

## ABSTRACT

The Rhetoric of Persuasion: Cicero, Archias, and the Defense of the Liberal Arts

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Cicero's defense of his teacher, the *Pro Archia*, is far from the expert orator's most well-known work, yet it presents fascinating questions for analysis. Archias's Roman citizenship has been called into question, and through an artful display of oratory and rhetoric, Cicero reconstructs the reality of Archias's life and contributions to provide proof of his worth as a citizen. The speech then comes to stand as proof of Archias's great teaching, as Cicero's exceptional command of language and rhetoric illustrates his teacher's vast influence. Although technically delivered in a court of law, the speech possesses the unique characteristics of a more ornamental realm of oratory, epideictic, which includes speeches such as funeral orations, or *laudatio funebris*. It could even be read as a sort of *laudatio funebris* for Archias, Cicero, and liberal learning. The *Pro Archia*, then, is an oration with a complex network of layered meaning with broad cultural implications both for Cicero's audience and for readers today.

THE RHETORIC OF PERSUASION: CICERO, ARCHIAS,  
AND THE DEFENSE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Cicero and Archias

#### *Introduction*

Marcus Tullius Cicero, often cited as the best orator of all time, credits his teacher, Archias, with cultivating his skills in rhetoric and persuasion. From Archias, Cicero claims to have learned not only how to defend a client in a court of law, but also how to defend the validity of a liberal arts education. A man known for hyperbole and metaphor, it might be said that, for Cicero, the facts of life are more important than the facts of a particular case—that ultimately he constantly and ardently pursued the truth throughout his life and career. For Cicero, this search for truth and an understanding of philosophy, rhetoric, and other liberal arts was absolutely crucial.

In a rather unlikely venue, a court of law, Cicero eloquently defends liberal learning and consequently his intimate friend and first teacher, Archias. Although there is some debate concerning Cicero's true motivations for the defense in the *Pro Archia*,<sup>1</sup> many see it as a means by which a man long-known for his intellect and passion for literature, gives voice to his beliefs on education and the integral role of a poet in the development and maintenance of a successful Roman republic. The speech comes at a time when Cicero was enjoying a considerable amount of clout in the political sphere, and because of this context in the greater timeline of his life and career, this speech likely

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<sup>1</sup> William Malin Porter, "Cicero's *Pro Archia* and the Responsibilities of Reading." *Rhetorica: A Journal of The History of Rhetoric* Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring 1990): 143.

gained greater attention than it might have otherwise, as the offense in question was rather minor compared to other cases Cicero tried. Even so, the speech offers the modern audience insight into the mind and intellect of Cicero, enabling an improved understanding of multiple factors contributing to his success as an orator in the classical era.

Far from being the only influential writer or statesman to wax poetic on the virtues of liberal learning, others in the company of Cicero include C.S. Lewis and John Henry Cardinal Newman. These writers, too, employ their gifts in the field of rhetoric to persuade their readers of the importance of a well-educated person, particularly one educated in the liberal arts. Cicero, Lewis, and Newman all seem to be somewhat on the defensive—liberal learning in each of their contexts is under attack to a certain extent. Today’s society arguably is no better in its appreciation of the liberal arts; if anything, even less value is placed on them, and defenders of the liberal arts once again find themselves under scrutiny. In this paper, I shall make a case for liberal learning, namely that it informs the individual on how to behave morally and make a contribution to society, while also drawing from previously formed arguments from Cicero’s *Pro Archia*.

### *Early Life and Family*

From a very early age, Cicero placed a high value on learning and education. He was born in 106 B.C. in Arpinum.<sup>2</sup> It seems that he harbored a certain fondness for his hometown of Arpinum throughout his life, as in a letter written in later years to his good

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<sup>2</sup> G.C. Richards, *Cicero, A Study* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1970). 4.

friend Atticus he writes, “Well, I shall go to Arpinum, ‘my native hills, the cradle of my being.’”<sup>3</sup> Although Cicero ultimately would claim Rome as his *patria*, he also felt a deep connection to the place of his birth, because it enabled him to enjoy the peace and tranquility where he “could meditate, read, and write, and also entertain his dearest friends.”<sup>4</sup> Apparently Cicero also cherished his hometown because of its associations with Marius, whom Cicero had admired from his youth.<sup>5</sup>

Cicero and his brother, Quintus, four years younger than Cicero,<sup>6</sup> were born to a mother, Helvia, of noble origin, and to a father who dedicated himself to studies and “was more than a mere gentleman-farmer, being devoted to reading.”<sup>7</sup> Not much further is known about his mother, as, “He never refers to his mother; our only clue there is a slight reminiscence in a letter of Quintus to Tiro, suggesting a strict, parsimonious housewife.”<sup>8</sup>

His father, however, also bearing the name Cicero, apparently ensured that his sons were well-educated. To this end, Cicero’s father sent the boys to Rome, where he had established a secondary residence and spent a great deal of time.<sup>9</sup> Cicero’s father himself was rather well-educated, despite being a farmer, and it seems that Cicero’s

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<sup>3</sup> D.R. Shackleton Bailey. *Cicero* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Company Limited, 1971). 1.

<sup>4</sup> Torsten Peterson, *Cicero: A Biography* (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1963), 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>6</sup> Richards, 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Bailey, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Richards, 11.

paternal uncle had similar inclinations. Bailey asserts, “Cicero says of his father that he spent most of his life in literary pursuits,” and was a man of “bookish tastes.”<sup>10</sup> He refers to his uncle, Lucius, as a, ““very highly cultivated person.””<sup>11</sup> Plausibly then the influence of his family’s emphasis on education in Cicero’s earliest years greatly contributed to his own appreciation for learning so apparent throughout his life and in his orations.

### *Educational Background*

Aside from Cicero’s father, another man, Lucius Licinius Crassus also significantly influenced the early education of Cicero and his brother Quintus, as well as that of their cousins. This influential connection occurred as a result of the relationship with Cicero’s mother, as the husband of her sister was Aculeo, a close friend of Crassus.<sup>12</sup> Crassus is said to have, “personally supervised the curriculum of the Ciceros and chose[n] their teachers. One of these can be named, the Greek poet Archias, who came to Rome before the turn of the century.”<sup>13</sup> Because of the gratitude Cicero will much later extend to Archias in the *Pro Archia*, it can be said that Crassus, by extension, also greatly contributed to Cicero’s intellectual development. Bailey confirms this by writing that “Crassus took a benevolent interest in the education of Aculeo’s two sons and their

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<sup>10</sup> Bailey, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Peterson, 30.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas N. Mitchell, *Cicero: The Ascending Years* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), 6.

cousins the two young Ciceros, even to prescribing their teachers and curriculum.”<sup>14</sup>

Although Cicero clearly was influenced by this eventual teacher, Archias, whom we shall consider in greater detail later, little is known about his formal schooling beyond this. As Richards points out, “If he had been a pupil of the great grammarian Lucius Aelius Stilo, he would surely have told us so.”<sup>15</sup> Cicero, did, however, study rhetoric under the Rhodian Molo, while in Rome, and later was taught philosophy by Philo of Athens and Diodotus, the Stoic.<sup>16</sup>

Although he did receive formal education to a certain extent, Cicero also learned a great deal of his own accord. One scholar describes him as an “omnivorous reader,” and goes on to explain that, “His theory was that a man who wished to excel in oratory could not study too much nor make his range of culture too wide; and we gather from his descriptions that he and the group of cousins to which he belonged were trained from the first on this system.”<sup>17</sup> It is unclear to what extent Cicero had an innate zeal for learning and what was cultivated by teachers like Archias, as Cicero claims in the *Pro Archia*, yet that he did possess this zeal is undeniable. Though admittedly a bit fanciful, Bailey paints a vivid picture of a young Cicero by writing, “In the life-long student and prolific writer can be seen the same child, fascinated by the papyrus rolls in his father’s library.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Bailey, 7.

<sup>15</sup> Richards, 12.

<sup>16</sup> J.L. Strachan-Davidson, *Cicero and the Fall of the Roman Republic* (London and New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1928), 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>18</sup> Bailey, 4.



Access to education, both formal and informal, as a child seems to have been integral to Cicero's later successes. It is also evident that Cicero was highly self-motivated, even as a young boy. As Peterson eloquently writes, "Cicero had ambition, talents, and self-confidence; he wished from the very beginning to make a mark in the world, and he knew that he could do it, and he was willing to pay the full price of ceaseless industry."<sup>19</sup> Even from his youth, Cicero dedicated himself to his studies, both independently and in the classroom setting in which he also found himself.

By all appearances, Cicero was a star pupil, inciting "the admiration (says Plutarch) of his fellows and the disgruntlement of their aristocratic parents."<sup>20</sup> Another scholar confirms this assessment by referring to Plutarch, who claimed that, "he acquired such a reputation that the fathers of his schoolmates came to see the prodigy."<sup>21</sup> Cicero also gained valuable friendships in the classroom. Here he became acquainted with his intimate and lifelong friend, Atticus, with whom he exchanged many letters over the years. Cicero cultivated his intellect through dialogue and debate with friends such as Atticus, who, "Like Cicero...loved books and things Greek. No doubt many other contacts of more or less importance in Cicero's career began in the class-room."<sup>22</sup> Cicero's appreciation for intellect and knowledge in his associations with others becomes even more apparent in another work of his, *De Amicitia*, in which he articulates the value of a friend who is also an intellectual companion. Peterson writes that for Cicero

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<sup>19</sup> Peterson, 33.

<sup>20</sup> Bailey, 7.

<sup>21</sup> Peterson, 34.

