Greek writers from the fifth century onward collected a number of stories relating to an Assyrian king known to the Greeks as ‘Σαρδανάπαλ(λ)ος’. Over time the ‘historical Σαρδανάπαλ(λ)ος’ became so obscured by myth that the very existence of the original character became subjected to doubt. Although the historical origins of ‘Σαρδανάπαλ(λ)ος’ remain obscure, the literary tradition on this enigmatic figure from ancient Assyria thrived in antiquity. This note aims to explore the ramifications of ‘the tradition of the Sardanapalli’ in the work of Cicero.

Among all Greek and Roman accounts of Assyrian history, the three rulers Ninus, Semiramis and Sardanapallis appear to have held a continuous fascination for authors. Although originally having historical identities, in time these characters seem to have acquired legendary accretions that became intertwined in a series of not always consistent stories.¹ The case of Sardanapallis deserves special mention. According to some stories, Sardanapallis was an active hero; according to others, he spent his days in idleness, cushioned in luxury. This discrepancy in character apparently perpetuated speculation about the identity of Sardanapallis among ancient writers. Whether ancient treatment of this discrepancy is to be explained as Greek ‘rationalising’, resulting from an argument for the existence of two Sardanapalli, or whether the characteristics of two or more distinct personages over time became conflated, is still a matter for speculation, for there is still no reliable evidence to point to the existence of an Assyrian king named Sardanapallis other than the legendary ‘Σαρδανάπαλ(λ)ος’ found in the Greek literary tradition.

The earliest extant reference to the supposedly historical ‘Sardanapallis’ is found in the early fifth century writings of Hellanikos of Lesbos and

¹ The three stock chapters in Greek accounts of Assyrian history were: The story of Ninus, legendary founder of the Assyrian Empire and builder of Nineveh; the rise of Queen Semiramis to power; and the fabulous wealth, reputed effeminacy and self-immolation of Sardanapallis, legendary last king of Assyria.
Herodotus. According to the scholiast on Aristophanes’ *Aves* 1021, Hellanikos is said to have distinguished two Sardanapalli, both known as ‘king of the Persians’, a claim also said to have been made by Kallisthenes (c. 370-327 BC). Unfortunately, what both Hellanikos and Kallisthenes wrote is preserved at second hand in a few fragments and is in any case separated from the recorded events by several hundred years. The same is true of Berossos, a third century Babylonian priest who wrote a Babylonian history (the *Babiloniaca* c. 290 BC) in Greek, presumably to provide the Greeks with additional information about a Babylonian past that stretched back much further than the recorded Greek literary tradition.

Herodotus depicts ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ as a king in possession of enormous wealth and fabulous treasure. This ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’,

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2 Hdt. 2.150.9; Hellanikos: Schol. V Aristoph. Av. 1021: ὃ δὲ Ἐλλάνικος ἐν τοῖς Περσικοῖς δόσει Σαρδανάπαλλος γεγονέναι (Jacoby F 3c, 687a, F fragment 2a.2); Phot. Sud. s.v. Σαρδανάπαλλος ἐν β Περσικῶν δόσει γεγονέναι <Ἐλλάνικος, Ὀσιάτως δὲ καὶ> ... (Jacoby F 3c, 687a, F fragment 2b.2).

3 Contemporaries and later Greek historians did not generally distinguish between the Assyrian empire and its successors, the Babylonians and Medes. In the Greek historical tradition the Persian king Cyrus, for instance, is referred to as the ‘King of Assyria’ and Strabo was of the opinion that the customs of the Persians were like those of the Assyrians. When Assyria was conquered in 612 BC, the western part of the empire became Babylonian, while the eastern part, including the Assyrian heartland, became Median, later Persian, and eventually Greek. Only in Roman times a distinction between Assyria and Syria came into use, though they were still interchangeable in Strabo. Pliny the Elder prefers Assyria for Assyrian Empire, likewise Josephus, who uses Syria for both the Seleucid Empire and the Roman province of Syria. Cf. R.N. Frye, ‘Assyria and Syria: synonyms’, *JNES* 51.4 (1992) 281-85, and S. Parpola ‘Assyrians after Assyria’, *Nineveh On-Line* www.nineveh.com/ (1999) on the equation of Assyria and Syria in antiquity.

