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Virtus Homo First Century B.C.

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Virtus Homo

First Century B.C.

by

Katherine Ann Kalberer

A Thesis
Submitted to
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Carroll College

In Partial Fulfillment
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By: [Signature]
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Virtue and Humanitas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Sapientia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Pietas</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Gravitas</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Temperantia</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Conclusion</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. VIRTUE AND HUMANITAS

Before I can truly discuss the characteristics and properties of the virtuous man in the first century B.C., a clear idea of virtue itself must be presented. Throughout the history of man many ideas concerning virtue have been expressed, many of which seem quite distinct from one another. But as in all definition, by taking the common elements from each, a fairly conclusive idea can be reached. At this time I would like to state that in this thesis I do not intend to present any specific philosophy such as Stoicism or Epicurianism or any other prominent school of thought in ancient Rome, but rather to set forth general ideas and ideals which the average Roman would have held.

Socrates was one of the earliest and most prominent spokesman on this subject. He taught that knowledge was virtue and vice was ignorance. Knowledge to him was the common element of all virtue: "the courageous man knowing what to do in danger. the temperate man knowing how to restrain his passions, the just man knowing what rightly belongs to himself and to others. ...He (Socrates) says that the philosopher alone has true virtue because he alone has true wisdom." Thus no one would voluntarily pursue evil but always by his knowledge choose the good. Although we now do not agree with this idea, it is well to see that there is some truth here which is still accepted; that knowledge does play a good part in possessing virtue, and, indeed, if knowledge were truly perfect, virtue would result.
The common Greek term for virtue was ἀρετή which is defined as "excellence of character, disposition, and habit of life, with reference to generally accepted moral standards." This idea was an expansion of the original idea of excellence in battle.

Our word *virtue* is borrowed from the Latin word *vir*. Cicero verified this by saying in reference to shunning death and pain, that

*(Tusc. ii. 18)* si virtutes compotes vel, potius si viri volumus esse, quoniam a viris virtus nomen est mutuata.

Virtue can thus mean manliness, encompassing all that which is excellent in man. It also implies the idea of strength as in the relation:

*(Ter. E. 778)* imperatoris virtutem et vim militum.

Cicero also says:

*(Tusc. ii. 43)* omnes rectae animi affectio necessitates virtutes appellentur.

Virtue is aimed at the perfection of man's nature as Forcellini states:

*Per synecdochen usurpatur de quacumque hominis perfectione, tam corporis, quam animi, sed praecipue animi.*

This perfection of the mind is emphasized by Cicero:

*(Tusc. v. 36)* Hic agitur si est cultus et si ejus acies ita curata est, ut ne caecaretur erroribus, fit perfecta mens, id est absoluta ratio, quod est idem virus.

Thus virtue in its many aspects simply aims at the development of the true nature of man.

*(Cic. Acad. i. 5)* Quod autem absolutum, id est virtus, quasi perfectio naturae.

Man, therefore, by virtue develops according to what we call the natural law.
This idea is basic in the Aristotilian-Thomistic philosophy. Aristotle defined virtue as a habit (εἴσοδος). If the habits seemed to perfect man's total nature and thus became good habits of living or of good conduct, they were called virtues. Each act implies deliberate choice and must be in accordance with right reason. But by frequent repetition of such an act an inclination to do good is produced. Thus such acts become habit by being able to be done with greater facility. Hence, virtue is defined as a good habit. Cicero also says this.

(Inv. ii. 53) Virtus est animi habitus naturae modo rationi consentaneus.

The Roman seemed to feel that virtue was rather stable and permanent.

(Cic. Phil. iv. 5) Omnia alia facta, incerta sunt, caduca, mobilia; virtus est una altissimis defixa radicibus, quae nunquam ulla vi labefactari potest, nunquam demoveri loco.

I think Cicero was somewhat influenced by Stoicism here as to the supreme good being virtue, although this passage does serve to show how highly rated the truly virtuous man was.

It is interesting to note that in a society which now is thought to be rather virtueless, virtue

ab antquis Dea putata est, cui templum dedicavere, Virtutis autem templum cum aedo Honoris conjunctum fuit, ita ut in hanc nisi per illud pateret aditus. Qui significare voluerunt, veram unicumque parandi honoris viam esse virtutem.

This fact is testified by Cicero when he said:
(N. D. ii. 53) Vides Virtutis templum, vides Honoris a M. Marcello renovatum, quod multis ante annis erat bello Ligustico a Q. Maximo dedicatum:

This idea of the connection between virtue and honor seems to have more meaning when we consider honor as also used in the term Cursus Honorum, the progression of a man to high office. Honor as used here connotes the highest esteem and the highest offices of Rome. Although the public official may not have been in reality the virtuous man, the parallel can show the importance of virtue to the Roman before the time of Christ.

But what more concrete aspects of virtue did the Romans include? They, as we, tend to group virtues under two main divisions, the intellectual or speculative and the moral virtues. The Aristotelian habit points to the fact that there are also habits of the intellect which, although indirectly affecting our moral lives, do affect the mind in making it a more efficient instrument in attaining knowledge. Aristotle subdivides these intellectual virtues into understanding, science and wisdom as speculative intellectual virtues, and art and prudence as practical intellectual virtues.⁵ Today we generally consider two chief intellectual virtues—"speculative wisdom which deals with the absolute nature of things and prudence or practical wisdom which deals with the relative and changing conditions of human conduct."⁶

The Romans seemed to make a similar distinction using the terms sapiens and prudens. The correlation between virtue and wisdom is quite clear in such a passage as:
(Sall. Cat. 52) Virtus atque sapientia major in illis fuit.

And like Socrates, who believed that virtue can be learned, the Roman seemed to consider the orator as necessarily a virtuous man:

(Cic. Brut. 17) In Catonis orationibus omnes oratoriae virtutes reperientur.

(Cic. Or. ii. 27) In quo oratoris vis illa divina, virtusque cernitur.

This fact is significant as the orator was generally the most highly educated man.

Those virtues that are characterized by good living are called the moral virtues. "They are good habits in the appetitive part of the soul, directing the activity of the will and governing the passions of the sense-appetite. They enable us not merely to know what to do and how to do it, but they actually assist us in the doing of it." Here the Romans also considered the four cardinal or hinge virtues: prudence, temperance, fortitude and justice. Further subdivisions and constituent parts of these virtues can be seen in the following statements by Cicero:

(Off. i. 15) Ut quisque maxime his virtutibus lenioribus erit ornatus, modestia, temperantia, justitia.

(Mur. 10) Aliis te virtutibus continentiae, gravitatis, justitiae, fidei, ceteris omnibus, consulatu dignissimum judicavi.