<sup>22</sup> Bailey, 8.

friendship, “consists in a complete agreement about all things, human and divine, to which are added good will and affection.”<sup>23</sup> Cicero also makes a point, however, to underscore the priority one should place on service to one’s country, even at the cost of friendships, as he allows that, “A friend is the greatest blessing that can come to a man...but even a friend must not be cherished to the detriment of the state.”<sup>24</sup>

Later in life, Cicero studied again under Molo, during two years spent in Greece near the beginning of his career.<sup>25</sup> Molo helped Cicero to hone his skills as a speaker, and also focused on ensuring that Cicero was in good health, as he had been rather frail from overwork and exhaustion before departing for Greece.<sup>26</sup> He ultimately returned to Rome, rejuvenated and refreshed, and ready to proceed in his career. Upon resuming his residence in Rome, Cicero continued to cultivate his skill in eliciting pathos, appealing to the emotions of his audience and the jurors throughout his defenses.<sup>27</sup> In this way, Cicero’s influence only grew, as “he came to have great power over his audiences, swaying them in one direction or another according to his own wish...and he could do this because, whenever speaking, he had himself the feelings with which he wished to inspire others.”<sup>28</sup> This is a skill that Cicero certainly makes use of in the *Pro Archia*.

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<sup>23</sup> Peterson, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

An influential component of Cicero's studies was his fascination with Greek, both with regard to history and language. Although he studied Roman literature as well, "Under Greek instructors he came to know the great Greek poets, especially Homer and Euripides, and got his first lessons in the art of speaking from Greek rhetoricians, according to the practice of the time."<sup>29</sup> Cicero's interest in Greek was perhaps heightened during his years as the pupil of Archias, his client in the *Pro Archia*. Peterson relates Cicero's appreciation for Greek also with his praise of *otium*, or "scholarly leisure."<sup>30</sup> These men of scholarly leisure, however, must not withdraw into themselves, but rather should utilize their gifts to serve in the public sector in service to the state.<sup>31</sup>

#### *Foray Into the Political World*

Later in his education, Cicero learned by way of observation, although not necessarily by imitation. After having received a more formal education at home and in Rome, in addition to pursuing his own interests independently, Cicero further cultivated his knowledge and expertise in the fields of rhetoric and politics by observing others in the Forum, and by engaging in debates himself. As Peterson explains, "Cicero had received as careful a training in oratory as any aristocrat; and he had added to this, perhaps in a higher measure than any one else, constant practice in declamation, both by

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<sup>29</sup> Bailey, 7.

<sup>30</sup> Peterson, 38.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 39.

himself and with his friends, as well as an almost daily attendance in the forum, where he observed the various speakers with a view to improving his own method.”<sup>32</sup>

At the age of twenty-five, Cicero had the opportunity to try his first case, introducing himself to the forum where his efforts would come to define his career.<sup>33</sup> Although the subject matter of his first few cases was comparatively insignificant, Cicero’s early performances helped him to gain respect and recognition within various spheres of influence.<sup>34</sup> During these early years, he “established for himself the reputation of being a protector of the humble; he often claimed this position in his speeches; and he no doubt found it serviceable.”<sup>35</sup> His role gradually grew in importance, and he began to defend increasingly significant individuals, gaining further credibility and note.<sup>36</sup>

As Cicero had begun by listening to and learning from the great orators of the time, as he grew in popularity and influence, he began to publish many of his orations. He did so in part for the sake of educating youth in a manner similar to that by which he himself had been introduced to the art of oratory. Peterson explains, “His own speeches, in their turn, were actually used in rhetorical schools. It was considered creditable for an

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<sup>32</sup> Peterson, 71.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 72-3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

orator in this way to assist his younger contemporaries. He was doing a practical service.”<sup>37</sup>

### *Context of the Pro Archia*

Clues regarding Cicero’s views on literature, education, and poetry are found in Cicero’s defense of Archias, the *Pro Archia*. Widely acclaimed for its affirmation of the validity of literature, the context surrounding the actual oration is notably unrelated. In his introduction to his translation, N.H. Watts eloquently pens, “For it contains what is perhaps the finest panegyric which has been quoted and admired by a long series of writers from Quintilian, through Petrarch, until to-day, when it has lost none of its lustre.”<sup>38</sup> The defense itself, however, is an argument for Archias’ citizenship, which has been called into question.<sup>39</sup> This oration comes in 62 BC, the year immediately following his prosecution of Catiline.<sup>40</sup> Cicero was at the zenith of his political power and influence, so although in some ways a minor speech, his speech for Archias also carried a lot of weight because of the context in which it occurred.<sup>41</sup>

Archias was a citizen of Heraclea, and all citizens of Heraclea were declared to be entitled also to Roman citizenship, but this status could not be ascertained.<sup>42</sup> As the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>38</sup> N.H. Watts, N.H., introduction to *Pro Archia Poeta*, by Marcus Tullius Cicero (Cambridge: (Harvard University Press, 1955), 2.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>41</sup> Peterson, 288.

<sup>42</sup> Richards, 226.

records of citizenship of Heraclea could not be consulted, Cicero is left to defend Archias and his citizenship, albeit in a rather unusual fashion.<sup>43</sup> Although the overt charge was lack of citizenship, it seems that the charges brought against Archias were actually an effort to embarrass the Luculli, who had close ties to Archias.<sup>44</sup> As Watts explains, “It was the fashion among the Roman aristocracy to adopt and patronize a tame poet or philosopher, usually a Greek, and this was the relation in which Archias stood to the family of the great general.”<sup>45</sup> Despite the origins of the case, however, the result is an eloquent appeal to liberal learning and poetry.

Archias had been one of Cicero’s earliest teachers, arriving in Rome to reside in the house of Lucullus in 102 B.C. when Cicero was not yet five years old.<sup>46</sup> Perhaps Archias made such a lasting impression on Cicero because his arrival came at such a critical juncture in Cicero’s education, a time when he was likely just beginning to learn how to read. Although it could be, and in fact is, argued that Cicero had ulterior motives in defending Archias, it does seem remarkable that after forty years, he remembers his old teacher so fondly as to defend him eloquently in court.<sup>47</sup> In the speech, Cicero argues that his skill in oratory can be attributed to what he gained as the pupil of Archias, telling the audience that “Archias had more right than any man living to claim the benefit of

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Watts, 3.

<sup>45</sup> Watts, 3-4.

<sup>46</sup> Strachan-Davidson, 10.

<sup>47</sup> Porter, 143.

whatever skill in pleading he possessed, for it was Archias who had first implanted in him the love of those studies which had made him an orator.”<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps the most striking claim Cicero makes about Archias is that he instilled in Cicero a love for reading and literature. As Peterson writes, “Archias had been one of Cicero’s earliest teachers, and had inspired him with a love of reading.”<sup>49</sup> Cicero refers to himself by asserting, “*Ego vero fateor me his studiis esse deditum,*” which Watts translates as, “I am a votary of literature, and make the confession unashamed.”<sup>50</sup> Cicero argues that he is this “votary of literature” in large part because of the influence of Archias in his early years.

Although Cicero claims that, “the poetry of Archias...would extend the fame of the Roman people,”<sup>51</sup> Richards contends that, while at face value a defense of liberal learning, the speech in truth is patriotic, emphasizing the role that Archias, as a Greek poet, could play in enhancing the perception of Rome abroad. Watts, in his translation, concurs with this point, writing in his Introduction that, “Archias the Greek made no appeal to Roman exclusiveness and contempt, but Archias the poet had done much, and might yet do more, to spread Roman fame and heighten Roman self-satisfaction. Cicero knew his jury, and skillfully weaves into his client’s cause an appeal to that patriotism

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<sup>48</sup> Strachan-Davidson, 10.

<sup>49</sup> Peterson, 289.

<sup>50</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Pro Archia Poeta*. Trans. N.H. Watts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 20-21.

<sup>51</sup> Richards, 244.

which was the weakness (and the strength) of the Roman character.”<sup>52</sup> Considering that Cicero, as well as scholars, place such emphasis on the ability of Archias to promote the Roman agenda, it is surprising that, “little or no poetry survives that can with confidence be ascribed to Archias.”<sup>53</sup> For a man who garnered such adoration and accolades from the great orator Cicero, it seems rather odd that so little would be known about the poet himself, particularly in light of the role that poetry and the poet play in Cicero’s defense.

Another key element found in the *Pro Archia*, in addition to Cicero’s defense of literature, Archias, and liberal learning, is his belief in the importance of being a good citizen and his explication of what it takes to be a valuable Roman citizen.

#### *Liberal Learning and Morality*

Cicero was a proponent of liberal learning and the development of a moral compass and strong virtue. In the *Pro Archia*, Cicero argues that liberal learning contributes to the betterment of the individual in terms of ethics and morality, which, for Cicero, are also closely tied to citizenship. From Archias, Cicero gained an appreciation for learning, and by extension, an appreciation for philosophy, as Peterson suggests, “letters, says Cicero, give inspiration and zest to men of affairs; they contain the highest moral teachings, so that the greatest characters are those whose unusual talents have been fostered by study.”<sup>54</sup> In other words, for Cicero, an education enhances an individual’s innate abilities, and, as in his own life, this education is often accompanied both by

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<sup>52</sup> Watts, introduction, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Porter, 139.

<sup>54</sup> Peterson, 289.



literature and likely a teacher, such as Archias, to instill in the pupil this love of learning. Lewis would seem to agree, with his famous claim that, “The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts.”<sup>55</sup> Rolfe writes, “Cicero offers an example of one who possessed to an eminent degree the moral virtues of honesty, chastity, and temperance in an age when those virtues were not common in the men whose names appear on the pages of history.”<sup>56</sup> Although this evaluation is likely too generous, certainly Cicero was exceptional in many ways when compared to the general population.

Cicero writes in the *Pro Archia*, “*Sed pleni sunt omnes libri, plenae sapientum voces, plena exemplorum vetustas; quae iacerent in tenebris omnia, nisi litterarum lumen accederet,*” (“All literature, all philosophy, all history, abounds with incentives to noble action, incentives which would be buried in black darkness were the light of the written word not flashed upon them.”)<sup>57</sup> In this sense Cicero sees literature as illuminating and enlightening. In a vein similar to his views on *otium*, however, literature must not be simply for one’s own personal benefit, but rather should inform actions performed in service to the nation and society, made evident by his assertion that the liberal arts provide “incentive to noble action,” which for Cicero is of course a life of public service.

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<sup>55</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1974), 13-14.

<sup>56</sup> John C. Rolfe, *Cicero and His Influence* (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1923), 168.