4 Kallisthenes, *Fragmenta* (Jacoby F2b, 124 F fr. 34.1).

5 Athenaeus c. 200, Photius c. 810-893.

6 Berossos made use of Babylonian historical traditions and chronicles, and gives a very different version of Babylonian history than the early fourth century account given by Ktesias in his *Persica*. The version of Berossos was probably intended to counterbalance the distortion of facts that one would expect to find in the version of, for instance, the tragic history of Duris (fl. 280 BC). Unfortunately the surviving fragments of Berossos printed in Jacoby’s *Fragemente der Griechischen Historiker* are not from the original work, but are quotes from later authors who borrowed from the lost work of Eusebius, who himself drew on Abydenus, who in turn drew on Alexander Polyhistor’s summary of the *Babiloniaca* (and he is thought to have read Berossos). Cf. G.P. Verbrugge & J.M. Wickersham, *Berossos and Manetho, Native Traditions in Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt* (Ann Arbor, Michigan 1997) 28-30. The compendium of Alexander probably followed the tradition of Greek literary historiography, and one can assume that the original Babylonian material underwent considerable reshaping to conform with Greek popular perceptions of Mesopotamian history.

7 Hdt. 2.150.9: ἐώς τα μεγάλα χρήματα.
distinguished for both his fabulous wealth and his notorious love of luxury, appears to have been a well-known literary theme which was explored by writers from the fifth century BC onwards as the mythical tales relating to the Midas and Croesus characters found in Greek and Roman legend. These originally historical figures appear to have become mythical characters living on in the literary tradition. As rulers once associated with and respected for their power and wealth, they eventually became known as the last rulers of conquered nations. From the Greek and Roman perspective (as the victorious successors), such rulers, whether historical or legendary, seem to have acquired negative connotations. Rulers once respected for their phenomenal wealth are often portrayed as objects of ridicule, persons of dubious moral character, in vain searching for true happiness, only in the end to face

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8 Aristoph. Av. 1021; Diod. 2, p. 1.18, 2.23.1, 2.24.4; Vell. 1.6.2; Val. Max. 4.7.25; Ampel. Lib. Mem. 11.4.1, 12.1.2; Juv. Sat. 10.362; Sex. Pomp. Festus p. 322.51.

9 Midas, an eighth century Phrygian ruler, seems to have been known by Greeks and Romans primarily as a legendary figure proverbial for his outstanding wealth. Both Greek and Roman descriptions of Midas show a significant transformation in the character of Midas very much removed from the historical identity of the Phrygian king. Herodotos, for instance, refers to Midas, son of Gordias, simply as the Phrygian king (1.14.2). By the time of Aristotle, the legendary Midas needs no introduction: he had become the ‘famous Midas in the legend’ (Arist. Pol. 1257b), whose exceptional wealth according to some expert diviners (so Cicero, Div. 1.78.10; 2.66.4), was predicted when ants were seen carrying wheat into the mouth of the infant Midas as he slept. References to the historical Midas are found in contemporary Assyrian texts and Greek literary works as well as in epigraphical and archaeological evidence in Anatolia. Cf. L.E. Roller, ‘The legend of Midas’, CInA 12.2 (1983) 300-01 for detailed discussion.

10 In 414 BC ‘Σαρδάναπαλλός’, for instance, features by way of sarcastic allusion in Aristophanes’ Aves 1021 as an overdressed, pompous inspector. Aristotle describes ‘Σαρδάναπαλλός’ as a paradigm of effeminacy carding wool with his women (Pol. 1312a). As early as the fifth century Midas figures on Attic vase paintings with protruding ass-ears, a tradition followed by writers of comedy (Aristoph. Ploutos 286-87) and poets alike (Ovid, Met. 11.146-93). The Lydian king Gyges fills the pages of literature as the ‘invisible man’ who usurped the throne through dishonesty and, with the help of a magic ring (Plato, Rep. 359d-360b), and is criticised for his desire for wealth (Arist. Rhet. 1418b). Gyges was lazy as well: ‘Gyges did nothing else great in his reign of 38 years ... therefore I shall say no more of him’ (Hdt. 1.115.1). Diodorus says that Croesus is called a ‘great fool’ by the Pythian priestess when asked for a cure for his dumb son (9.33.2), whilst Lucian draws a satirical picture of ‘Σαρδάναπαλλός’ in the company of Midas and Croesus in the under world, all lamenting their great earthly losses and longing for their spendthrift days (Dial. mort. 3).