Likewise, honesty is a virtue:

(Cic. Font. 13) Qui tanta virtute atque integritate fuit, ut solus Fruge nominaretur.
More than in contemporary times, the ancient Roman did not fail to consider as virtues the more practical traits as patriotism. For example, devotion to duty was held in high regard:

(Cic. Fam. 13. 28) Est in eo virtus et probitas, et summum officium, summaque observantia.

Likewise the soldier held fortitude and bravery as good examples of true virtue, for:

saepe etiam accipitur pro fortitudine militari, et latius pro amini constantia in periculis, et rebus adversis.  

Although it is a common practice to divide and categorize virtues, one must consider the interrelation among them.

A single virtue, if perfect, is necessarily connected with all other virtues; in view of the unity of the human person, one cannot adequately tend to the supreme end of life by one specific spiritual activity and remain habitually removed from that same end in other sectors of his spirit.

For this reason the growth of one is proportional to the growth of others.

Cicero likewise recognizes this fact when he says:

(Tusc. ii. 33) Ecquid nescis igitur, si quid de Corinthiis tuis amiseris, posse habere te reliquam supellectilem salvam, virtutem autem si unam amiseris, etsi amitti non potest virtus, sed si unam confessus fueris te non habere, nullam esse te habiturum.

But there is a common element or bond between all virtues? Indeed, prudence is connected to all of the moral virtues and is necessary for their practice. "But, furthermore, each of them is connected with charity, and charity could not exist without infused moral virtues...Moral virtues must be directed by prudence, and prudence cannot exist without charity."
Thus although charity is today considered a supernatural or theological virtue, and not the totality of virtue in itself, charity or Christian love is the true underflowing trait of all virtue. Charity is the means for the Christian to attain his true end of happiness with God in eternity, and charity is the guiding standard by which we must pattern our lives. Charity can be a purely natural virtue concerning love of man for man and the means of perfection of man's nature. Today, aided by faith and hope, charity indeed is such a trait.

For the ancient Roman, the idea of Christian love as such was, of course, unknown. But he did understand that there is a true natural end for man, and the attainment of such an end, as we have seen, he called virtue. Man must be perfected as a true man. This was the Roman's underlying spirit and goal—the perfect man.

This idea then leads to the basic hypothesis of this thesis: for the Roman the true man of virtue was he who possessed the virtue or trait of _Humanitas_, a condition based on the fulfillment of and the perfection of the true nature of man as man.

Even the ancients realized that a real man was more than just a creature possessing a human body. Cicero says:

(Rosc. Am. 22) Esse aliquem humana specie et figura, qui tantum immanitate bestias vicerit..

There is a deeper quality of manliness which arises from the inner worth and value of true humanity. Cicero tells us that:

(Ibid. 16) natura certe dedit, ut humanitatis non parum haberes.
Thus we can see how this *humanitas* derives from nature. *Humanitas* also gives rise to a quality similar to what we consider charity in a man. We see our perfection in Christian love; the Roman saw it in *humanitas*. This quality arises from human nature itself.

*Ex hac humanitate communi oritur illa virtus, quae et ipsa humanitas dicitur, qua benigni sumus, comes, et faciles in eos, quibuscum agimus.*

_Humanitas_ is close to kinship:

*(Ibid. 22)* _Magna est vis humanitatis, multum valet communio sanguinis, natura ipsa._

It recognizes the nearness of human kind and of human nature itself as seen in the following passage from Terence:

*(Ht. 77)* _homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto._

_Humanitas_ recognizes order in human nature. Note how Cicero states:

*(Off. i. 40)* _ea, quae multum ab humanitate discrepant, ut si quis in toto cantet, aut si qua est alia magna per-versitas, facile apparent._

This idea of order for the ancient mind is very prominent. Nature is orderly and any disruption of this order is evil. Note, for example, that Plato considers beauty as order in nature, in the universe. With such a comparison, we can now better appreciate Cicero's idea of *humanitas* and the order in human nature and the emphasis so placed on the importance of this quality.

_Humanitas_ itself is difficult to define although Forcellini defines it as follows:

*Sumitur pro illo affectu, qui proprie hominis est erga hominem, et Graece ἀληθεία appellatur, quem-admodum civilitas erga cives est. Potest autem definiri,*
necessitudo quaedam nobiscum simul genita, per universum
diffusa genus humanum, qua vicissim se hominis tuentur,
opemque ferunt, hoc duntaxat nomine, quod homines sunt,
cademque corporis forma, eodem rationes lumine praediti.

But since the word itself has no true English equivalent, perhaps the
best way to understand it is to study the effects of it. In general, it
seems that a man possessing humanitas would approach our idea of a true
gentleman. Seneca says that

(ep. 88) Humanitas vetat superbum esse adversus socios,
vetat avarum: verbis, rebus, affectibus comen se,
facilemque omnibus praestat: nllum alienum malum putat,
obnum, autem suum id maxime, quid alicui bono futurum
est, amat.

The first clause in his statement emphasizes the kindness shown by a
gentleman. Pride, the source of most sin, is shunned by the gentleman.
Humanitas does not allow one to reject another. One accepts the equality
of all men and acts with kindness toward all. Cicero emphasizes the
aspect of suffering sympathetically with others:

(Att. 12. 44) Hirtium aliquid ad te ὁ-υκτιαιδος,
de me scripisse, facile patior: fecit enim humane.

This idea is further emphasized in Cicero's letter to Quintus in which
he writes:

(31) Obscravit per fratris sui mortui cinerem, per
nomen propinquitatis etc, ut aliquando misericordiam
caperet aliquam, si non propinquitates, at aetatis suae:
si non hominis, at humanitas rationem haberet.

Thus men show compassion simply on the basis of their humanitas, if for
no other reason. Such kindness, as was mentioned by Seneca, leads to the
quality of facilitas. Cicero shows this relationship a number of times,
e.g.:

(Fam. xiii 13. 24. 2) pro tua facilitate et humanitate.
Facilitas in these connotations then seems to mean the quality of being easily approached. This is an integral part of kindness, for one feels free to tell his cares, joys, or worries to another who is kind and understanding and who keeps confidences.

A man possessing humanitas also possesses the qualities of refinement, pleasantness, correct modes of acting. Such qualities can be seen from the following quotes:

(Cic. Att. 16. 16) singularis humanitas suavissimique mores.

(Ibid. 15. 1) amorem erga me, humanitatem suavitatemque desidero.

(Cic. Sen. 17) Ceteris in rebus comem erga Lysandrem atque humanum fuisse.

(Ter. Andr. 1. 1. 87) humani ingenii, mansuetique animi officia.