<sup>57</sup> Cicero, 22-23.

### *Survey of Scholarship*

Although viewed by many as a defense of liberal learning, some scholars view Cicero's tone and claims in the *Pro Archia* in a much more negative light. Some have accused him of vanity, or perhaps false modesty, particularly in the opening lines which read, "If I possess any talent, gentlemen of the jury, and I know how slight it is, or any skill in speaking, to which I confess I have given no little attention..."<sup>58</sup> Rolfe defends Cicero, however, arguing that, as opposed to a vanity of the sort of self-praise often associated with any haughty mention of one's own accomplishments, Cicero is merely pointing out that he has done his duty, as a Roman citizen, for the state. Rolfe points out that this would not have been viewed as arrogant or vain, but simply admirable that Cicero was fulfilling his duties.<sup>59</sup> Though again, Rolfe views Cicero quite generously.

Other commentators criticize the speech for its structure and Cicero's tendency to largely avoid arguing the actual case at hand, in favor of taking a less direct approach. As Watts writes in the Introduction to his translation, "'Cicero's speech for Archias,' says Brougham, 'which is exquisitely composed, but of which not more than one-sixth is to the purpose, could not have been delivered in a British Court of Justice.'<sup>60</sup> Acknowledging this criticism, however, Porter argues that, "The disproportionate size of the digression, to which Lord Brougham drew attention, inevitably suggests that Cicero's real concern lay there rather than in the legal issue of the case, which was trivial and

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<sup>58</sup> Rolfe, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Watts, introduction, 5.

unchallenging.”<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, Hanchey is of the opinion that, “the idea that the poetic subject matter of the *Pro Archia* somehow shaped the arguments of the speech more broadly than Cicero’s subject matter usually shaped his speeches is misguided.”<sup>62</sup>

Many scholars also mention the point that Cicero had hoped that Archias would write a poem concerning Cicero’s career, and provide this motive as explanation for his extensive praise of Archias in the oration.<sup>63</sup> Yet, others defend the style and structure of the speech, arguing, that, regardless of its factuality, the speech is worthwhile. Richards explains, “Cicero asks leave to treat the manner in a style unusual to the law courts. He sketches his client’s brilliant career and calls the attention of the court to the importance of literary studies generally and especially of poetry.”<sup>65</sup> Richards further defends the means by which Cicero attempts to persuade his audience, pointing out that, “men forget that his chief object was to persuade, and that to persuade a Roman jury then was a different thing from persuading an English jury today.”<sup>66</sup>

In the *Pro Archia*, disguised as a defense of his teacher’s Roman citizenship, Cicero succeeds in providing a defense of liberal learning. Liberal learning, philosophy, history, and poetry enable the intellectual individual to serve more effectively in the realm of public service, while the also enhance his/her understanding of morality and

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<sup>61</sup> Porter, 140.

<sup>62</sup> Daniel Hanchey. “Typically Unique: Shared Strategies in Cicero’s *Pro Archia* and *Pro Balbo*.” *Classical Journal* 108, no. 2 (December 2012): 183.

<sup>63</sup> Richards, 12.

<sup>65</sup> Richards, 226.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

right action. In this paper, I shall first assess the circumstances in which Cicero defended Archias, demonstrating how Cicero reconstructs social memory throughout the oration through a multifaceted approach to argument. Next, I shall analyze the speech as an example of epideictic rhetoric, providing a sort of *laudatio funebris* for Archias, Cicero, and liberal learning. Then, I shall delve further into the extent to which liberal learning and moral development enhance both one's personal and professional life and the invaluable worth of a poet to the state.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Reconstruction of History in Cicero's *Pro Archia*

#### *Introduction*

In the *Pro Archia*, Cicero must construct a case in defense of the citizenship of his teacher, Archias, whose citizenship records were allegedly burned at Heraclea. Cicero writes, “*Hic tu tabulas desideras Heracliensium publicas, quas Italico bello incenso tabulario interisse scimus omnes?*”<sup>1</sup> [Here do you desire the public records of Heraclea, all of which we know had been destroyed with the burning of the records office during the Italian war?] Although Cicero first claims that Archias’ name would have been on those records were they available, he spends the remainder of the speech reconstructing Archias’ personal history in order to persuade the audience that Archias is deserving of Roman citizenship. Furthermore, Cicero argues that Archias holds value for the state in his ability to immortalize the power and might of Rome—or, in essence, his capacity for reconstructing history. Throughout the speech, the theme of the reconstruction of history occurs repeatedly as both an overt rhetorical tactic and as an underlying, pervasive theme that can be perceived only from a broader perspective.

#### *Brief Survey of Scholarship*

Cicero’s personal and political motivations for defending Archias have been hotly debated over the decades, and it is unlikely that any scholar will ever be able to ascertain the precise motivations with complete certainty. One of Cicero’s less-studied works,

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<sup>1</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 8.

scholars nonetheless have presented an array of opinions and hypotheses concerning the historical context and rationale for the speech for Archias. Many scholars have focused their analyses on the part of the speech not explicitly linked to the case at hand, namely Cicero's extensive exaltation of liberal learning. Berry though, in his own analysis, focuses on the complexities of the language used in the speech, acknowledges this viewpoint by asserting that, "It is the encomium of literature, however, for which *Pro Archia* is read and remembered."<sup>2</sup> William Porter, in his article, "*Pro Archia* and the Responsibilities of Reading," provides one example of such an interpretation. He eloquently presents the elements of Cicero's argument for the intimate and essential connection between the poet and the state, an argument that Porter classifies as a "digression" in the speech.<sup>3</sup> Nesholm takes a somewhat different perspective, focusing instead primarily on the language in the speech itself and the importance of Cicero's eloquence to the success of his argument.<sup>4</sup> Still another scholar, Dugan, turns his attention to Cicero's construction of his own identity, labeling the speech as an example of epideictic rhetoric and "self-fashioning."<sup>5</sup> Each of these scholars provides valuable

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<sup>2</sup> D.H. Berry, "Literature and Persuasion in Cicero's *Pro Archia*," in *Cicero the Advocate*, ed. Jonathan Powell and Jeremy Paterson, (Oxford University Press, 2004), 292.

<sup>3</sup> William Malin Porter, "Cicero's *Pro Archia* and the Responsibilities of Reading," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 8, no. 2 (May 1, 1990): 152.

<sup>4</sup> Erika J. Nesholm, "Language and Artistry in Cicero's *Pro Archia*," *Classical World* 103, no. 4 (2010): 477.

<sup>5</sup> John Dugan, "How to Make (and Break) a Cicero: Epideixis, Textuality, and Self-Fashioning in the *Pro Archia* and *In Pisonem*," *Classical Antiquity* 20, no. 1 (April 1, 2001): 36.

insight into a particular facet of the rhetoric and argumentation of the speech. When their various analyses are combined, however, one can glean the fullest portrait of the multidimensional case that Cicero is constructing in the *Pro Archia*.

While the scholars previously mentioned have centered their research on the content and style of the speech itself, others have speculated concerning Cicero's key motivations in defending Archias in the first place. Some scholars entertain the notion that Cicero's defense of Archias was not entirely a selfless act of civic duty for a former teacher but rather a bargaining chip by which Cicero hoped to entice Archias to write about Cicero's contributions to the state during his consulship. Porter hints at this tendency to question Cicero's motives by writing, "We are left with the suspicion that the entire speech is little more than a product of Cicero's vanity."<sup>6</sup> Arguments such as this surely have created heated discussion, yet scholars err when attributing motive, as so often, due to our limited information about the precise context of the speech; the inferences necessary to prove the point go too far and stray from the point of the speech itself. Cicero's motives might never be discovered, but it is nonetheless quite evident that in this speech, regardless of original intent, the master orator has crafted a complex argument revealed one layer at a time throughout the defense.

#### *Arguments and Rhetorical Devices*

To begin, the style of the speech proves noteworthy. In order for his arguments to hold water, Cicero must first earn the trust of his audience, and this trust is based largely on a shared set of morals, or as Porter explains, "The style of the *Pro Archia*, although it

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<sup>6</sup> Porter, 143.

is not especially idiosyncratic, is supremely personal: it betokens a universe of personal values that Cicero implies are shared by him and his audience.”<sup>7</sup> It is interesting how Porter phrases this notion: “Cicero *implies* are shared by him and his audience.” Here, at the stylistic level, we see the first hints of the restructuring of history and memory that will continue to unfold throughout the speech. Whether or not Cicero and his audience—and Archias for that matter—in fact do share the same set of values, is not known (though it is likely that they would). The crux of the argument depends on Cicero’s own implication, leading the audience to believe subsequently that they share similar values, and therefore Cicero’s opinions and arguments on the case at hand are valid and credible. Berry takes a slightly different perspective, explaining Cicero’s style particularly at the outset of the speech, as a conscious choice by which he might cajole the audience by incorporating them into the “atmosphere of culture and sophistication.”<sup>8</sup> Berry notes a similar theme, writing that, “Treating the jury as intellectuals also serves to reduce the apparent cultural distance separating them and Archias: during the trial, Cicero, Archias, and the jury will all be literary men together.”<sup>9</sup> In either case, Cicero’s stylistic choices and his dependence on the trust of his audience are also relevant to the content of the introduction to the case, the *exordium*.

Although the style of the speech initially sets the tone for the trust and credibility upon which Cicero’s argument will come to rely, he also explicitly addresses this subject in the *exordium*. Key to Cicero’s success in argumentation is his task of “creating

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>8</sup> Berry, 297.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 304.



goodwill for himself and his client” which he seeks to establish in the *exordium*.<sup>10</sup> Porter corroborates the importance of the jury’s opinion of Cicero as he writes, “The oration instead consists of a number of claims, both about Archias’ status as a citizen and also about the status of poets generally in the state, which the judges are *simply supposed to believe on the strength of Cicero’s own personal authority*.”<sup>11</sup> Cicero must first create for himself goodwill, based on the assumption of shared values between the audience and himself, but then he must go one step further and prove the credibility of his client, Archias. Wallach elaborates on the first premise, Cicero’s own credibility, in the *exordium* by explaining that, “Clearly, modest acknowledgement of a debt (*sine arrogantia*) and references to Cicero’s service to his fellow Romans would set well with jurors. Neither of these points is developed into an argument, although both are amplified at length.”<sup>12</sup> Once establishing his own credibility, Cicero must continue by extending this virtue to Archias, by extension. This foundation of goodwill for Archias by means of Cicero’s assertion of his vast influence on his own life proves particularly relevant to this paper:

“Nam 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

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<sup>10</sup> Barbara Price Wallach, “CICERO’S ‘PRO ARCHIA’ AND THE TOPICS,” *Rheinisches Museum Für Philologie*, Neue Folge, 132, no. 3/4 (January 1, 1989): 316.

