CICERO

Pro Archia Poeta Oratio

3rd edition

Introduction
Text
Vocabulary
and
Commentary

by

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With a Foreword By

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Cover Illustrations: This denarius, minted in Rome ca. 66 BCE by Q. Pomponius Musa, is one of a series of nine types, each depicting on its reverse one of the nine muses. Shown here is Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, playing the lyre while resting it on a column. (Photograph courtesy of the American Numismatic Society); Background illustration of Modern-day Arpinum © 2006 Patricia Lynn Miller

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Cicero: Pro Archia Poeta Oratio
Third Edition

Steven M. Cerutti

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EXORDIUM

(1–41)

For Cicero, the primary purpose of the EXORDIUM*, or opening statement, was to win the* benevolentia *(good will) of his audience, particularly the* iudices*, whose judgment would decide the fate of his client. Cicero begins by introducing himself in terms of three essential qualities that define him as an orator — ingenium (natural talent), exercitatio (experience), and ratio (strategy for the particular case at hand). Always the humble servant, however, Cicero is careful, as he is quick, to temper his acknowledgment of each of these qualities with a modest disclaimer before attributing to his client and former teacher, A. Licinius Archias, whatever success he has achieved as an orator. He concludes the* EXORDIUM *by asking his audience to indulge him if he uses in his defense a new style of speaking* (novum genus dicendi)*, one suited more to the nature of his client, a poet, than to a court of law.*

1. **ingenium, ~i,** *n.,* natural ability, talent.
   iudex, iudicis, *m.,* one appointed to decide a case, a juror.
   sentio, sentire, sensi, sensus, to realize, perceive.
2. **exiguus, ~a, ~um,** small, scanty, slight, insignificant.
   exercitatio, exercitationis, *f.,* practice, experience.
3. **infitior, infitiari, infitiatus,** to deny.
   mediocriter, (*adv.*) somewhat, to a moderate extent, moderately.
   verso, ~are, ~avi, ~atus, to turn (*pass.:* to be engaged in).
4. **ratio, rationis,** *f.,* (*w. gen.*) a methodology, strategy, or system; a professional ethic directing one's actions.
   ars, artis, *f.,* art, skill; (*pl.*) cultural pursuits, liberal studies.
   studium, ~i, *n.,* (*w. gen.*) study (*of something*); intellectual pursuit.
   disciplina, ~ae, *f.,* formal instruction, training.
5. **proficiscor, proficisci, profectus,** to set forth, derive (*from a source, etc.*).
   confiteor, confiteri, confessus, to confess, admit.
   aetas, aetatis, *f.,* the span of one's life; a lifetime.
6. **abhorreo, abhorrere, abhorrui,** to be adverse to (*w.* **a** + *abl.*).
7. **fructus, ~us,** *m.,* profit, benefit, reward.
   repeto, repetere, repetivi (~ii), repetitus, to seek in return.
   prope, (*adv.*) almost, nearly, all but.
   ius, iuris, *n.,* (*w. poss. adj.*) one's right, what one is entitled to.
   debeo, debere, debui, debitus, (*w. inf.*) to be under obligation (*to do something*).

M. Tulli Ciceronis
Pro Archia Poeta Oratio

1 Si quid est in me ingeni, iudices, quod sentio quam sit exiguum, aut si qua exercitatio dicendi, in qua me non infitior mediocriter esse versatum, aut si huiusce rei ratio aliqua ab optimarum artium studiis ac disciplina profecta, a qua ego nullum confiteor aetatis meae tempus abhorruisse, earum rerum omnium vel in primis hic A. Licinius fructum a me repetere prope suo iure debet. Nam

1–7. **Si...debet:** a compound condition with three PROTASES, each followed by a relative clause introduced by a relative pronoun whose antecedent is in the PROTASIS that precedes it (*ingeni* ⇒ *quod* :: *exercitatio* ⇒ *in qua* :: *ratio* ⇒ *a qua*), *B* 302. See note on *a qua* (4–5) below.