Forcellini adds the following qualities:

Interdum de illa cultura animi dicitur quae ad urbanitatem, et decentiam, et civilitatem pertinet.12

Decentia expresses here the idea of timeliness: the choice of the correct situation for certain acts, speech, listening. This is also a part of human sensitiveness, which is the cultivation of a true gentleman. He also possesses civility, i.e., courtesy and politeness. But this can also mean cultivation, a man of good breeding, of civilisation. This is intimately connected to the virtue of urbanitas. The urbane man knows the proper mores of dress, speech, conduct, etc., whereas the man not possessing this quality is uncultured and uneducated in such matters.

From Cicero's statement:
(Att. 1. 2) Sin aliter accederit, humaniter feremus, he. aequo animo, honeste, decenter, convenienter, naturae humanae

and from clarification by Forcellini, we see the idea of a balanced disposition. Such a person would be well composed and possess a certain tranquility of manner.

Furthermore, humanitas implies a certain amount of restraint and control. Note how in the following passage from Terence humanitas implies a more reasonable and composed mode of action:

(Hc. 553) si modeste ac raro decet, nonne ea dissimulare nos magis humanumst quam dare operam id scire, qui nos oderit?

In another play this idea is expressed in a slightly different connotation, as here the father considers his action rather rash and having little understanding and clemency.

(Ht. 100) ubi rem rescivi, coepi non humanitus neque ut animum decuit aegrotum adulescentuli tractare, sed vi et via pervolgata patrum.

But lest we feel that humanitas assumes a somber and completely restraining quality, we must realize that humanitas, as derived from the nature of man, also implies a lightheartedness and joyfulness. Cicero says:

(fil. ap Cit. Fam. 16 21) humanissime nobiscum jocatur.

He further carries this idea in opposition to excessive mourning and lamentation after the death of a loved one. Note how he says such action is contrary to humanitas:
(Tusc. iii. 27) Haec omnia recta, vera, debita putantes faciunt in dolore, maximeque declarat hoc quasi officii indicio fieri, quod, si qui forte, cum se in luctu esse vellent, aliquid fecerunt humanius aut si hilarius locuti sunt, revocant se rursus ad maestitiam peccatique se insimulant, quod dolere intermiserint.

So far I have dealt with the idea of humanitas as coming from nature; but this quality also results from education and deliberate training.

Et quia ad hanc virtutem praecipue facit animi cultura, litterarum studiis acquisita, ideo ea ipsa studia et eruditio humanitas appellatur, Cicero equates the terms many times as in referring to

(Div. i. 1) Gens humana atque docta.

But in the Verrine Orations he states his idea quite clearly.

(ii. 4. 44) Tu videlicet solus Corinthiis delectaris? Tu illius aeris temperationem, tu operum lineamenta solertissime perspicis? Haec Scipio ille non intelligebat, homo doctissimus atque humanissimus? Tu sine ulla bona arte, sine humanitate; sine ingenio, sine litteris intelligentis et judicas?

He likewise shows how through training certain aspects of humanitas as peractiveness can be developed:

(Ibid. 5. 28) Syracusani, hominis periti et humani, qui non modo ea, quae perspicia sunt, videre, verum etiam occulta suspicari possunt.

In ancient Rome, the embodiment of the truly educated man was found in the orator. Humanitas directed a man to study oratory as Cicero said:

(Or. i. 8. 32) age vero, quid esse potest in otio aut jucundius aut magis proprium humanitas quam sermo facetus ac nulla in re rudis?

The true orator is described:

(Ibid. 60) in omni recto studio atque humanitate versari.
And again:

(Ibid. 16. 71) in omni genere sermonis, in omni parte humanitatis dixerim oratorem perfectum esse debere.

Thus we have seen the two sources of humanitas and the qualities which it encompasses. But what are the general effects of it upon others?

Forcelli tells us,

**Humanitas** in his saepissime significat in universum eam virtutem, qua favorem gratiam aliorum ita comparare valemus, ut felices se nostra consuetudine praedicent, ut ea non sine magna carere posse videantur.15

And Pliny says:

(ep. 9. 5.) humanitas praecipua pars est, honestissimum quemque complecti, atque ita a minoribus amari, ut simul a principibus diligi.

The general power or influence of it can also be clearly understood when Cicero says:

(Man. 14) Humanitate tanta est, ut difficile dictu sit, utrum hostes magis virtutem ejus pugnantis timuerint, an mansuetudinem victi dilexerint.

And Seneca tells us how:

(ep. 65) hominis quidem pereunt; ipsa humanitas, ad quem homo effingitur, permanet.

Thus humanitas itself, just as virtue, is indeed a lasting quality.

Thus far we have come to grasp a better idea of virtue and of humanitas. And humanitas as seen, seems to encompass all other virtues. Since a study of all the virtues and their relationships and places in humanitas is impossible for this thesis, I chose to study in detail sapientia, pietas, gravitas, and temperantia as characteristic examples of Roman
virtues. It is hoped that the reader will also conclude from these examples that humanitas is the transcendental virtue.

3 Egidio Forcellini, Thesaurus Linguae Latinae (London: Black and Armstrong, 1839)
4 Ibid.
5 Fagothey, 198.
6 Baldwin, 764.
7 Fagothey, 199.
8 Forcellini

10 Ibid.
11 Forcellini
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
II. SAPIENTIA

The first of the virtues which will be studied in more detail is the virtue of wisdom as expressed in the Latin words *sapientia*, *prudentia* and *providentia*. Cicero tells us:

(Off. iii. 3) *Atque illud quidem honestum, quod propri vereque dicitur, id in sapientibus est solis neque a virtute divelli umquam potest; in iis autem, in quibus sapientia perfecta non est, ipsum illud quidem perfectum honestum nullo modo, similitudines honesti esse possunt.*

Thus we see the intimate connection between wisdom and moral goodness. Seneca tells us that this connection can be noted by watching the constancy of one's actions; for to the question, "What is wisdom?" he replies:

(ep. 20) *Semper idem velle, atque idem nolle: licet illam exceptiunculam non adjicias, ut rectum sit quod velis: non potest cuiquam semper idem placere, nisi rectum:*

*But the importance of wisdom not only comes from its intimate bond with moral goodness, but wisdom is also the highest of all virtues. First of all, the pursuit of wisdom is such that it is peculiar to man alone.*

(Cic. Off. i. 5. 13) *In primisque (sapientibus) hominis est propria veri inquisitio atque investigatio. Tum avemus aliquid videre, audire, addiscere cognitionemque rerum aut occultarum aut admirabilium ad beate vivendum necessariam ducimus. Ex quo intellegitur, quod verum, simplex sincerumque sit, id esse naturae hominis aptissimum.*

Cicero also tells us that it is the highest of all virtues:

(Off. 43) *Princeps omnium virtutum est illa sapientia, quam οὐδεὶς vocant;...Illa autem sapientia, quam*
principem dixi, rerum est, divinarum atque humanarum scientia in qua contineatur Deorum et hominum communitas et societas inter ipsos.