<sup>11</sup> Porter, 143-4.

<sup>12</sup> Wallach, 316-317.

exstitisse.”<sup>13</sup>

[For my mind is able to look back as far as possible to time gone by and to record the earliest memory of childhood, searching this (my memory) from that point on I see that this man stood out as foremost for me and with a view to undertaking and with a view to beginning the reason of these zeals/studies.]<sup>14</sup>

At this point, Archias is first introduced to the audience as the man to whom Cicero credits his own early tendency toward study and intellectual pursuits. True or not, by this assertion, Cicero adroitly creates an image of a child and his first teacher, a mentor who set him on the path from the very beginning toward becoming a successful statesman. Others join Porter in his suspicion of the accuracy of this claim, but he puts the matter frankly by writing, “In retrospect it is evident that the claim was made in the *exordium*, that it was Archias more than anyone else who was responsible for Cicero’s undertaking the study of oratory, is hyperbole if not fable.”<sup>15</sup> Thus once again, through his tactics of defending Archias, Cicero evidently reconstructs historical fact to suit his needs at the time. Therefore, although not explicitly relevant to the arguments Cicero will make in the coming paragraphs, the *exordium* accomplishes the necessary tasks of setting the tone and introducing the speaker, the defendant, and the subject matter.

Cicero has now established two significant facets of his argument, first that he himself should be seen as credible in the eyes of the audience, and second, that his client, because of his relationship with Cicero, likewise deserves the complete trust of the

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<sup>13</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 1

<sup>14</sup> All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

<sup>15</sup> Porter, 143.

audience members. Furthermore, the style and eloquence of the speech itself and Cicero's rhetorical and oratorical skills, provide further evidence of Archias' skills as a teacher.

While on one level, much of the *Pro Archia* could be read at face-value as precisely the "encomium of literature"<sup>16</sup> *videlicet* Berry, there are many more levels to the argument than first appear on the surface. Cicero has already established in the *exordium* that Archias was one of his first teachers, whom Cicero claims to have had an immense influence on his life. Archias had instructed Cicero in the very valuable skills of oratory and rhetoric, which are, conveniently, on display for the audience in the speech itself. Therefore, the speech stands out as a sort of exemplum for the very arguments that Cicero presents within the speech. As Berry explains, "A show of stylistic brilliance on Cicero's part will therefore reflect creditably on the man who taught him. Archias must indeed be a teacher of genius, the jury will conclude, if he taught Cicero to speak like this."<sup>17</sup> In essence, Cicero's abilities in oratory that he demonstrates throughout the speech were cultivated by Archias, and for this and many other reasons, Archias qualifies to be a citizen of Rome.

Another compelling facet of Cicero's argument is his portrayal of a connection among the arts, civic duty, and action. In part, this connection is conveyed through Cicero's style throughout the speech. Nesholm speaks to this point by elaborating, "Cicero reactivates artistic metaphors so that the highly literary language of the speech is itself an important element in his argument for the significance of literature in Roman society. This defense speech, which integrates the poetic into the forensic, displays the

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<sup>16</sup> Berry, 292.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

wide-ranging importance of literature in a civic context.”<sup>18</sup> In a manner somewhat to Berry’s argument for the speech as an example of Archias’ impeccable teaching, Nesholm’s observation also functions as an example of the interdependence of literary and civic pursuits for which Cicero also argues in the speech.<sup>19</sup> Berry emphasizes a similar point, noting that Cicero’s extensive glorification of history in the *Pro Archia* serves to convince and remind the audience of the connections between literature and public service, providing another implicit argument for Archias’ citizenship.<sup>20</sup>

Dugan expands on this unique manner of argument further, by labeling Cicero’s use of rhetoric as epideictic, which he defines as, “the form of oratory that is most closely associated with self-consciously literary expression and least connected to the “real world” of the senate and forum.”<sup>21</sup> Dugan identifies the epideictic mode as a key element of Cicero’s power of persuasion in the speech, which, “stands as an exemplary case of how a literary form could interact with Roman political reality to reveal the potentialities and limitations of attempts to shape politics through cultural means.”<sup>22</sup> Dugan takes into account the immense complexities that arise from a reimagining of history such as that depicted in the *Pro Archia*. Thus, perhaps the best analysis of the *Pro Archia* is one that combines both the literary and political implications, as this combination seems to be precisely the strategy by which Cicero constructed his own arguments.

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<sup>18</sup> Nesholm, 478.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 477.

<sup>20</sup> Berry, 297.

<sup>21</sup> Dugan, 36.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

### *Historical References and Structure of the Speech*

As has already been mentioned, Cicero presents a unique case, arguing first that the documented references of Archias' citizenship would in fact show that he is a citizen. Interestingly, however, he spends very little time with this part of the case. He essentially states it as fact, but then, perhaps expecting that his audience will be skeptical of such a claim, spends the vast majority of the speech constructing the assertion that Archias deserves to be a citizen. It therefore becomes much less the case that it appears at first, that is, the defense against an accusation, and is instead a construction of a new case for granting citizenship to Archias. Cicero spells out these two facets of the argument he is about to construct:

Quod si mihi a vobis tribui concedique sentiam, perficiam profecto ut hunc A. Licinium non modo non segregandum, cum sit civis, a numero civium verum etiam, si non esset, putetis asciscendum fuisse.<sup>23</sup>

[But if I shall perceive that it has been granted and conceded to me, I shall bring it about that this man, A. Licinus, not only not having been excluded, because he is a citizen, but also from the number of citizens, if he were not, you all think that he ought to be enrolled.]

Put simply, not only would the records, had they not been destroyed, show that Archias is a citizen, but Cicero also provides a secondary argument for those in the audience who may be skeptical of his first argument: even if the records do not show that Archias is a citizen, the records, not Archias, would be in the wrong, because he is so very worthy of

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<sup>23</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 4.

Roman citizenship. Once Cicero has created the foundation of credibility upon which he will build his future arguments and has clearly delineated the two layers of the argument itself, Cicero is able to continue on to an introduction of the persona and character of Archias. The *exordium* is a component of the outermost layer of the speech, wherein Cicero establishes himself as a worthy defender of a worthy defendant, Archias. It is also focused primarily on the most obvious purpose of the speech—a defense of a man whose citizenship status has been called into question.

The *narratio* builds on the foundation established in the *exordium*, but it also begins to provide another layer of argumentation in addition to the explicit case for Archias' citizenship. Cicero's focus both on Archias' early years and his own early years, (which he claims were heavily influenced by Archias' instruction) indicates the importance of an individual's history and past on his character and worth later in life. Here, as in many other instances throughout the speech, the value of history in rhetoric and argument in Cicero is quite apparent. Cicero begins by depicting Archias as an adolescent in order to establish an account of his life and accomplishments building the case for citizenship:

Nam ut primum ex pueris excessit Archias atque ab eis artibus quibus aetas puerilis ad humanitatem informari solet, se ad scribendi studium contulit. Primum Antiochiae—nam ibi natus est loco, nobili—celebri quondam urbe et copiosa atque eruditissimis hominibus liberalissimisque studiis adfluente, celeriter antecellere omnibus ingeni gloria coepit.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 4.

[For when Archias had first left boyhood and those arts by which the age of boyhood is accustomed to be shaped with a view to humanity, he applied himself to the study of writing. First at Antioch—for there at that noble place he was born, from the once renowned and bountiful city and rich in the most erudite men and most liberal studies, he quickly began to excel before all others in natural ability and fame.]

By establishing Archias as a scholar even very early in his life, Cicero emphasizes the longstanding legitimacy of Archias' intellect, *studium*, as well as, by extension, his virtue. Berry notes the connection between virtue and poetry by explaining that, "Cicero cannot conceal or explain away Archias' occupation, and so he has no choice but to make a virtue of it."<sup>25</sup> While the information presented in this section appears to be factually true—for example he was born in Antioch—it also provides further credibility for Archias' worth as a citizen of Rome.

In the speech, both Archias' and Cicero's personal history, as has been previously mentioned in the paper, is supremely important. Yet, here again, we find that Cicero's depth of argument penetrates still deeper. He also spends a great deal of time and effort associating Archias with highly acclaimed and respected historians and poets of the era.<sup>26</sup> On one level, the discussion of history and its importance to society in general is important, but furthermore, Cicero emphasizes that Archias in particular has a unique role to play in portraying the history and civic accomplishments of Rome. The goal, of course, in providing this second argument, is to prove Archias' unique worth as a citizen and as a

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<sup>25</sup> Berry, 297.

<sup>26</sup> Steel, C. E. W., *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2001). 85.

poet. Cicero reconstructs Archias' personal accomplishments, which many scholars believe Cicero greatly exaggerated for the purpose of argument, and he builds on that reconstruction further by listing great poets and historians with whom Archias ought to be compared. The most notable comparison is, of course, with Homer.

Homerum Colophonii civem esse dicunt suum, Chii suum vindicant, Salaminii repetunt, Smyrnaei vero suum esse confirmant itaque etiam delubrum eius in oppido dedicaverunt, permulti alii praeterea pugnant inter se atque contendunt. Ergo illi alienum, quia poeta fuit, post mortem etiam expetunt; nos hunc vivum qui et voluntate et legibus noster est repudiamus, praesertim cum omne olim studium atque omne ingenium contulerit Archias ad populi Romani gloriam laudemque celebrandam?<sup>27</sup>

[Colophonians say that Homer was their own citizen, Chians claim he was theirs, the Salaminians demand he was theirs, the Smyrnians confirm that he truly was theirs and they even dedicated a shrine of him in their town, moreover many others fight and argue amongst themselves. Thus those men seek after a stranger, because he was a poet, even after his death; we question this man alive, a man who by his own will and by our laws, is ours, especially since long ago Archias devoted all of his studies and ingenuity with a view to celebrating the glory and praise of the Roman people?]