1. **Si...est in me:** "if there is in me," i.e., "if I have..." **quid:** = *aliquid* after *si*, as also *nisi*, *num*, and *ne* (cf. *qua* for *aliqua* in the second PROTASIS), *B* 91.5. **ingeni:** partitive genitive with *quid*, "anything of talent," i.e., "any talent." **iudices:** vocative plural, "members of the jury."

1–2. **quod...exiguum:** "which I realize how slight it is." While *quod* is the subject of the *quam* clause, an indirect question dependent on *sentio*, it has been attracted into the governing clause as the direct object of *sentio*, an example of the rhetorical figure PROLEPSIS.

2–4. **qua exercitatio dicendi:** sc. *est in me*. **qua:** = *aliqua* (see note on 1 above). **me... esse versatum:** indirect statement with *infitior*, *B* 331.1. **huiusce rei ratio aliqua:** sc. *est in me:* "if I have any strategy..." **-ce:** the enclitic particle emphasizes the pronoun *huius*: "of this case before us."

4–5. **ratio...profecta:** note how the "bookend" placement of the nominative *ratio* (=A) and its modifier *profecta* (=A) BRACKETS the two prepositional phrases, *ab...studiis* (= B) *ac disciplina* (= B), creating CHIASMUS (A B :: B A), *B* 350.11c. **nullum...tempus:** accusative, subject of *abhorruisse*, indirect statement with *confiteor*. **a qua:** the antecedent is *ratio*, ANTICIPATED by *aliqua* (as the preceding *quid* [*ingeni*] anticipates the *quod* clause, and *qua* [*exercitatio*] anticipates the *in qua* clause).

6–7. **hic**: i.e., Archias. Cicero uses *hic* (in other grammatical cases) in the following examples to refer to Archias: *hunc* (10), *huius* (12), *huic* (15) *in hoc* (17). **earum... debet:** the APODOSIS, or main clause, of the condition. **rerum omnium:** i.e., *ingenium, exercitatio*, and *ratio*. **vel:** intensifies *in primis*, "first and foremost," *B* 240.3. **hic A(ulus) Licinius:** Cicero properly uses Archias' Roman *praenomen* and *nomen* to recommend him to the Roman audience. **hic:** i.e., Archias. **prope suo iure:** "nearly by his own right."

8. **quoad,** (*interrog. and rel. adv.*) as far as.
   mens, mentis, *f.,* the mind.
   respicio, respicere, respexi, respectus, to look back on.
   spatium, ~i, *n.,* a period, interval.
9. **praeteritus, ~a, ~um,** past, bygone, former.
   pueritia, ~ae, *f.,* childhood.
   recordor, recordari, recordatus, to call to mind, recall.
10. *** repeto, repetere, repetivi (~ii), repetitus,** to trace, search for.
    princeps, principis, first in time, earliest; most important.
11. **suscipio, suscipere, suscepi, susceptus,** to undertake.
    ingredior, ingredi, ingressus, to begin, embark.
    *** ratio, rationis,** *f.,* (*w. gen.*) course, curriculum (*of study, etc*).
12. * **studium, ~i,** *n.,* study, intellectual pursuit.
    exsto, exstare, exstiti, to emerge, stand out, exist (*in a given manner or capacity*).
    hortatus, ~us, *m.,* encouragement.
13. **praeceptum, ~i,** *n.,* instruction, precept.
    conformo, ~are, ~avi, ~atus, to train, shape, mold.
    aliquando, (*adv.*) occasionally, at some time; from time to time.
    salus, salutis, *f.,* a means of deliverance (*usu. judicial*); security.
14. **accipio, accipere, accepi, acceptus,** to take, receive.
    opitulor, opitulari, opitulatus, (*w. dat.*) to give help (*to*).
    servo, ~are, ~avi, ~atus, to defend (*esp. in court*).
15. **profecto,** (*adv.*) surely, certainly.
    quantum, (*interrog. and rel. adv.*) to what extent, to the extent to which (< the neuter accusative singular of the interrogative and relative pronoun **quantus, ~a, ~um**).
    situs, ~a, ~um, placed or lying in one's control or power.
16. **ops, opis,** *f.,* aid, assistance.
    fero, ferre, tuli, latus, to convey, bestow; to bear, endure.
    *** debeo, debere, debui, debitus,** (*w. inf.*) to be under obligation (*to do something*).