Cicero's idea in this passage is also quite significant in that we see that the ancient peoples also felt that our intellect not only makes us more one with the human family, but also gives us a share in the Divine.

The concept of wisdom being directed toward knowledge of both human and divine matters was the definition the ancient philosophers gave to sapientia. Both Cicero and Seneca confirm quite well the definition of philosophy as held today:

(Cic. Leg. i. 22. 58) ita fit, ut mater omnium bonarum rerum sit sapientia, a cujus amore Graeco verbo philosophia nomen invenit.

(Sen. ep. 89) Dicam, inter sapientiam et philosophiam quid intersit; sapientia perfectum bonum est mentis humane; philosophia sapientiae amor est, et affectatio.

Thus we see sapientia as related to philosophical and moral wisdom.

But what were the other characteristics of true wisdom?

In the realm of wisdom taken as common sense, Cicero gives us two rather important insights; these follow our idea of the intellectually educated mind:

(Cic. Off. i. 5) Qui maxime perspicit, quid in quaque rerum verissimum sit; quique acutissime et celerime potest videre et explicare rationem, is prudentissimus et sapientissimus rite haberi solet.

(Cluent. 31) Sapientissimum esse dicunt eum, cui quod opus sit ipsi, veniat in mentem; proxime accedere illum, qui alterius bene inventis obtaperet
Sapientia, understood as common sense, can be seen many times in the ancient authors. The following from Cicero is quite characteristic of this connotation:

(Fam. 11. 7) Teque hortor, ut omnia gubernes et moderere prudentia tua, ne te auferant aliorum consilia. Nemo est, qui tibi sapientius suadere possit te ipso.

Sometimes sapientia has the connotation of reasonableness, as when Cicero writes to Atticus:

(8. 12) Nihil praetermissum est, quod non habeat sapientem excusationem, modo probabilem.

And then, of course, we have the lasting epigram from Terence,

(P. 541) Dictum sapienti sat est.

This common sense idea is seen also in action—a wise action is not based on mere chance:

(Cic. Marcell. 2) nunquam tementis cum sapientia commiscetur, nec ad consilium casus admittitur.

Nor was it done rashly:

(Cic. Fam. i. 7) Si cecidisset, ut volumus, omnes te, et sapienter et fortiter; sin aliquid esset offensum, eosdem illos, et cupidè et temere fecisse dicturos.

But one acts with consideration and after careful thought:

(Cic. Phil. 4. 2) Non solum id animose et fortiter, sed considerate etiam sapienterque fecerunt.

A wise man does not resort to brutal force to clear up difficulties as the first recourse to solving a problem:

(Ter. E. 789) omnia prius experiri quam armis sapientem decet.
But in practical ways a wise man does use his wisdom to secure good returns:

(Pl. Poen. 1. 1. 1.) saepe res multas tibi mandave dubias, egenas, inopiosas consiliis, quas tu sapienter, docte, et cordate, et cate mihi reddedisti opiparas opera tua.

And finally, sapientia means wisdom or knowledge in a certain field, as in medicine or law, as the following points out:

(Cic. Or. ii. 33) istam oscitantem et dormitantem sapientiam, Scævolarum et cererorum beatorum otio concedamus. (juris prudentiam)

The second word used by the Roman to connote wisdom was prudentia.

Sapientia, as most often used, seems to be concerned with philosophical wisdom, whereas prudentia seems to be concerned more with the practical wisdom, or the wisdom we usually associate with the expression "a wise man," e.g.:

(Cic. fragm. ap. Non. 1. 198) id enim est sapientis providere; ex quo sapientia appellata est prudentia.

Also, the three parts of prudentia are

(Cic. Inv. ii. 53) memoria, intellegentia, providentia. Memoria est per quam animus repetit illa quae ferunt; intellegentia, per quam ea perspicet quae sunt; providentia, per quam futurum aliquum videtur ante quam factum est.

In these aspects, the two words sapientia and prudentia are practically interchangable. Thus in the De Finibus, Cicero says:

(i. 13. 42) sapientia, quae ars vivendi putanda est,

but later on says,

(i. 5. 6) ut medicina valetudinis navigationis gubernatio, sic vivendi ars est prudentia.

Likewise, we can see this with respect to wisdom as the mother of all other arts:
And a third comparison deals with the problem of the knowledge of good and evil concerning which providentia is similar to sapientia except that it takes on a more practical aspect. Cicero tells us that providentia

(Off. i. 43) quam Graeci providentia est

And yet he says,

(Inv. ii. 53) Prudentia est rerum bonarum et malorum neutrurnque scientia,

and substantiates this by saying,

(N. D. iii. 23) Prudentia constat ex scientia rerum bonarum et malarum, et nec bonarum nec malarum.

Likewise, as sapientia,

(Cic. Fin. iv. 23) prudentia cernitur in delectu bonorum et malorum.

Some other characteristics of prudentia should also be added. Note how the following adds a more practical aspect:

(Sall. Cat. 8) Prudentissimus quisque negotiosus maxime erat.

Likewise to the teacher we note:

(Cic. Part 8) facillime auditor discit, et quid agatur intellegit, si definias, si dividias, si neque prudentiam ejus impedias confusione partum, nec memoriam multitudine.

But the orator is warned:

(Cic. Or. 7) semper oratorum eloquentiae moderatrix fuit auditorum prudentia.
Prudentia, as peculiar to other endeavors, sometimes has other names. Note the following:

(Cic. Amic. 2) Quis prudens esse in jure civili putabatur?

(Cic. Part. 22) Prudentia in suis rebus, domestica; in publicis, civilis appellari solet.

And finally, prudentia connotes skill and foresight in re militari:

(Nep. Con. 1) prudens rei militaris

Now let us turn to providentia, one of the three parts of prudentia. Very simply, providentia is equivalent to our understanding of foresight. Although there are many good sources, in Latin literature, the following three quotes seem to state the idea clearly enough. The first shows the quality of good counsel:

(Cic. Mur. 2) Est boni consulis, non solum videre quid agatur, verum etiam providere, quid futurum sit.

The second shows how foresight plays an important role in many professions:

(Cic. Div. ii. 6) Medicus morbum ingravescintim ratione providet, insidias imperator, tempestatem gubernator.

And the third shows the result of a lack of foresight:

(Cic. Rosc. Am. 40) Illi homines honestissimis propter istius insidias parum putantur cauti providiqueuisse.