Homer would have been, as he is today, the quintessential Greek poet. Consideration of the likely exaggerations that Cicero has made throughout the speech regarding Archias' literary production, leads to the conclusion that the comparison of Homer and Archias is

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<sup>27</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 19.



rather unreasonable, yet it certainly would have captured the attention of the jury to hear such a name. In addition to the purely artistic and literary qualities of Homer, the comparison also carries significance because of both poets' subject matter of the glories of war and battle.<sup>28</sup> Archias' poetry brings still further glory to Rome, and thus there is still another reason for his rightful citizenship. Cicero continues by comparing Archias to several other noteworthy figures, including Ennius, Alexander the Great, and Pompey the Great.<sup>29</sup>

Cicero's comparison of Archias to Ennius proves worth mentioning as well. While the discussion of Homer is significant for the similarities in subject matter and country of origin, the association with Ennius is unique in that "it places Archias specifically at the centre of Rome's cultural achievements, given that Ennius was still, at this period, *the* epic poet of Rome."<sup>30</sup> Cicero is then able to adduce both political and cultural comparisons in order to enhance the audience's perception of Archias through associations with admirable figures. Of course, these comparisons are considerably exaggerated; therefore Cicero has, on this point as well, succeeded in reconstructing the personal history of his defendant.

A second facet of this section of grand comparisons resides in the significance of the ties between the poet and the state, not simply the poet's worth purely as a literary figure. Steel explains succinctly: "great poets are in demand as ornaments to states; Archias is a great poet; therefore he should be in great demand by the Roman state for

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<sup>28</sup> Berry, 308.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>30</sup> Steel, 86.

whom he has done so much.”<sup>31</sup> Poets are valuable to the state for their ability to commemorate and immortalize great exploits. Once the historical facts of the past have slipped away, the immortality of poetry will remain. This seems to be precisely the point that Cicero is trying to make, and it is one that fits snugly into the broader arc of the speech as well. Archias has been accused of not being a Roman citizen because the material evidence of the citizenship documents has been destroyed. Through rhetoric and oratory, Cicero then reconstructs proof that Archias deserves to be a citizen, and a primary reason for his qualification is his portrayed ability to immortalize the greatness of Rome, the state of which he desires to be a citizen. Therefore, aside from the beauty of the speech that is the “encomium of literature” of Berry’s analysis, it is also an incredibly complex tapestry of history, that Cicero has carefully woven to pertain precisely to the abilities of his client.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 87.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Epideictic Rhetoric on Behalf of Cicero, Archias, and Liberal Learning

#### *Introduction*

Although the *Pro Archia* is in fact a defense of Archias in a court of law, and could therefore be classified as forensic rhetoric, because of Cicero's unique stylistic choices and their relationship to his subject matter, Dugan, in his article published in *Classical Antiquity*, asserts that a more apt classification of the speech would be epideictic rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> In many cases, epideictic rhetoric is the alternative to forensic rhetoric, and yet in this particular instance, Cicero manages to juggle both realms seamlessly. Dugan further develops this argument in his book on what he labels "Ciceronian self-fashioning," as well.<sup>2</sup>

Dugan further explains that epideictic is a "ludic rhetorical domain that embraces paradoxes: it encompasses both praise and blame, is markedly Greek and proximate to the Romans' *laudatio funebris*, and is simultaneously associated with both textual fixity and *viva voce* improvisation."<sup>3</sup> The *Pro Archia* clearly falls into the category of an encomium, most overtly for Archias, but Dugan argues further that the *Pro Archia* enables Cicero to portray himself in as positive a light as possible, and therefore create

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<sup>1</sup> John Dugan. "How to Make (and Break) a Cicero: Epideixis, Textuality, and Self-Fashioning in the *Pro Archia* and *In Pisonem*." *Classical Antiquity* 20, no. 1 (April 1, 2001): 35-77.

<sup>2</sup> John Dugan. *Making a New Man: Ciceronian Self-Fashioning in the Rhetorical Works*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Dugan, 2001: 36.

what Dugan labels a “pre-mortem *laudatio funebris*.”<sup>4</sup> This argument dovetails well with another mentioned briefly by Dugan, that, “In defending Archias’ citizenship in a way that blended himself with his client, Cicero could justify his own claim to be authentically Roman and, by extension, to have conducted himself as consul in accordance with the *mos maiorum*.”<sup>5</sup> Dugan’s analysis emphasizes the significance of Cicero’s intention and centers on the creation of Cicero’s identity throughout the speech. Thus, though the title is *Pro Archia*, according to Dugan, a more honest title would be *Pro Cicerone*.

If Ciceronian self-fashioning certainly seems to be a major component of the speech, but it does not, *pace* Dugan, quite represent the entire picture. Accordingly, it is more than simply Cicero’s “pre-mortem *laudatio funebris*” rather, in effect, the speech serves to provide a sort of *laudatio funebris* not only for Cicero but also for Archias, as well as for poetry and liberal arts as a whole. The “blending,” therefore, also carries over into Cicero’s grand expository on the value of poetry and liberal learning, serves the purpose of lauding each of the three subjects—Cicero, Archias, and liberal arts.

#### *The Pro Archia as Epideictic Rhetoric*

Whether or not one goes so far as to view the speech as a *laudatio funebris*, the *Pro Archia* inarguably bears many generally accepted traits of epideictic rhetoric, a sort of ceremonial form of rhetoric. Cicero himself even makes reference within the speech to

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 45.

the fact that he is employing a peculiar style.<sup>6</sup> As Sheard explains succinctly, “Aristotle limited epideictic to the praise or censure of a person or thing (tangible or intangible) and described it primarily as ceremonial speech whose audience serves as spectator rather than judge (as in deliberative and forensic oratory) and whose temporal focus is on the present.”<sup>7</sup> In the case of Cicero’s speech for Archias, however, the epideictic mode functions not as an alternative to forensic discourse, but rather as a tool for the forensic.

Nesholm alludes to this as well when she points out that the highly stylistic tone of the speech “contributes to its persuasive impact as it demonstrates the influence of poetry on forensic speech.”<sup>8</sup> One factor that distinguishes epideictic from forensic discourse in many instances is the absence of a burden of proof.<sup>9</sup> Or, in other words, “Insiders usually come to hear epideictic speakers with expectations that they will say what they want to hear.”<sup>10</sup> Such fawning, however, does not seem to be entirely consistent with the aims of the *Pro Archia*, although the precise conditions of the speech are not known. The fact remains, however, that there is a question of law to be determined and Cicero must persuade the judge of a particular point. Therefore, the speech is not merely epideictic, as there is some question of evidence, nor is it merely

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>7</sup> Cynthia Miecznikowski Sheard. “The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric.” *College English* 58, no. 7 (November 1996): 768.

<sup>8</sup> Erika J. Nesholm. “Language and Artistry in Cicero’s *Pro Archia*.” *Classical World* 103, no. 4 (2010): 479.

<sup>9</sup> Dale L. Sullivan. “The Ethos of Epideictic Encounter.” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 26, no. 2 (1993): 124.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 124.

forensic, as it employs highly literary and stylistic elements uncommon in typical forensic discourse but hallmarks of epideictic oratory. As Dugan aptly explains, “By transforming the legal case of the *Pro Archia* into an epideictic speech that seeks to use the cultural value of poets and poetry to naturalize Archias as a Roman citizen, Cicero shapes the speech into a text that carries out several simultaneous transactions.”<sup>11</sup>

Although the audience is not quite so predictable as many epideictic audiences, the audience members likely had a shared set of common values upon which Cicero’s speech depended, another essential quality of epideictic speech.<sup>12</sup> Cicero possibly exploited the acceptance of shared values and the epideictic tactics served to distract the audience from the fact that there was indeed an element of proof necessary throughout the speech, capitalizing on what Sullivan refers to as “epideictic speakers’ relative freedom to state opinion without grounding it with detail.”<sup>13</sup> The veracity of much of what Cicero says is certainly questionable, but as addressed in the previous chapter, Cicero manages to reconstruct reality to fit the needs of the speech.

As we saw earlier (Chapter 2), the epideictic mode also explains the way in which the speech itself is an illustration and a piece of evidence in support of the arguments made in the case. Another scholar, Beale, discusses the epideictic mode as what linguists would identify as a speech act, emphasizing the role of the performative in the orator’s technique. He explains his term “rhetorical performative” as the “composed and more or less unified act of rhetorical discourse which does not merely say, argue, or allege

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<sup>11</sup> Dugan 2001, 36.

<sup>12</sup> Sullivan, 118.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

something about the world of social action, but which constitutes (in some special way defined by the conventions or customs of a community) a significant social action in itself.”<sup>14</sup> Later in his article, Beale goes on to argue for epideictic as a means of social change, and there is certainly an element of idealism and an encouragement of emulation involved, as Sullivan points out as well.<sup>15</sup> In the case of the *Pro Archia*, however, which Beale does not examine in his research, the epideictic mode is certainly used to create a speech that will be a “significant social action in itself.” This idea is also related to the argument put forward in chapter two, that the speech stands as evidence for the case itself, namely that Cicero is such an excellent orator because he had the privilege of having such an excellent teacher in Archias.<sup>16</sup> Cicero’s own skills hold relevancy because of the necessity of establishing an ethos in order to effectively persuade the audience of his case.