11 ‘Sardanapallus’ is associated with obscenities and debauchery (Polyb. 8.10.3); through his insatiable greed Midas falls victim to the curse of the golden touch (Arist. Pol. 1275b; Ov. Met. 11.85-145); and Croesus discredits himself when his desire for property (for himself) becomes one of his motives to campaign against Cappadocia (Hdt. I.73.1). Lucian calls them the ‘worst scum’ of Lydia, Phrygia and Assyria respectively: ὥς κάκιστοι Λυδίων καὶ Φρυγῶν.
tragic deaths.

The legendary self-immolation of ‘Sardanapallus’ seems to have made considerable impact on Greek and Roman consciousness. Within the Greek historical tradition the legendary tale of ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ supposedly immolating himself, together with his concubines and treasure, became a standard ingredient of any description of the downfall of the Assyrian empire. This legendary death of ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ could probably represent a conflation of several accounts relating the tragic fates of the last historical Assyrian kings as reflected in Ktesias’ mythical narrative which became the standard version followed by Diodorus (2.27.2), Ovid (Ibis 311) and Ampelius (11.4). The only source suggesting a non-violent death for ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ is Kleitarchos who claims that ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ lived to a ripe old age after losing his empire. This brings one back to speculation on the identity of ‘Sardanapallus’ and the claims allegedly put forward by Hellanikos and Kallisthenes that there were two ‘Sardanapalli’.

Among ancient writers the spelling Σαρδανάπαλλος / Sardanapallus (with double ‘l’) occurs most frequently and is also consistent with the spelling found on inscriptions and papyri. Before the first century AD, writers whose works are extant appear predominantly to use the double consonant spelling of Sardanapallus, whereas spelling with the single consonant occurs mostly

καὶ Ἀσσυρίων (Dial. Mot. 3.2.1-2).

12 Croesus questions Solon on the meaning of happiness (Hdt. 1.30-33), as does Midas when he captures Silenos (Hdt. 8.138; Cic. Tuscr. 1.114.10), and ‘Σαρδανάπαλλος’ allegedly, with confidence, places true happiness in pleasure (Arist. Eud. Eth. 1216a; Nic. Eth. 1095b).

13 It seems likely that Ktesias incorporated into his ‘history’ the mythic narrative of sacrifice as part of a process of stigmatising to reassure his Greek audience of the marginality of the enemy. Cf. for instance, the various accounts relating to the death of Croesus. According to one tradition, Croesus was to perish together with his wife and daughters on the pyre, when facing defeat during the Persian capture of Sardis (Hdt. 1.7; Bacch. 3.30). Diodorus on the other hand says that Croesus was taken prisoner after Cyrus had ordered the pyre to be quenched, only to witness the plunder of his city (9.33.4).

14 The nature of the death of Assurbanipal, greatest of the Assyrian kings, is nowhere recorded. His half-brother Shamash-shum-ukin threw himself into the flames in his palace after an unsuccessful rebellion in 648, and Assurbanipal’s son, Sin-shar-ishkun when facing defeat, also died in his burning palace.

15 Different versions of Sardanapallus’ tragic death are recorded: Aristotle (Pol. 1312a) mentions that he was allegedly murdered by an unknown person who saw him combing his hair with his women; Athenaeus 12.38 says that according to the history of Duris, he was murdered by Arbaces, while Ampelius (11.4) says that he drank poison before immolating himself.

16 Athen. 12.530a, fr. 2.

17 Weißbach, ‘Sardanapal’, RE (1920) 2436-37, 2474.

18 Herodotos, Ktesias, Aristophanes, Aristotle, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Philo
in fragments preserved by later writers, and in both the commentaries on and epitomes of the original works of, for instance, Aristotle, Dio Cassius, Athenaeus and Georgius Monachus, who all used the double consonant spelling. The increased occurrence of the single consonant spelling in Σαρδανάπαλος / Sardanapalus is typical of fourth century AD writers who refer to him. This seems to have become the general trend throughout late antiquity.

In general, writers before Cicero consistently use one or the other spelling, presumably closely following a specific source. Apparently, with the exception of Velleius Paterculus, most Latin authors before the fourth century use the spelling with double ‘l’ in their references to ‘Sardanapallus’. Cicero, however, seems to be the exception to the rule in his inconsistency of usage. ‘Sardanapallus’ occurs four times in the extant corpus of Cicero: three times in the philosophical works, all with spelling double ‘l’ (Rep. 3 fr. 4.1, Fin. 2.102.6, Tusc. 5.101.3), and once only with single ‘l’ in his letter to Atticus (10.8.7).