An interesting footnote to providentia concerns the fact that the Romans attributed this quality to the gods, which parallel our idea of Divine Providence. In fact, Cicero uses the exact phrase along with the connotation of providentia meaning wisely or with foresight when he says,
(N. D. iii. 40) Investus es in eam Stoicorum rationem, quae de providentia Deorum ab illis sanctissime et providentissime constituta est.

Just as *humanitas*, wisdom has two general sources. The first is closely connected with learning or education as seen, for example, in Plautus who says:

(Epid. 3. 3. 23) Docte et sapienter,

or as seen in the ideal orator:

(Cic. Part. 5) orator prudens et providens.

Secondly, wisdom is from nature and is uniquely the quality of a man, for:

(Cic. Leg. i. 7) animal hoc providum, sagax, multiplex, actum, memor, plenum rationis et consilii, quem vocamus hominem.

And finally:

(Cic. Sen. 6) temeritas est videlicet florentis aetatis, prudentia senescentis.

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16 Cic. Off. ii. 2. 5.
III. PIETAS

The second virtue which will be studied is the virtue of piety as understood by the ancient Roman. Piety is found in the order of justice:

(Cic. Top. 33.) aequitas tripartita dicetur esse; una ad superos deos, altera ad manes, tertia ad homines pertinere. Prima pietas, secunda sanctitas, tertia justitia aut aequitas nominatur.

We see that pietas first of all is understood as an essential part of man's relationship to the gods:

(Ibid. 23) aequitas tripartita dicitur esse: una ad superos deos, altera ad manes, tertia ad homines pertinere. Prima pietas, secunda sanctitas, tertia justitia, aut aequitas nominatur.

Hence pietas involves dutiful conduct or rendering due justice, combined with reverence and respect. Cicero reaffirms this idea by saying:

(N. D. i. 41. 115) est enim pietas justitia adversus deos.

Note also the intimate relationship of piety to religion itself:

(Ibid. 2. 2.) quae potest esse pietas? quae sanctitas? quae religio? haec enim omnia pure, ac caste tribuenda deorum numini sunt.

(Cic. Off. ii. 3) deos placatos pietas efficiet et sanctitas.

Lucretius, however, is very careful to define what piety is not:

(v. 1198) nec pietas ullast velatum saepe videri veriter ad lapidem atque omnis accedere ad aras nec procumbere humi prostratum et pandere palmas ante deum dalubra nec aras sanguine multo spargere quadrupedem nec votis nectere vota, sed mage pacata posse omnis mente tueri.
Finally in this connotation, let us notice one of the values of having pietas:

(Pl. Rud. prol. 26) Facilius, si quis pius est, a Diis supplicans, quam qui scelestus est, inveniet veniam sibi.

It is interesting to note that there was a temple dedicated to Pietas at Rome. Cicero tells us that the Law of the Twelve Tables demanded that they shall worship

(Leg. ii. 8. 19) propter quae datur homini ascensus in caelum, Mentum, Virtutem, Pietatem, Fidem, earumque laudem delubra sunt, ne uncula vitiorum.

Furthermore, these laws command:

(Ibid.) ad divos adeunto caste, pietatem adhibento, opes amovento. Qui secus faxit, deus ipse vendex erit.

And again, although with the additional emphasis on the relation of virtue, including pietas, to man’s life, they declare:

(Ibid. 2. 11) bene vero, quod Mens, Pietas, Virtus, Fides consecratur manu; quorum omnium Romae dedicata publice templi sunt ut, illa qui habeant (habent autem omnes boni) deos ipsos in animis suis conlocatos putent.

But the gods must also hold mankind and his humanitas in reverence.

Note how Aeneas calls out:

(Verg. A. ii. 535) At tibi pro scelere, exclamat, pro talibus ausis
di, si qua est caelo pietas quae talia curet, persolvant gratis dignas, et praemia reddant debit.

(Ibid. v. 687) Juppiter omnipotens, si nondum exosus ad unum
Troianos, si quid pietas antiqua labores respicit humanos, da flammam evadere classi.
Pietas is also applied to parents, relatives and one's fatherland:

(Cic. Somn. Scip 3) justitiam cole, et pietatem, quae cum sit magne in parentibus et propinquis, tum in patria maxima est.

In fact, although Cicero seems to contradict himself with respect to his previous statement, he even says that

(Part. 22) justitia erga Deos religio, erga parentes pietas nominatur.

But this should be no real problem, for in all respects, pietas involves reverence and respectful fulfillment of duty. One of the best definitions given directly by Cicero is the following:

(Inv. ii. 22) pietas, quae erga patriam, aut parentes, aut alios sanguine conjunctos officium conservare monet.

Let us look at each of these aspects separately. With respect to parents then, Cicero asks:

(Planc. 33) Quid est pietas, nisi voluntas grata in parentes?

Once in writing to Atticus, Cicero is outraged that

(13. 39) ad patrem domo sibi carendum propter malum, for "ad matrem plena pietatis."

Pamphilus, in Terence's "Hecyra," brings out some interesting aspects and predicaments, for, as he says:

(301) Non matris ferre inuiuras me, Parmeno, pietas jubet.

(481) Nunc me pietas matris commodum suadet sequi.

A further very noteworthy aspect is the fact that pietas toward a mother should be stronger than love for a sweetheart:
(447) quod potero faciam, tamen ut pietatem colam; nam me parenti potius quam amori absequi oportet.

Furthermore, note the terrible effects and degradation incurred by one who commits patricide:

(Cic. Rosc. Am. 13) si (id quod praecclare a sapientibus dicitur) vultu saepe laeditur pietas, quod supplicium satis acre reperietur in eum, qui mortem abtulerit parenti?

And yet pietas does have its place in the relationship between a husband and wife. Note Ovid's wife's supposed words upon his departure from Rome:

(Tris.) Te jubet a patria discedere Caesaris ira, me pietas; pietas haec mihi Caesar erit.

Plautus also acknowledges this fact:

(Amph. 5. 1. 33) At ago faciam, piam et pudicam esse tuam uxorem ut scias.

And finally, it is interesting to note that a proper burial is a sign of pietas toward loved ones:

The formula Pietatis Cavas or Ex piate in epitaphs, denotes that the heir raised the monument to the deceased, not because, compelled by the latter's last will, but out of affection and respect.17

Although pietas toward parents is very necessary, note that:

(Cic. Rep. vi. 5. 15) justitiam cole et pietatem, quae cum sit magna in parentibus et propinquis, tum in patria maxima est.

This brings out quite well the patriotism of the ancient Roman. The family was very important for him, but the well-being of the state was of the utmost importance. But note how the state in turn depended on good family relationships:
(Cic. Off. iii. 23) ipsi patriae conducit pios habere civis in parentes.