#### *The Pro Archia as Laudatio Funeris for Cicero*

Many scholars accuse Cicero of using the *Pro Archia* as a means of advancing his own political agenda, and he certainly does make either overt or subtle references to himself throughout the speech. In part, however, this self-centeredness could simply be emblematic of the epideictic mode. Sheard elaborates: “epideictic discourse was burdened from the start by suspicions of the speaker’s self-indulgence and opportunism, his manipulation of audience sentiments, and his distance from the interests of the

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<sup>14</sup> Walter H. Beale. “Rhetorical Performative Discourse: A New Theory of Epideictic.” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 11, no. 4 (Autumn 1978): 225.

<sup>15</sup> Sullivan, 115.

<sup>16</sup> Nesholm, 487.

community.”<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, so much of the success or failure of the case rests on the audience’s perception of Cicero that the development and cultivation of his personal ethos throughout the speech becomes integral to the argument itself. Sullivan identifies five key elements of the epideictic rhetor’s ethos: “(1) the rhetor’s reputation, (2) the rhetor’s vision, (3) the rhetor’s authority, (4) the rhetor’s presentation of good reasons, and (5) the rhetor’s creation of consubstantiality with the audience.”<sup>18</sup> In order to encompass these various facets, Cicero must engage in the “self-fashioning” identified by Dugan, thereby in effect creating his own “pre-mortem *laudatio funebris*.”<sup>19</sup> In keeping with the arguments proposed in Chapter 2 related to immortality and the importance of rhetorical reconstruction of events due to the fallibility of written documentation, a *laudatio funebris* similarly encompasses ideas of immortality as the deceased remains in the memories of the living. The difference here, of course, is that Cicero would like to be remembered in the positive public opinion generally granted to the dead while he is still alive and well.

Cicero begins the *exordium* with a sort of false modesty, introducing himself as the speaker, but very clearly hinting at the fact that he is well-known as a great orator. This section, however, is not especially unique in Ciceronian discourse, and did he not continue to refer to himself throughout the oration; it would not be nearly enough to classify the speech as an epideictic pseudo-funeral oration. Later, however, in the

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<sup>17</sup> Sheard, 767-8.

<sup>18</sup> Sullivan, 118.

<sup>19</sup> Dugan 2001, 50.



*confirmatio*, Cicero expands at length on his own experiences with liberal learning, clearly portraying himself in a highly positive light:

Ego vero fateor me his studiis esse deditum. Ceteros pudeat, si qui ita se litteris abdiderunt ut nihil possint ex eis neque ad commune adferre fructum neque in aspectum lucemque proferre; me autem quid pudeat qui tot annos ita vivo, iudices, ut a nullius umquam me tempore aut commodo aut otium meum abstraxerit aut voluptas avocarit aut denique somnus retardarit?<sup>20</sup>

[But I confess that I have given myself to these studies. Let it shame the rest, if anyone thus devotes himself completely to literature with the result that they can contribute nothing from these studies neither with a view to the common advantage nor show its fruits to the eyes of all; moreover why should I be ashamed that I who have lived my life thus for so many years, oh judges, with the result that time in the library ever diverted me from the time or convenience of no one or that pleasure distracted me or that sleep inhibited me?]

The phrasing employed in this segment serves to laud both liberal learning and Cicero. He addresses critics who may suggest that *otium* is not a worthy use of one's time and refutes their potential arguments. He does acknowledge that if one engages himself only in study, and then does nothing to better society, he should be faulted; but, he quickly points out that he does not belong in this category. Rather, he leads the audience to consider the many good deeds he has accomplished on behalf of his state and for his countrymen. By associating himself with liberal learning and then proceeding to defend liberal learning throughout the speech, Cicero portrays himself in a positive light. It also

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<sup>20</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 12.

seems interesting to note at this point that the absence of the word *otium* in the first two lines of this passage, and Cicero's choice to use words such as *studiis* and *litteris* instead. The sense of *otium* is certainly present, however, but avoiding the word itself perhaps would help Cicero to avoid initial criticisms. He uses the word only in the final lines of the section, describing not what he does engage in, but highlighting what he does not do in the second half of the result clause. Interestingly, Dugan draws connections between the world of epideictic and the idea of *otium*. He writes, "Despite the anxieties caused by epideictic's association with *otium*, its ludic quality renders it an ideal vehicle for Cicero's self-fashioning. Epideictic, since it is not grounded in the reality of a court case or political meeting, is a genre that stands apart from questions of truth and falsity."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps this is yet another piece of evidence for the complex layering and construction of the speech proposed in the second chapter. It also provides further explanation of Cicero's choice to employ the epideictic rhetorical mode throughout a speech that deals primarily with justifying the worth of *otium* when combined with political activity.

After establishing this first connection between himself and liberal learning, Cicero does not return immediately to the defense of Archias, but rather continues to defend his own status and activities:

Qua re quis tandem me reprehendat, aut quis mihi iure suscenseat, si, quantum ceteris ad suas res obeundas, quantum ad festos dies ludorum celebrandos, quantum ad alias voluptates et ad ipsam requiem animi et corporis conceditur

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<sup>21</sup> Dugan 2001, 42.

temporum, quantum alii tribuunt tempestivis conviviis, quantum denique alveolo, quantum pilae, tantum mihi egomet ad haec studia recolenda sumpsero?<sup>22</sup>

[Wherefore who in the world should rebuke me, or who would rightly be angry with me, if, as much as is devoted by the rest toward carrying out their own matters, as much as is devoted toward celebrating festival days of games, as much as is devoted toward other pleasures and toward that rest itself of the spirit and body, as much as others grant to elaborate dinner parties, as much then they grant to a gaming board, as much to a ball, so much did I undertake for myself with a view to cultivating this study?]

Cicero here continues to defend the way that he spends his time, while also implicitly criticizing those who spend their time on less worthy ventures. This segment then incorporates both elements of the paradox described by Dugan—praise and blame. Cicero’s use of the word *recolenda* in the final line here is interesting; for what reason would Cicero need to resume study, as opposed to simply continuing it? One possible explanation for this choice of phrasing may be simply related to his desire to employ complex and literary language in order to fit the demands of the speech. Yet, the emphasis on returning still seems significant. Perhaps another analysis of this word choice could be that liberal learning is something that, though we may stray toward other activities, such as political activity in Cicero’s case, in the end, we should return to our study of the liberal arts for further cultivation. In either way, this section clearly serves to further Cicero’s positive portrayal of himself and his cultural and political exploits,

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<sup>22</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 13.

providing evidence once again for the speech as a sort of *laudatio funebris* for Cicero himself.

Cicero further praises himself because of his association with Archias. He describes at the outset of the speech the longstanding relationship he has had with the poet, but still further in the oratory, he writes of the appropriateness of his praise of Archias, given the latter's immense qualifications and contributions. Cicero says, "*Hunc ego non diligam, non admirer, non omni ratione defendendum putem?*" [Should I not love this man, should I not admire him, should I not think that he must be defended with every reason?]<sup>23</sup> In essence, a man of such great accomplishments and worth as Cicero should likewise respect another man of worth in similar areas, namely Archias. This attitude also contributes to Dugan's argument that Cicero and Archias become blended into a sort of ideal poet/orator/statesman throughout the speech. On the one hand, Cicero must create an ethos for himself that will provide credibility to the arguments he makes on behalf of Archias, but on another level, blurring the distinctions between the two men serves to craft an even more compelling argument. "As Cicero blurs the distinction between himself and Archias, so too he presents his exemplary couplings of poet and patron in such a way that the two blend with each other."<sup>24</sup> In a similar vein, Kenneth Burke discusses the mode of epideictic as "the type of rhetoric that is readily transformed into display art, thus blurring the distinction between rhetoric and poetic."<sup>25</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>23</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Dugan 2001, 47.

<sup>25</sup> Sullivan, 116.

blending of various characters, as well as various modes of rhetorical discourse, becomes a central component in the composition of the speech.

#### The *Pro Archia* as *Laudatio Funeris* for Archias

While Cicero certainly casts himself in a leading role in the *Pro Archia*, its title character remains Archias, and therefore it is also a sort of *laudatio funeris* for the teacher, as well as the student. As mentioned previously, Cicero manages to praise both himself and Archias simultaneously at multiple points during the oration, but also there are certainly passages solely devoted to the positive portrayal of Archias. In fact, the majority of the speech, predictably, could be classified as such. For the purposes of this paper, we shall focus on only a few. The identification of the speech as a *laudatio funeris*, rather than simply a defense, grants the orator certain allowances that would not be permitted in typical forensic discourse. Crawford, in his analysis of the history of the *laudatio funeris*, points out the loose demands for historical truth, asserting that, “Indeed we have evidence that ‘amplification’ and ‘embellishment’ were almost as customary as the delivery of the oration itself.”<sup>26</sup> He mentions specific embellishments such as the exaggeration of titles and labels, initially put forth by Aristotle. Crawford explains that, “Since there is a certain affinity between vice and virtue we should deviate a little from the literal meaning of words (*derivatione verborum*) and call a man brave instead of rash, liberal instead of prodigal, thrifty rather than miserly.”<sup>27</sup> Cicero certainly exaggerates

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<sup>26</sup> O.C. Crawford. “Laudatio Funeris.” *The Classical Journal* 37, no. 1 (October 1941): 17–27. Crawford, 24.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

Archias' accomplishments in order to present the most persuasive case possible for his client.

As would be customary in a *laudatio funebris*, Cicero begins by describing Archias' earliest beginnings, quoted and translated previously in Chapter 2 of this text. Following this initial depiction of his childhood and adolescence, Cicero proceeds to consider the reputation that Archias acquired as a result of his myriad talents and accomplishments. Cicero asserts: *Post in ceteris Asia partibus cunctaque Graecia sic eius adventus celebrantur ut famam ingeni expectatio hominis, expectationem ipsius adventus admiratioque superaret.*<sup>28</sup> (“Afterwards, in the rest of Asia and in all of Greece, his coming was so celebrated that the expectation of the man surpassed the fame of his talent, and the admiration of his actual presence surpassed the expectation.”) It certainly is an exaggeration that Archias was known across Asia and Greece, but for the purposes of a laudatory speech such as a *laudatio funebris*, hyperbole such as this would be far more acceptable. Cicero spends a significant portion of the speech then detailing the various cities where Archias was granted citizenship. Although this certainly portrays Archias positively, it seems to be one of the few parts of the speech that are directly relevant to the question at hand, and does not particularly set the oration apart as epideictic.

