonius repeats that the first eight books were for Constantius: *epist.* 9.16.1: “ceteris octo… quos ad Constantium scripsa”.
he wanted to dedicate to Varro, but there is no letter attached to the work. A dedicatory letter of sorts which we do know is found in Cicero’s *Ad
Familiares* and has a different manuscript tradition. The story of the *Academica* is intricate (we have two different versions of it, both incomplete, one of the rare examples when an earlier version was not suppressed), and this letter seems unfit for dedication, but perhaps the ‘real’ letter of dedication has just disappeared from the manuscript tradition. Or perhaps in this rare case the fact that Varro is a speaker in the dialogue suffices, without any of our three necessary devices for dedicating.57 Flavius Josephus in the preface of his *Contra Apionem* only speaks of, not to Epaphroditus; nevertheless we do assume that the treatise is dedicated to him.

There are other instances of complicated or less clear-cut dedication: poems within in a book of lyric poetry or epigrams or poetic epistles, may be addressed to someone, and these poems are, or were, dedicated to their addressee, but the book as a whole is a different matter: there can be only one dedication of it, otherwise different versions of texts would be circulating. Thus the poems were ‘published’, since the author had given them to their addressees, but an unknown percentage of these single poems was republished as part of a book. Single poems could still be copied if their dedicatees wished them to be, but in collecting his poems and dedicating them to a single patron, the poet hopes and expects that this new text will be authoritative. The dedicatee must take care of that, and giving a copy to all the addressees will help. This is roughly how it worked for the Augustan poets, and also for Statius. Martial who composed many, short poems, is original. Throughout his books of epigrams around 45 presentation poems are scattered, that is to say poems which refer to the gift of a book. This has sometimes been supposed to mean that Martial dedicated 45 smaller books (*libelli*) to different patrons, later to collect those into 14 books of epigrams. But recently it was shown that Martial dedicated only books of collected poetry, always by a prefatory letter or poem to one special person; but that he dedicated the same

\[57\] Cicero planned, hesitated and endlessly asked Atticus for advice whether or not to dedicate something to Varro, for which he chose his revised version of the *Academica*, see *Att.* 13.12.3 (SB 320), 13.13-14.1 (SB 321), 13.14-15.1 (322), 13.16.1 (323), 13.18 (325), 19.3-5 (326), 21a.1 (327), 22.1 (329), 23.2 (331), 24.1 (332), 25.3 (333), 35-36.2 (334), 44.2 (336). That Cicero is speaking of dedication is clear, especially from 320 and 325: “libros ad Varronem”. Apart from that he tries very much to make Atticus responsible for the book in some way or another. The letter to Varro accompanying the four books *Academica* is *Fam.* 9.8 (SB 254).
book to other people as well, who might read ‘their’ dedication poem somewhere in the book. So Martial’s epigrams are a case of ‘multiple dedication’ scattered throughout the books. We may compare other forms of original or anomalous dedication, such as the technique of the prose dedication followed by a verse dedication in later Latin, which we have seen earlier, or Claudian’s way of introducing his occasional poems addressed to the high and mighty: most of his (hexameter) poems have poetical introductions in a different metre, which in a few cases represent dedications. All these variations which tend to give the dedication more importance and multiply it may also point a way to renaissance practices of variation on and expansion of ancient examples. The rest of this book will show how authors and musicians used or ignored antiquity.

59 The prefaces of *III Cons. Honorii* and *Cons. Malli Theodosii* both by implication; the second book of *De raptu Proserpinae* is explicitly dedicated by its elegiac preface to Floreninus praefectus urbi in 396.
DEDICATION IN CLASSICAL ANTQUITY

APPENDIX
DEDICATIONS IN CLASSICAL TEXTS

Didactic poetry: Nicander Alexipharmaka, Theriaka, Lucretius De rerum natura, Germanicus Aratea, Vergilius Georgica, Horatius Ad Pisones, Ovidius Fasti, Manilius Astronomica, Columella De re rustica 10, Palladius De insitio, Oppianus Halieutica

Technical prose: Apollonius Conica, Archimedes Arenarius, De quadratura parabolae, Parthenius Erotika Pathemata, Varro De lingua latina, Varro De re rustica (1-3, 4 ff.), Vitruvius De ars architectorum, Scribonius Largus Compositiones, Columella De re rustica, Onasander Strategikos, Plinius Naturalis Historia, Balbus militarum, Polyaenus Strategemata, Galenus several "unpublished" treatises, Artemidorus Oneirokritika, Apollodoros of Damascus Poliorcetica, L. Ampelius Liber memoriae, Pollux Onomasticon, Solinus De mirabilibus mundi, Censorinus De die natali, Nonius Marcellus De compendiosa doctrina, Vegetius Epitome rei militaris, Donatus Commentary on Vergil, Palladius Opus agriculturae, Servius De centum metris, Caelius Aurelianus De morbis acutis, Hesychius Lexicon

Rhetoric: Rhetorica ad Herennium, Cicero De oratore, Brutus, Orator, Dionysius Halic. De compositione Verborum, Apollonius of Pergamon Techne, Valerius Maximus Dicta et facta memorabilia, Seneca Controversiae (9 books), Tacitus Dialogus de Oratoribus, Longinus Peri Hupsous, Quintilianus Institutio oratoria, Iulius Paris Excerpt from Valerius Maximus

Philosophy: Epicurus Ad Herodotum, Ad Pythoclen, Cicero Academica (?), De officis, De finibus honorum ac malorum, Paradoxa Stoicorum, Topica, Laelius, Cato maior, Seneca All dialogues, Arrianus Enchiridion Epiceteti, Lactantius De mortibus persecutorum, epitoma Divinarum institutionum, Tertullianus De fuga in persecutione, Augustinus many treatises

Lyric poetry: Catullus, Propertius I-II, Tibullus, Hor. Iambi, Sermones, Epistulae, Carmina, Anonymous Ciris, Culex, Panegyricus Messallae, Laus Pisonis, Elegiae in Maecenatem, Status Silvae 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.1, Martialis 1, 2, 8, 9, 12 (letters), 3, 5, 6, 10, 11 (poems), and several other poems, Opatianus De figuris (Constantine), Ausonius various poems and letters, Claudianus De rapto Proserpine II (Cons. Mallii Theodori, 3rd cons. Honorii), Sidonius Apollinaris many poems and letters, Luxorius

Epic: Lucanus, Valerius Flaccus, Statius