Likewise pietas also means simply true devotion to duty itself and to one's state in life:

(Cic. Fam. i. 1) egi omni officio, ac potius pietate erga te ceteris satisfacio omnibus.

Pietas, then, is held in high respect.

(Cic. Or. ii. 40) Si pietati summi tribuendi laus est, debitis moveri, cum Q. Metellum tam pie lugere videatis.

With respect to the idea of humanitas, we see the two ideas placed side by side:

(Cic. Fam. ii. 27) alia, sunt, quae defendam a te pie fieri, et humane, ut de curatione ludorum.

Although it seems to be greater than simply good will:

(Cic. Fam. i. 9) te perspicere meam in te pietatem; quid enim dicam benevolentiam, cum illud ipsum suavissimum et sanctissimum nomen pietatis levius mihi meritis erga me tuis videatur?

we also see how pietas can mean kindness, clemency, gentleness:

(Suet. Dom. ii) permitte Patres Conscripti a pietate vestra impetrari, ut damnatis liberum mortis arbitrium indulgeatis.

Thus we have seen how pietas as an example in the realm of justice shows us that a man having humanitas also has piety. The perfect man would have respect and consideration for all men, especially his family, and would have a sense of duty toward his country and his state of life; all these qualities are contained in the virtue of pietas.

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IV. GRAVITAS

Even such a limited study of Roman virtues as this could not be complete without considering that peculiarly and eminently Roman virtue of *gravitas*. Gravitas comes from the word *gravis* meaning heavy or weighty and thus, although it is actually untranslatable because of its unique Roman character, comes to mean dignity, constancy, severity, influence, weightiness. This virtue characterized the sober, practical, and conservative Roman. It was concerned with, or perhaps derived from, the great tradition of the destiny of Rome and the responsibility and faithfulness that must be shown to perpetuate this Roman might and influence. Like *pietas*, it also connotes devotion to duty. But now let us see what the Roman himself understood concerning this virtue.

First of all, let us note that *gravitas* is considered in the realm of virtue. This is easily seen in the following passages from Cicero:

(Q. Fr. 3. 8) *adhibere virtutem et gravitatem in dolore.*

(ibid.) *de virtute et gravitate Caesaris, quam in summo dolore adhibuisset.*

It is well to note how in both cases Cicero used *gravitas* to denote a certain constance and control shown in times of sorrow. This idea is further brought out in another letter:

(Fam. 5. 16) *non est gravitatis ac sapientiae tuae, ferre immoderatius casum incommodorum tuorum...Tuenda tibi est gravitas, et constantiae serviendum.*
Similarly it also connotes calm restrained actions—the opposite of rash and uncontrolled action:

(Cic. Alue. 616) tulit hoc commune dedecus familiae, cognitionis, nomines graviter filius....statuit tamen nihil sibi in tantis iniuris ac tanto scelere matris gravius esse faciendum, quam et illa matre ne uteretur.

Such restraint to the Roman mind naturally led to dignity. Note that speech characterized by swift and impetuous movement has no dignity for an old man:

(Cic. Brut. 95) haec genera dicendi aptiora sunt adulescentibus in senibus gravitatem non habent.

Gravitas also connotes the dignity that is opposed to complacency:

(Cic. Att. 9. 9) praecclare admones, ne nimis indulgenter, et ut cum gravitate potuis loquar.

Thus gravitas came also to mean influence and authority. Note the close connection when Cicero says,

(Or. ii. 37) Homo auctoritate gravis,

and

(Cic. Fam. ii. 2) Gravis testis, cujus dicta pondus habent auctoritatis et fidei.

Likewise note the power of this weightiness:

(Pl. Trin. 2. 2. 107) gravius erit tuum unum verbum ad eam rem, quam centum mea.

As a final example of this idea, let us study the following from Vergil's Aeneid:

(i. 148) Ac veluti magno in populo cum saepe coorta est seditio, saevitque animis ignobile vulgus, jamque faces et saxa volant (furor arma ministrat),
tam pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem conspexere, silent arrectisque auribus astant
(ille regit dictis animos et pectora mulcet).

Note how Vergil emphasizes the influence of one who is "gravis pietate!"
Cicero further emphasizes this with reference to its value to the state:

(Or. i. 9. 38) home prudens et gravis haudquaquam eloquens, 
et saepe, alias, et maxime censor, saluti rei publicae fuit.

In the following passages we also see gravitas as meaning authority through skill:

(Cic. Quint. xii. 1. 36) gravissimi sapientiae magistri
(Cic. Pis. 6) gravis auctor in medicina.

Gravitas was also used many times with reference to war. For example, note the importance of it as indicated in the following passage from Caesar:

(B. G. iv. 3) hos cum Suevi, multis saepe bellis experti, 
propter amplitudinem gravitatemque civitates, finibus expellere non potuisset.

And finally we see this virtue meaning influence and might as applied to the state itself, as when Cicero says:

(Agr. 2. 32) Gravitatem imperii ac nomen sustinet.

Sometimes, gravitas also meant firmness or severity:

(Cic. Lael. 25. 96) tristia et in omni re severitas habet illa quidem gravitatem.

(Cic. Rosc. Com. 2) quod apud omnes leve et infirmum est, 
id apud judicem grave et sanctum esse ducetur,

(Cic. Caec. 3) gravitas judiciorum.

But the connotation was not necessarily bad, but rather good in the practical and sober Roman mind. Thus with respect to the state, gravitas
means the grave or weighty matters of public life.


With respect to oratory, Cicero constantly refers to the place of gravitas. Note his praise of this virtue when he says:

(Amic. 25) Quanta illa, Dii immortales fuit gravitas! quanta in oratione majestas?

Likewise he well defines the necessity of gravitas in speaking.

(Or. ii. 56) Sed, cum omnium sit venustissimus et urbanissimus, omnium gravissimum et severissimum et esse, .... ne quid jocus de gravitate decerperet.

and

(ibid. 17) Sententiarum gravitate, verborum ponderibus est utendum.

In the *De Senectute* (4) Cicero gives us quite a lengthy example of Q. Maximus as a man in whom there was comitate condita gravitas.

Nec senectus mores mutaverat. Fabius made speeches in favor of the Cincian law which prohibited lawyers from accepting fees from clients and the rich from receiving gifts from the poor for services. He waged war like a youth, Cicero tells us, and by his patient endurance checked the impetuosity of Hannibal. Of him Cicer quotes Ennius as saying,

unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem: non enim rumores ponebat ante salutem; ergo postque magisque vire nunc gloria claret.

Furthermore,

C. Flaminio trubuno plebis, quoad potuit, resistit agrum Picentem et Gallicum veritum contra senatus auctoritatem
Cicero tells us that he bore the death of his son admirably. But he was great not only in public, but also in his home life.