In the De republica Cicero depicts ‘Sardanapallus’ as the notorious character familiar from the Greek literary tradition: ‘Sardanapallus ille vitiis multo quam nomine ipso deformior’ (Rep. 3 fr. 4.1). The context of the reference to ‘Sardanapallus’ in this fragment is not known, and one cannot therefore ascertain the thrust of Cicero’s argument here. With Cicero, though, the temptation to deploy a rhetorical flourish cannot be excluded, especially if it could strengthen his argument. Given the politico-philosophical content of the De republica concerning discussions of justice vs. injustice in a ruler (books 3 and 5), it seems very likely that Cicero is referring to the deficiency of ‘Sardanapallus’ as a ruler, where his imperfection as a statesman by far

Judaean.

19 Cf. the fragments of Hellanikos, Theophrastus, Kallisthenes, Chrysippus, and Posidonius.
20 Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae (original work 19x double consonant, epitome 12x single consonant), Dio Cassius (Hist. 12x double consonant, Xiphilini epitome 11x single consonant), Georgius Monachus Chronogr. (Chronicon 5x, Chronicon breve 5x single consonant).
21 Himerius Soph., Declamationes et orationes 69.16; Basilii Caesariensis Theol., De legendis gentilium libris 8.59; Gregorii Nazianzeni Theol., Carmina moralia p. 724.12; Theodoretus, Graecarum affectionum curatio 9.54.4, 12.93.1; Procopius, Secret History 9.2; Lydus Hist., De magistratibus populi Romani p. 224.12.
22 Vell. 1.6.2. However, given the corrupt condition of the manuscript on which the text of Vellius depends, one cannot with utmost certainty assume that Vellius deviated from tradition.
23 Ov. ibis 312; Mart. Ep. 11.11.6; Trogus, Hist. Phil. 1 fr. pr. 2; Val. Max. 4.7.25; Ampel. 11.4.1; 12.1.2; Iuv. Sat. 10.362; Sex. Pomp. Festus, De verborum significatio p. 322.51.
24 One would strongly suspect some form of punning here. As a paradigm of vice, ‘Sardanapallus’, in his allegedly abnormal sexual preferences (Diod. 2.23.3), by far surpasses the degree of
outdid his so-called moral vices. I would suggest that in the philosophical
works mentioned above, Cicero exploits ‘Sardanapallus’ as paradigm of
immoderation in a ruler (cf. *Tusc*. 5.101 ‘quo modo igitur iucunda vita potest
esse, a qua absit prudentia, absit moderatio? ex quo Sardanapalli, opulentissimi
Syriae regis, error adgnoscitur’), as opposed to his conception of a moderate
and just ruler, an ideal statesman embodied by, for instance, Scipio Africanus
with whom ‘Sardanapallus’ is contrasted in *Fin*. 2.106.

As the earliest extant Latin allusion to ‘Sardanapallus’ (with double ‘l’)
that we know of, this allusion also conveys a very negative, perhaps typically
Roman attitude of superiority over conquered rulers, in this instance a
legendary oriental king who became a paradigm of vice in ancient literature.
However, ‘Ille Sardanapallus’ may even suggest (albeit *ex silentio*) Cicero’s
possible acquaintance with another ‘Sardanapallus’, less notorious, possibly
even benign. Kallisthenes was quite specific when he quoted Hellanikos
on the existence of two ‘Sardanapalli’. He even elaborates on these two
opposite characters: one is a vigorous and noble king, the other thoroughly
malignant:

Phot. Sud. s. Σαρδαναπάλους ἐν β Περσικῶν δύο φησὶ γεγονέναι <Ελλάνικος
(4 F 63), ὠσχύτας δὲ καὶ> Καλλισθένης, ἐνα μὲν δραστήριον καὶ γενναίον,
ἄλλον δὲ μαλακὸν.
Kallisthenes, *Fragmenta* (Jacyb F2b, 124F fr. 34.1)

Again, though we only have the evidence of Photius in fragmentary form, it
does correlate with the fragment quoted by the scholiast in his commentary
on Aristophanes’ *Aves*, which likewise claims knowledge of the existence of
two ‘Sardanapalli’:

Schol V Aristoph. *Av*. 1021: ὃ δὲ Ἕλλανικος ἐν τοῖς Περσικοῖς δύο φησὶ
Σαρδαναπάλους γεγονέναι (Jacyb F 3c, 687a, F fragment 2a.2).