In the *confirmatio*, Cicero describes at length, however, Archias' intellectual and rhetorical abilities that presumably bear no relevancy to his status as a citizen. Cicero vehemently asserts:

Quotiens ego hunc Archiam vidi, iudices—utar enim vestra benignitate, quoniam me in hic novo genere dicendi tam diligenter attenditis—quotiens ego hunc vidi,

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<sup>28</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 4.

cum litteram scripsisset nullam, magnum numerum optimorum versuum de eis ipsis rebus quae tum agerentur dicere ex tempore, quotiens revocatum, eandem rem dicere commutatis verbis atque sententiis!<sup>29</sup>

[How often did I see Archias, oh judges—for let me take advantage of your kindness, since you have listened so diligently to me in this new manner of speaking—how often did I see that this man, although he had written no words, spoke extempore a great number of esteemed verses about these very matters which then were being discussed, how often, having been called back, he spoke about the same matter with altered words and phrases!]

Archias' ability to recite oratory extemporaneously is in many ways utterly irrelevant to his citizenship status, yet if Cicero were able to accomplish the task of convincing the audience of how worthy Archias is, because of talents albeit exaggerated, such as this, perhaps they would see only his many positive characteristics and conclude that of course he should be granted citizenship. This extensive exposition of Archias' skills and abilities would be typical in a *laudatio funebris* as well. The blending of Archias and Cicero does not only augment the perception of Cicero, but likewise betters the perception of Archias. Cicero uses his power and status as a tool for persuasion, granting Archias far more credibility than he would otherwise have, as a relatively little-known Greek poet.

Cicero eloquently portrays his former teacher as influential, brilliant, and invaluable to the state. As we have seen, Dugan suggests that perhaps this speech is the opening shot of a *quid pro quo*, as Archias will now be indebted to Cicero to write the poem about Cicero's consulship. Dugan explains, "The stylistic finish and laudatory

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<sup>29</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 18.

exuberance with which Cicero honors Archias sets a standard for the poet to emulate. As Cicero's poetically charged epideictic style represents Archias' formative influence on the voice of the orator, so should Archias' poem mirror the mode of Cicero's speech for the poet."<sup>30</sup> Another view might be that the speech is meant rather to offer a kind of literary example. Indeed, other scholars have highlighted the significance of the epideictic orator's goal of inspiring the audience to emulate certain characteristics and embody certain traits depicted in the oration. Sullivan articulates that, "A successful epideictic encounter is one in which the rhetor, as a mature member of the culture, creates an aesthetic vision of orthodox values, an example (*paradeigma*) of virtue intended to create feelings of emulation, leading to imitation. As such, epideictic instructs the auditors and invites them to participate in a celebration of the tradition, creating a sense of communion."<sup>32</sup> Considering these two arguments in conjunction, I believe that not only does the assembled crowd and jury provide an audience for Cicero's epideictic oration, but Archias, too, is a member—perhaps the most important member—of Cicero's intended audience. Cicero hopes that his audience member, Archias, will receive the speech on his behalf and reciprocate in kind. This also presents a sort of full-circle instance: Cicero claims he first learned rhetoric and oratory from Archias' example, and now he wishes that Archias will emulate his example, resulting in a role-reversal of teacher and student. The epideictic mode seems particularly effective in creating this dynamic, given its tendency toward encouraging emulation among the audience members.

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<sup>30</sup> Dugan 2001, 48.

<sup>32</sup> Sullivan, 118.



The epideictic mode enables Cicero to use artistic license to an even greater extent than is typical in his orations. He employs eloquent praise and embellishment to create a sort of *laudatio funebris* both for himself and for Archias. Just as he blends himself and Archias, so too does he tie in the importance of liberal learning, a quality that gives worth both to his own identity and to that of his client.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Liberal Learning, Literature, and Civic Responsibility

#### *Introduction*

Widely regarded as the most enjoyable passages of the *Pro Archia*, Cicero's eloquent praise of the virtues of literature do not carry direct weight for the case at hand. They do, however, subtly advance Cicero's argument in favor of the pursuit of the liberal arts by presenting an excellent example of a possible use for education and literature. Furthermore, these passages provide value in their own right and can be analyzed independently to illustrate Cicero's views on the importance of liberal learning. There is no doubt that Cicero valued liberal learning in his own life. As Spaeth eloquently asserts, "that Cicero had a deep and abiding affection for poetry throughout his life is evident to anyone who has read his philosophical discourses and his orations even a little. I scarcely need mention the famous passages in the *Pro Archia*, written ostensibly in defense of a Greek poet but actually in praise of good literature."<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that in the *Pro Archia*, Cicero at times discusses poetry and literature rather interchangeably, yet both certainly have had a vast influence on his life and career. When combined with the label of epideictic asserted in the previous chapter, it might be concluded that in his praise of literature and its myriad merits, Cicero hopes to engender in his audience a desire to emulate exploits such as reading and writing literature, while also of course winning the case for Archias. Michael Grant has notably

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<sup>1</sup> John W Spaeth, Jr. "Cicero the Poet." *The Classical Journal* 26, no. 7 (April 1, 1931): 501.

said that the speech “‘is perhaps the finest eulogy of the literary life in the whole of ancient literature.’”<sup>2</sup> Thus, while in one sense the speech can be viewed as a pre-mortem *laudatio funebris* for both Cicero and Archias, it also stands as a sort of “eulogy” to any life lived in the pursuit of liberal learning—lives that both Archias and Cicero are famed to have lived. Nesholm points to something similar, citing Gotoff’s idea of the blending “‘between great men of the past and the literature that has immortalized them,’” and articulating that, “This slippage suggests that the speech itself functions as an image of both Archias and Cicero.”<sup>3</sup>

Cicero presents several different cases for the zealous study of literature within the *Pro Archia*. As is true for much of the speech, here too, there are numerous levels. First, literature is valuable to the individual simply for personal development and fulfillment. At the next level, the study of liberal arts and literature benefits one’s career—especially the career of an orator. Finally, and this is the point he makes most ardently to justify Archias’ citizenship, a person with poetic and literary skills and expertise is valuable to the state. Porter organizes this section of the speech similarly: first, general benefits of studying poetry, then the virtue of poets, and finally the value of the poet to the state as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

### *Literature as Personal Cultivation*

With the exception of references to a highly literary style of speaking in the *exordium*, the first mention of poetry or literature occurs in the beginning of the

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<sup>2</sup> Porter, 138.

<sup>3</sup> Nesholm, 483-4.

<sup>4</sup> Porter, 140-141.

*confirmatio*, in a description of the wonderful effects of having a friend and mentor such as Archias:

Quaeres a nobis, Gratti, cur tanto opere hoc homine delectemur. Quia suppeditat nobis ubi et animus ex hoc forensi strepitu reficiatur et aures convicio defessae conquiescant. An tu existimas aut suppetere nobis posse quod cotidie dicamus in tanta varietate rerum, nisi animos nostros doctrina excolamus, aut ferre animos tantam posse contentionem, nisi eos doctrina eadem relaxemus?<sup>5</sup>

[You will seek from me, Grattus, why I should be so greatly delighted by this man. Because he supplies for us whereby both the spirit is revived from this forensic clamor and our senses are given rest, exhausted from the shouts. Do you think either that that which we say daily can be available for us in such great variety of things, unless we cultivate our spirits with learning, or that our spirits can bear such conflict, unless we relax them with the same learning?]

Nesholm writes of this particular passage, astutely observing that, “As he responds to the imagined question from the prosecutor, Cicero shifts the argument subtly but significantly from the importance of this one man (*hoc homine*) to training in general (*doctrina*).”<sup>6</sup> This passage, then, serves as a bridge from the specific to the more broadly applicable, signaling to the audience that Cicero’s claims should have some relevance in their individual lives, which were unlikely to have been particularly intellectual.<sup>7</sup> This is the threshold of the two sections that Berry identifies, the first being literary pursuits in

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<sup>5</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Nesholm, 486.

<sup>7</sup> Berry, 304.

general and second, the importance of the poet Archias in particular.<sup>8</sup> Nesholm further corroborates this idea of a bridge by pointing out that, “The statement that Archias provides intellectual respite might apply equally to any poet, or indeed any writer. This shift from the man himself to the work he produces progresses to the still more far-reaching importance of training.”<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, while the relation of Archias to great poets enhances the view of poets in general, likewise the praise of poets in general reflects positively on Archias, whose fate still hangs in the balance.<sup>10</sup> Cicero portrays learning (*doctrina*) as a respite from the chaos of a public life. As he will later go on to describe, this is one half of the give-and-take of learning—it both provides us respite and equips us to reenter our daily lives with newly acquired knowledge and tools we need to be successful. Cicero navigates this transitional moment quite artfully, presenting a vivid depiction of the scene that his audience is likely currently experiencing. Perhaps he hints here at a note of irony—enticing the audience to imagine themselves engrossed in *doctrina*, somewhere far away from the crowds and noise of the forum where they all currently stand. There is also a sense here of inclusion—literary pursuits are not reserved for a special class of citizens, but rather are beneficial and necessary for diverse groups of people. As Berry observes, “He makes it out to be not an exclusive or intellectual subject, but something practical and useful to society.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>9</sup> Nesholm, 487.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Berry, 303.

*Literature as a Tool for Oratory and Discourse*

Cicero then progresses to a description of his own employment of such literary arts, and distinguishes between those who study literature but then do nothing productive with that knowledge, and people, like Cicero himself, who apply their literary expertise to worthwhile pursuits, such as forensic discourse. He ultimately concludes that his study of literature and poetry contributes to his success as an orator:

Atque id eo mihi concedendum est magis quod ex his studiis haec quoque crescit oratio et facultas quae, quantacumque est in me, numquam amicorum periculis deficit. Quae si cui levior videtur, illa quidem certe quae summa sunt ex quo fonte hauriam sentio.<sup>12</sup>

[And that must be conceded to me so much more because this oratory and skill which never fails my friends in danger even grow out of these passions or pursuits, whatever greatness there is in me., If this (ability) seems to anyone of little consequence, I certainly know from what font I derive those things which are of the utmost importance.]