 Qui sermo, quae praecepta! Quanta notitia antiquitatis, scientia juris auguri! Multae etiam, ut in homine Romano litterae: omnia memoria tenebat non demestica solum, sed etiam externa bella.

By studying these aspects of Fabius' character, it is clear to observe his patriotism, devotion to duty, learnedness, and conservatism that made him the man "gravis conditus comitate."

At this time, it is well to realize that although gravitas is a virtue and thus a part of humanitas, still the fact remains that gravitas is also separate and somewhat contrary to humanitas. Note how Cicero says,

(Nur. 3. 6) Ego has partis linitatis et misericordiae quas me natura ipsa docuit semper egi libenter illam vero gravitatis severitatisque personam non appetivi.

Likewise note the following:

(Nep. Attic. 25) ejus comitas non sine severitate erat, neque gravitas sine facilitate.

This quote clearly shows how gravitas is somewhat contrary to facilitas, one of the important parts of humanitas. Likewise, note how this serious quality is contrary to the open expression of grief, if so felt, as was seen in our study of humanitas itself. Thus even though the influence, dignity and controlled thoughtful action necessary for humanitas are indeed manifest in gravitas, all of which traits help a man become
virtuous, still the two concepts are not completely compatible.

An excellent example of the above is seen in the life of Aeneas in the Aeneid. Pius Aeneas is a very human man. He grieves at the ruined Troy, the loss of his wife; he is downcast and afraid during the stormy voyage. After some time at Carthage he falls in love with Dido and in his heart wished to remain there. But at each step of his fateful mission, he is forced on by oppressive Fate, which drives him on and on to found the Eternal City and powerful race of Romans. His humanitas rebels, but yet the gravitas of his destiny dominant; he must continue on.

To conclude this study of gravitas, let us study what Moses Hades says concerning this virtue. Notice especially the stiff and formal character of gravitas as is shown in some concrete examples.

We translate the word as "dignity," but what it really meant was weightiness. It was this weighty quality, sober, monumental and enduring, which marked the personality of the Roman, his system of government and, indeed, all things Roman. Enduring strength rather than delicacy, power rather than agility, mass rather than beauty, utility rather than grace--these are the hallmarks of Rome. Fact rather than imagination dominates its art; its portraiture is mercilessly realistic, its carved reliefs a solemn record of history. Strength clothed in dignity was the Roman ideal. Swathed in his toga, a well-born Roman never gave the impression of being in a hurry. Always he seemed to be on parade, always conscious of his audience, real or spectral. In thrall to the past, he constantly reminded himself of the eminent forebears whom it was his duty to emulate in every waking action. 18

The last virtue which will be studied in this thesis is the virtue of temperance. As Cicero states, this same idea is expressed in several Latin words:

(Tusc. iii. 8. 16) temperans, quem Graeci \( \sigma \omega \phi \rho \omicron \omicron \nu \) appellant, eamque virtutem \( \sigma \omega \phi \rho \omicron \sigma \nu \nu \nu \) vocant, quam soleo equidem tum temperantiam, tum moderationem appellare, nonnunquam etiam modestiam.

And yet in the De Inv. he seems to define the three parts of temperance, one of which is \textit{modestia}, as each having its own domain:

(ii. 54. 164) temperantia est rationis in libidinem, atque in alios non rectus animi impetus firma et moderata dominatio. Ejus partis sunt continentia, clementia, modestia. Continentia est per quam cupiditas consili gubernatione regitur; clementia, per quam animi temere in odium alicuius inferioris concitati comitate retinentur; modestia, per quam pudor honesti curam et stabilem comparat auctoritatem.

But, in general, these ideas are quite similar, and as Cicero says, are all part of one certain sphere of virtue.

(Off. iii. 33. 116) Restat quarta pars, quae decore, moderatione, modestia, continentia, temperantia continetur.

Temperance, in general, means self-restraint, control, moderation in all parts of our lives and should be a part of our nature.

(Cic. Tusc. v. 14) Temperantia est moderatrix omnium commotionum.

(Cic. Fam. i. 9. 22) Novi enim temperantiam et moderationem naturae tueae.
This virtue is often seen with respect to the intellect. Note the connection between it and wisdom:

(Cic. Off. ii. 5) uti iis, quibuscum congregamur, moderate, est scienter.

(Cic. Leg. iii. 5) quae res cum sapientissime moderatissimeque constituta esset.

In fact, reason is the basis of temperance.

(Cic. Fin. i. 14) Temperantia est, quae in rebus aut expetendis, aut fugiendis, ut rationem sequamur, monet.

And with respect to the soul or spirit, temperance is the health of the soul.

(Cic. Tusc. iv. 13) Est enim corporis temperatio, cum ea congruent iter se, e quibus constamus, sanitas: sic animi dicitur, cum ejus judicia opinionesque concordant: eaque animi est virtus, quam alii ipsam temperantium dicunt esse, alii obtemperantem temperantiae praeceptis.

But the realm of temperance is more properly that of controlling the emotions, desires, and actions.

(Cic. Part. Or. 22) Quae vero moderandis cupiditatibus regendisque animi motibus laudatur, eius munus in agendo: cui temperantiae nomen est.

(Cic. Off, i. 5. 17) Ordo autem et constantia et moderatio et ea, quae sunt his similia, versatur in eo genere, ad quod est adhibenda actio quaedam, non solum mentis agitatio. Iis enim rebus, quae tractantur in vita, modum quendam et ordinem adhibentes honestatem et decus conservabimus.

In one's own private life, temperance is often referred to with respect to eating:

(Cels. 3. 18) moderationem in cibo adhibere.

But even more often, it is applied to the control of pleasures.

(Cic. Off. i. 39) Multi villarum magni eicentiam imitati sunt: quarum quidem certe adhibendus est modus, ad
mediocritatemque revocandus. Eadem mediocritas ad omnem usum cultumque vitae transferenda est.

(Cic. Font. 17. 38) Homo sanctissimus ac temperantissimus multa audivit in sua causa, quae ad suspicionem stuprorum ac libidinum pertinere.

Temperance is evident not only in foregoing pleasures,

(Cic. N. D. iii. 15) temperantia constat ex praetermittendis voluptatibus,

but also in enjoying pleasurable things—but through control and moderation.

(Sen. ep. 18) Hoc multo fortius est, ebrio ac vomitante populo siccum ac sobrium esse; illud temperantius, non excipere se, hic indignari, nec misceri omnibus et eadem, sed non eodem modo, facere.

Such control of the body leads not only to virtue but, interestingly enough, to peaceful dreams and quiet surrender to sleep!

(Cic. Div. i. 29) Qui salubri et moderato cultu atque victu quieti se tradiderit.