‘deformity’ that his name has suffered over time. Cf. note 30 below. Punning aside, the Greeks
probably transliterated the name from its original language which must have been a far cry
from the result in writing. Porphyry, for instance, said that the languages of both the Syrians
and the Persians are very difficult to articulate or to put into writing, and that to non-Persians
and Syrians these languages sounded like the shrieking of cranes (*De abst*. 3.3.4).

26 If indeed a tradition of a more benign ‘Sardanapallus’ existed, it could not have made a
lasting impression. In late antiquity a virtuous ‘Sardanapallus’ seems to be very much absent
in the works of writers who mention him. Cf. Procopius in his introduction to the *Secret
History* and Augustine, *CD* 2.20.
Cicero was well read, and if any tradition about the existence of two ‘Sardanapalli’ was still current, he was bound to have come across it during his rhetorical training. Cicero certainly has a different ‘Sardanapallus’ tradition in mind to the mythical account recorded by Diodorus, when, in a letter to Atticus in May 49, he conveys his inner conflict relating to the decision about which side to take in the civil war. Here Cicero seems to draw on a tradition allegedly recorded by Kleitarchos on the death of ‘Sardanapallus’. One would think it somewhat uncharacteristic of Cicero, a usually meticulous writer, to suddenly make a careless slip of the pen when he resorts to the single ‘l’ spelling in Sardanapalus as shown in the quotation below. Instead, it would seem that Cicero’s intent here is deliberate, to distinguish between the notorious ‘Sardanapallus’ of the popular historiographical tradition, and the image of perhaps another ‘Sardanapalus’ present in a variant but less popular account (which was perhaps better known in the rhetorical schools), also known to Atticus who was not ignorant in Greek matters. In Att. 10.8.7 the ‘Sardanapallus’ of legend retreats only to reappear in the robes of

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27 The discovery of an inscription at Taormina in 1969 gives evidence that historical works of writers such as Kallisthenes and Fabius Pictor were still available in the second century BC. Cf. A. Momigliano, ‘The historians of the Classical World and their audiences’, The American Scholar (1978) 193-204. By the first century BC the book trade at Rome flourished. Cicero, for instance, extended his private library collection in 60 BC with the acquisition of an entire library from Greece (Att. 2.1.12) and had access to one of Atticus’ numerous library collections while he was working on the De republica (Att. 4.14.1).

28 Kleitarchos, author and companion of Alexander the Great, appears to have had knowledge of a Sardanapalus, said to have died in old age: fr. 2 Athen. 12 Kaibel par. 39.28. Cicero’s allusions to Kleitarchos (Leg. 1.7.2; Brut. 4.2.6; Fam. 2.10.3) suggest that he too, to some extent, was familiar with this shadowy author’s romanticised work on Alexander. Cicero was certainly familiar with an inscription found on the tomb of one Sardanapalus, and he gives it in Latin translation (Fin. 2.106, where he implies Aristotelian criticism of the epitaph, and Tusc. 5.101). Cf. Diod. 2.23.3; Polyb. 8.10.3; Strabo 14.5.9. The deciphering of Assyrian cuneiform texts during the eighteenth and nineteenth century rekindled scholarly interest relating to the claims allegedly made by respectively Hellanikos and Kallisthenes. This gave rise to further speculation about the identity of ‘Sardanapallus’ to such an extent that some scholars claimed to have identified up to five ‘Sardanapalli’. See Weißbach (note 17) 2475. The evidence, however, remains inconclusive.

29 The duress of the undecided civil war at that stage left Cicero entangled in a moral as well as political dilemma that facilitated neither casual writing nor idle conversation. The tone and argument here are evidence that Cicero, even under severe emotional strain, in his consideration of past precedents, was able to make a reasoned assessment of the present political situation and his own disposition at the time.