quoad longissime potest mens mea respicere spatium praeteriti temporis et pueritiae memoriam recordari ultimam, inde usque repetens hunc video mihi principem et ad suscipiendam et ad ingrediendam rationem horum studiorum exstitisse. Quod si haec vox huius hortatu praeceptisque conformata non nullis aliquando saluti fuit, a quo id accepimus quo ceteris opitulari et alios servare possemus, huic profecto ipsi, quantum est situm in nobis, et opem et salutem ferre debemus. **2** Ac ne quis a nobis hoc

8–10. **longissime:** construe with *respicere*, "to look back as far (into the past) as possible..." *B* 293.2. **respicere…recordari:** (deponent) are both complementary infinitives with *potest*. Each has its own direct object (*spatium…memoriam*) with a genitive modifier (*temporis…pueritiae*). The position of a genitive modifier can come before or after the noun to which it is attached. In this one sentence, Cicero gives us an example of each position. **spatium...memoriam:** note the CHIASMUS (acc. gen. :: gen. acc.). **praeteriti temporis:** "the passage of time gone by." **memoriam...ultimam:** "earliest memory." **inde usque:** construe with *repetens* (sc. *memoriam*), "searching my memory from that point on..." **hunc video:** the *hunc* is accusative subject of the infinitives. Notice how Cicero has placed the subject accusative in front of the main verb of the head, *video* (as he just did in 2, *me* is subject of *esse versatum*). *principem* is accusative in apposition to *hunc*. **hunc...principem:** i.e., Archias; *hunc* = accusative subject of *exstitisse*, an indirect statement dependent on *video* with *principem* in apposition to it: "I see that this man has stood out as foremost (*principem*) for me (*mihi*)..."

11. **ad suscipiendam...ingrediendam rationem:** *ad* + the accusative of the gerundive expresses purpose, *B* 338.

12–13. **Quod si:** "But if..." an adverbial use of the accusative of the relative pronoun, *B* 185.2. **vox...non nullis...saluti fuit:** the "double dative" construction, "my voice was for some a means of deliverance." *Non nullis* is a dative of reference, *saluti* a dative of purpose, *B* 191.2.b. **non nullis:** LITOTES, "not none" = some. **vox...conformata:** note how the separation of *vox* and *conformata* (called HYPERBATON) BRACKETS the ablatives *hortatu praeceptisque,* creating CHIASMUS. **huius:** i.e., Archias.

14–16. **a quo:** i.e., Archias; the relative clause precedes its antecedent (*huic...ipsi*). **accepimus, possemus, in nobis...debemus:** Cicero often uses the first person plural for the first person singular. Compare the use of the royal/editorial "we" (*B* 242.3). **quo...possemus:** "by which we (= I) are able..." a result clause (antecedent = *id* [i.e., oratory]), *B* 284.2. **ceteris:** dative object of *opitulari*. **huic...ipsi:** i.e., Archias, dative indirect object of *ferre* (16) below.

15–16. **quantum…in nobis:** an adverbial (*quantum*) clause of extent; take with *ferre:* "as much as (to what extent) is in our power." **opem et salutem:** note how the two nouns echo the meanings of the previous (line 14) infinitives, *opitulari (opem) et…servare (salutem),* emphasizing Cicero's role as Archias' legal defender.