This statement is of course related to a prior argument that the speech itself stands as a testament to the very learning that Cicero discusses, and therefore further proof of Archias' talents and abilities as a teacher. Cicero, notably, momentarily shifts the attention away from himself to describe how his friends are also benefited by his study of literature. He also refers to the origin of such talent, alluding to the possibility that it is of divine origin, a point that he will later pursue further.<sup>13</sup> After introducing the argument

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<sup>12</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 13.

<sup>13</sup> Porter, 141.

that literary pursuits augment his abilities as an orator, he goes on to describe the vast expanse of knowledge that can be gleaned from books:

Sed pleni omnes sunt libri, plenae sapientium voces, plena exemplorum vetustas; quae iacerent in tenebris omnia, nisi litterarum lumen accederet. Quam multas nobis imagines non solum ad intuendum verum etiam ad imitandum fortissimorum virorum expressas scriptores et Graeci et Latini reliquerunt! Quas ego mihi semper in administranda re publica proponens animum et mentem meam ipsa cogitatione hominum excellentium conformabam.<sup>14</sup>

[But all books, all voices of wisdom, all antiquity is full of incentives for right action: all of which would lie in the shadows, unless the light of literature comes near them. How many images of greatest might the great writers of Greek and Latin have expressed to us, they leave them behind for us not only with a view to considering them but also with a view to emulation! These I have always held up for myself in managing the republic, they have molded my spirit and mind in managing the republic, by the contemplation itself of such excellence.]

At this juncture Cicero clearly has broadened his praise of poetry to now a praise of literature in a broader sense, certainly including the area of history in his encomium.

Berry hypothesizes, quite logically it seems, that Cicero likely widened his scope in order to increase the likelihood that his assertions would resonate with the audience and their personal experiences in some way. He expands, “Clearly Cicero is not thinking only of poetry at this point: ‘scriptores et Graeci et Latini’ (‘the Greek and Latin writers’) would apply equally to prose historiography or biography, genres which some members of the

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<sup>14</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 14.

jury may have personally have considered more valuable and worthwhile, or less reprehensible than poetry.”<sup>15</sup> In large part, Cicero amplifies literature, even in his praise of poetry, that would have been at least loosely based on fact, such as an epic poem, and the idea of anything akin to a novel would likely have fallen outside his frame of reference. Then, after addressing the idea that it is possible to be a person of virtue without having been a person of learning and concluding that education only serves to further one’s virtue, Cicero embarks on perhaps the most inspiring lines of the speech:

Quod si non hic tantus fructus ostenderetur, et si ex his studiis delectatio sola peteretur, tamen, ut opinor, hanc animi remissionem humanissimam ac liberalissimam iudicaretis. Nam ceterae neque temporum sunt neque aetatum omnium neque locorum; at haec studia adulescentiam acuunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solacium praebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.<sup>16</sup>

[But if this fruit were not so great, and if from these studies delight alone was sought, nevertheless, as I opine, you would judge this the most civilized and decent relaxation of the mind. For the rest are neither of all time, nor age, nor place; and these pursuits excite the adolescent, amuse the old, they adorn favorable things, they supply refuge and solace in adversities, they delight at home, they do not obstruct when abroad, they spend the night with us, they travel with us, they stay in the countryside with us.]

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<sup>15</sup> Berry, 306.

<sup>16</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 16.



Here it is obvious that literature has its own value, outside of any benefits it might have for oratory and a political life. Cicero's assertions here hold a great deal of authenticity and relevance even for modern readers, who upon reading this passage, likely call to mind examples of particular works that have provided them with such benefits as Cicero articulates. One recent author, Christopher Beha, chose to detail his personal literary journey through the Harvard Classics Library in a book entitled *The Whole Five Feet*. Near the end of his work he concludes, "Books draw meaning from life, but they also give meaning in return."<sup>17</sup> This seems to be, in essence, precisely the argument that Cicero makes for literature. Beha further remarks that upon completing the vast Harvard Classics repertoire, "I can only hope that it sends me back to life, to possess the world more abundantly in myself."<sup>18</sup> Again, this bears notable resemblance to the arguments put forth by Cicero, sentiments that certainly are still relevant today.

Next, Cicero shifts his focus back to Archias and his employment of, appreciation for, and creation of, the many literary works that Cicero has now extolled at great length. He has, once again, skillfully blended the general into the specific, and vice-versa. After citing the great poet, Ennius, and his high praise of poets, Cicero continues to entreat his audience to hold a high opinion of Archias, the poet who stands before them:

Sit igitur, iudices, sanctum apud vos, humanissimos homines, hoc poetae nomen quod nulla umquam barbaria violavit. Saxa atque solitudines voci respondent,

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<sup>17</sup> Christopher Beha. *The Whole Five Feet*. Grove Press, 2009: 246.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

bestia saepe immanes cantu flectuntur atque consistunt; nos instituti rebus optimis non poetarum voce movamur?<sup>19</sup>

[Therefore let it be, judges, sacred among you, the most civilized men, this name of poet which no foreign land ever has violated. The rocks and the solitude answer the voice (of the poet), the dreadful beasts are turned by your song and stand still; should not we, trained in the best things, be moved by the voice of the poet ?]

Cicero draws a stark contrast between the men before him, as well as himself and Archias, and the barbarity so foreign to a poet. This is furthered by the description of the beasts over which Cicero claims a poet has power.

#### *Poetry as a Means of Achieving Lasting Glory*

Cicero then proceeds to his final point—that which is most significant and directly related to the case at hand of Archias’ citizenship—namely that, in addition to having personal and professional value, a poet and his work are invaluable to the state. Steel writes of this argument, saying, “But at this point the argument rises to a climax: Archias’ poetry is not valuable simply in augmenting and disseminating glory: it is crucial to the very survival of the state.”<sup>20</sup> Steel further elaborates that Archias has a particular value as a poet specifically because he is Greek, and not Roman. Steel quips, “What, after all, could be more satisfying or a better indication of Rome’s power than

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<sup>19</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Steel, 87.

having one of the defeated praising Rome's glory?"<sup>21</sup> This point of view stands in stark contrast to that proposed by Berry, who sees Archias' Greekness as a detriment to his credibility and worth, writing of Archias' poetry, that, "It would have seemed entirely alien to Archias' jury, who would have regarded it not just with the suspicion they directed at all intellectual subjects, but would have seen it as frivolous, effeminate, and even immoral. It was, in short, beneath the consideration of a Roman."<sup>22</sup> It seems quite likely that Berry and Steel have both aptly depicted the scenario: Steel points to the understanding of the situation construed by Cicero within the speech, and Berry points to the very view Cicero likely strove to combat throughout the speech. Regardless, Cicero provides clear explanation of the value of poets in general to the state, and of course he means for the audience to keep Archias in mind throughout this discourse.

In the following sections, Cicero inserts many names with which the audience would certainly have been familiar. Among others, he mentions, Ennius, Africanus, Cato, Alexander the Great, and Homer, naming both heroes and the poets who immortalized them in verse. This, then, is the value to the state: everlasting glory. The point further accents the idea that the entire oration can be seen as a reconstruction of memory and a re-envisioning of historical events, Archias' citizenship, that have been destroyed in public record but are recreated and immortalized by Cicero's panegyric of the poet. Near the very end of the speech, Cicero entreats the audience to think of themselves and their desire to be remembered into posterity:

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>22</sup> Berry, 303.

An vero tam parvi animi videamur esse omnes qui in re publica atque in his vitae periculis laboribusque versamur ut, cum usque ad extremum spatium nullum tranquillum atque otiosum spiritum duxerimus, nobiscum simul moritura omnia arbitremur? An statuas et imagines, non animorum simulacra, sed corporum, studiose multi summi homines reliquerunt; consiliorum relinquere ac virtutum nostrarum effigiem nonne multo malle debemus summis ingeniis expressam et politam?.<sup>23</sup>

[But truly shall we all seem to be so small minded, and we who are engaged in these dangers and labors of life in the republic, that, when we have allowed no tranquility and leisurely spirit toward the last period of life, do we think that all will die at the same time as we die? But have not many of the best men left behind statues and *imagines*, not the images of spirit, but of the body; should we not prefer the more to leave behind an effigy of our character and intelligence, carved and polished by the most outstanding talents?]

Here, Cicero encourages his audience to contemplate the future, envisioning what they wish to leave behind after they have exhausted their mortal lives. The “effigy of our character and intelligence” clearly refers to poetry. Certainly this is what Cicero hopes for his own life—immortalization of his heroic deeds on behalf of the state. As Steel articulates, “This careful shift enables Cicero to harness, for Archias’ benefit, the long-standing appreciation of poetry as an incentive to glory through its remembrancing powers, an appreciation which would not automatically extend to Archias...And it also

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<sup>23</sup> *Pro Archia*, sec. 30.

allows Cicero to recast his undisputed oratorical skills as the sort of heroic activity which is celebrated in epic.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, as so often occurs in this speech, Cicero expertly accomplishes multiple effects simultaneously, winning honor and credibility both for himself and for his client.

Cicero then concludes his argument toward which he has been building for most of the speech. Regardless of other effects that the speech might have on the audience, he cannot ignore his most obvious goal of convincing the jury of Archias’ worth as a citizen of Rome. In essence, “Just as the poet-patron relationship involved the exchange of services, of poetic commemoration and thus everlasting life in return for material support, so, the jurors are encouraged to think, should the relationship by which Cicero has suggested exists between Archias and the state be confirmed by their material support for Archias, that is, their allowing him to remain as a Roman citizen.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, although of course the *Pro Archia* presents a complex and multidimensional argument, rife with artful rhetoric and an inspiring encomium of literature, in the end, it concludes with the idea with which it was begun. He has used poetry and literature eloquently, in the same way he has advised within the speech, to enhance his own forensic discourse, thereby winning the case and securing Archias’ citizenship.

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<sup>24</sup> Steel, 89.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 90.

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