30 Whom one could, for sake of argument here, identify as ‘Sardanapalus, the legendary king
another ‘Sardanapalus’, someone not less fond of his delicacies and luxury, but a character more realistically pictured in old age as one who shares in the privilege that, according to Cicero, philosophers are supposed to enjoy— the ‘luxury’ of a peaceful though not necessarily honourable deathbed.

forte me Sardanapali vicem in suo lectulo mori malle censueris quam <in> exsilio Themistocleo (Att. 10.8.7.5).

Cicero’s contrast of the ‘Sardanapalus’, present in Att. 10.8, with the exemplum Themistocles, places the former on a similar level of ‘historicity’ to that of the latter. Both are paraded as historical exempla with whom Cicero can identify, and both contribute to Cicero’s pessimism on the potential outcome of the civil war. Both ‘Sardanapalus’ and Themistocles, respectively having lost their ‘empires’, become exempla of unfulfilled expectations. In this respect they share Cicero’s own coming fate, for he, at this stage, strongly foresees that he is about to lose his own freedom. The predicament for him is whether or not he, as presumably ‘Sardanapalus’ had done, should choose the easy, but contemptible way out? Should he endure defeat from a cosy couch, alive but without dignitas whilst living the life of a philosopher, or should he be obliged to follow the example of Themistocles? Cicero’s choices

of moral and sexual vice’, someone very similar to a rather ridiculous character often associated with comedy (cf. Hesychius Σ 201: σαρδανάφαλλος = γελοτοποιός), sardonically portrayed in the wordplay φαλλός = phallos of Σαρδανάπαλλος.

31 This reclining ‘Sardanapalus’ could now play the role of Σαρδαν-άπαλος ‘Sardan the softy’. Here Cicero could be drawing on a tradition that may reach back to the perceptions of the audiences of both Hellanikos and Kallisthenes, audiences that possibly were familiar with the fame of both the Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and his successor Assurbanipal (c. 668–625 BC). Both kings were regarded by contemporaries as the greatest of all Assyrian monarchs. Cf. G. Oussani, ‘Assyria’, The Catholic Encyclopedia 2, Online ed. http://www.newadvent.org/cathen (1999). It is not improbable that their names became conflated as either ‘Sardanaplus’ or ‘Sardanapallus’ when the name of the very last king of Assyria, Assur-uballit II is added to the verbal mixture. Both Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal could lay claim to the appellation ‘one of the last great kings’ of Assyria. To add to the confusion: the nature of Assurbanipal’s death is not known, but a non-violent death cannot be excluded, for the last mention of Assurbanipal is after 635 BC, when civil war between his twin sons forced him to retreat to Harran, from where he ruled over the western part of the Assyrian empire until his death.

32 Fin. 2.97: ‘philosophi autem in suis lectulis plerunque moriuntur.’ Ironically, this privilege sometimes befalls a tyrant: cf. the tyrant Dionysius, who died in his bed and had a royal funeral (Cic. DND 3.84.17).

33 Here the diminutive of lectus could imply contempt often found in the Roman attitude of disapproval against foreign luxury. Cf. Tuscc. 2.18.4.
leave plenty of room for discussion elsewhere. Suffice to say that Cicero had reason enough to rue his decision later.\textsuperscript{34}

The importance of Cicero’s treatment of the ‘Sardanapalli’ lies in the fact that he, like his predecessors, exploited the complex amalgam of myth and history preserved in the various traditions relating to ‘Σαρδαναπάλα(λ)ος I Sardanapal(1)us, king of Assyria’ to facilitate expressing his thoughts on contemporary situations. In this process Cicero both reaffirms established, and adds new, mythical credentials to a literary tradition on which additional layers could be built as part of ‘history’.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{34} What Cicero appears to have suspected at this stage, was that the \textit{res publica} as he had known it, was as far removed from reality as ‘Sardanapalus’ and his lost kingdom, and that Cicero’s own world was to become part of a distant past around which new myths were to materialise. Cicero could not have known it, but his projection of the past was in the end to become his destiny. Cf. his letter to Paetus, July 46 after Pharsalus (\textit{Fam.} 9.18.2.6).

\textsuperscript{35} This paper has resulted from research tangential to my present D. Litt. study at the University of Stellenbosch on Cicero as ‘haruspex’ of the vicissitudes of the \textit{res publica}. It owes much to constructive criticism passed by various readers. I wish to thank in particular my supervisor Prof. Jo-Marie Claassen for careful reading and thoughtful comments, and both anonymous referees of \textit{Acta Classica} for their valuable suggestions.
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