In all the above instances and countless others, temperance is seem as the governor along the middle course between two extremes. It is the moderator of action just as the sun, as believed by the Roman, was the moderator of the heavenly bodies.

(Cic. Somn. Scip. 4) Sol dux et princeps, et moderator luminum reliquorum, mens mundi et temperatio.

The sun kept all in order and in their proper places and nature.

Temperantia also is referred to as a balance, as concerning the state.

(Cic. Leg. iii. 5) Haec est, quam maxime probat temperationem rei publicae: quae effici non potuisset, nisi tali descriptione magistratum.
Sometimes even the idea of organization is connoted:

(Cic. Tusc. iv. 1) de moribus institutisque majorum, et disciplina ac temperatione civitatis loqui.

Many times simply the idea of governing and moderating is seen.

(Cic. Phil. 5. 18) Caesar rempubl. sibi judicem constituit, et moderatricem omnium factorum.

(Cic. Q. Fr. i. 1. 13) Moderari animo et orationi, cum sis iratus...etsi non est perfectae sapientiae, tamen est non mediocris ingenii.

Such governing is not according to pleasure but according to duty and responsibility.

(Cic. Finn. ii. 25) Non voluptate, sed officio consilia moderari.

The idea of control is also prominent.

(Cic. N. D. iii. 39) Mens divina coelum versans, terram tuens, maria moderans.

Firmness, stability, and constance are also indicated.

(Cic. Par. iii. 1. 21) An temperantem eum dicis, qui se in aliqua libidine continuerit, in aliqua effuderit?


But all of these qualities should remind us of prudentia and providentia, and, indeed, the direct bond is very apparent in the writings of Cicero.

(Phil. 3. 11) Nihil apparet in eo ingenium, nihil moderatum, nihil pudens.

(Font. 18. 40) Frugi hominem, judices, et in omnibus vitae partibus moderatum ac temperantum, plenum pudoris, plenum officii, plenum religionis.

Sometimes temperance itself connotes prudence:
Likewise, temperantia has an intimate bond with gravitas:

(Cic. Phil. 7. 4) Retine constantiam, gravitatem, perseverantiam.

In fact, temperance serves to strengthen gravitas.

(Cic. Off. i. 31) Catoni cum incredibilem tribuisset natura gravitatem, eamque ipsam perpetua constantia roboravisset, semperque in proposito susceptoque consilio permansisset.

And once again, we find that the orator should fully possess this virtue.

(Cic. Or. ii. 53) Neque est ulla temperatior oratio, quam illa, in qua asperitas contentionis oratoris ipsius humanitate conditur.

Temperance must play a part in oratory:

(Cic. Agr. 2. 1) adhibere certam rationem moderationemque dicendi.

(Cic. Phil. 2. 5) Si meam cum in omni vita, tum in dicendo moderationem modestiamque cognostis.

And finally the orator in himself must be the true moderator of his oratory:

(Cic. Or. iii. 48) oratio sic est vere soluta, non ut fugiat tamen, aut erret, sed ut sine vinculis sibi ipsa moderetur.

Although a thorough study of the "Golden Mean" which is so characteristic of Greek and Roman thought cannot be included in this thesis, the concept must at least be recognized. Temperance is the virtue in this realm. Note how temperance denotes the middle way:

(Sall. Jug. 49) Metellum magnum et sapientem virumuisse compерior, tanta temperantia inter ambitionem saevitiamque moderatum.
(Cic. Off. i. 25) nunquam enim, iratus qui accedet ad poenam, mediocritatem illam tenebit, quae est inter nimium et parum.

Note how true temperance can even combine harshness with kindness in the proper proportion:

(Cic. Fam. xii. 27) est autem ita temperatis moderatisque moribus, ut summa severitas summa cum humanitate jungatur.

This moderation is almost always preferred, even in such things as perfumes:

(Cic. Or. iii. 25) Unguetes minus diu delectamus, summa et acerrima suavitate conditis, quam his moderatis.

But temperance is actually the moderator not only of deeds, but also the moderator of all other virtues as well.

(Cic. Inv. ii. 54. 165) Sic uni cuique virtuti finitimum vitium reperietur, aut certo jam nomine appellatum, ut audacia, quae fidentiae, pertinacia, quae perseverantiae finitima est, supersticio, quae religione propinqua est, aut sineullo certo nomine.

But we must be careful to distinguish the "Golden Mean" theory from pure mediocrity. They are not the same. The "Golden Mean" is a mean of excellence that arises above excess and defect. Perhaps the following diagram would serve to illustrate this more exactly.  

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           mean-virtue
          /         \
   defect       mediocrity
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excess
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Finally, we should note the role of temperance with humanitas. With this virtue, too, we again see the close connection.

(Planc ad Cic. Fam. 10. 24) Caesar moderatissimi atque humanissimi fuit sensus.

And, in fact, harshness and in temperance are contrary to humanitas:

(Cic. Mur. 291) accessit istuc doctrina non moderata, non mitis, sed paulo asperior et durior quam aut veritas aut natura patitur.

The combination of humanitas with temperantia produces a fine and virtuous person.

(Cic. Att. 4. 6) Vir bonus et magnus homo in summa magnitudine animi multa humanitate temperatus.

Thus after our study of temperantia, we can understand how

(Varr. ap. Non 1. 274) non eos optime vixisse, qui diutissime vixerint, sed qui modestissime.

And in concluding this chapter, let us note and emphasize the lofty idealism of Cicero as he states his beliefs concerning temperance. Truly this quality, combined with humanitas, as he so often stated, could be the true purpose of human existence in the mind of a typical Roman.

(Sen. 21) Sed credo deos immortalis sparisse animos in corpora humana, ut essent qui terras tuerentur quique caelestium ordinem contemplantis imitarentur eum vitae modo atque constantia.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have studied the idea of virtue itself and that to the Roman humanitas seemed to entail all parts of virtue. I have studied some particular parts of virtue and have shown how they are also characteristic of one possessing humanitas. All such conclusions have been derived from studying the texts of Cicero and other writers who lived before the time of Christ.

Some people today seem to conclude that the ideas of virtue and goodness originated in the Judo-Christian tradition. Ancient Rome is held as a rather virtueless state. But, as this thesis clearly shows, virtue played a very important role in the life of a Roman. The Roman was not a Christian, but his idea of virtue and goodness closely corresponded to the Christian ideas.

Finally, it is well to note that this thesis defines and demonstrates the ideal of virtue. The possession of humanitas for the Roman corresponds to saintliness for the Christian. Other than Our Lord such a man never existed, but the important thing is that the ideal did exist, the ancient Roman as the Christian today has a goal--to reach this goal is each man's own responsibility.
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