Presentation: How convincing are Cicero’s arguments in defence of Archias?

Historical Background to the *Pro Archia*

• 62 BC: Aulus Licinius Archias prosecuted regarding his disputed Roman citizenship, under the *lex Papia de peregrinis* (Papian law concerning aliens, 65 BC, to expel certain non-citizens from Rome)

• 62 BC is also the year after Cicero was consul: at the height of his political career

• Archias: a Greek-Syrian poet from Antioch (Syria), arrived in Rome in 102 BC, stayed in the house of the Luculli, and connected to many important Roman aristocrats.

• Accompanied the general Lucius Lucullus east in the Third Mithraditic War (73-63 BC). In 67, Lucullus had his command revoked, to be replaced by Pompey.

• Archias composed a poem celebrating Lucullus’ role in the Mithraditic War.

• Uncertain why exactly Archias was prosecuted, but possibly as a ‘creature of Lucullus’ by a supporter of Pompey.

• Cicero: still at a stage where trying to conciliate both Lucullus and Pompey.

• Presiding magistrate (Praetor) at the trial: according to the ancient scholia was Cicero’s brother, Quintus Tullius Cicero.

• The Roman jury may still have had prejudices against Greek poets, and against the study of poetry in general, which Cicero would have needed to overcome.

• Cicero often rewrote his speeches for publication after they had been given.

Cicero and Archias

• Cicero later wrote a poem celebrating his consulship, having failed to find anyone else to write it for him:

> o fortunatam natam me consule Romam!

> ‘O fortunate Rome, born when I was consul!’

*De Consulatu Suo* (On his own Consulship), fr. 7, 60 BC


Literary Context

- tenus style
- Greek ideas of poetic inspiration
- ars and ingenium
- Ennius and Roman patriotic, national poetry
- Forensic and epideictic oratory
- Various poems by ‘Archias’ are preserved in Meleager’s Garland (Anthologia), a collection of epigrams by Greek poets from the third to the first centuries BC. However, there seem to have been several poets of that name, so we cannot tell which are by Cicero’s Archias.

Structure of the Speech

Exordium - Opening

1 Cicero’s motivations for defending Archias and unique qualifications to do so.

2-4 All ‘humanistic arts’ (omnes artes quae ad humanitatem pertinent) are connected. Cicero will speak in an unusual style, appropriate to his defendant. Flattery of the jury and praetor.

Narratio - Statement of the case

4-7 Narration of Archias’ claims to Roman citizenship and fame as a poet. Archias’ connections with the Luculli. Archias’ enrolment as a citizen of Heraclea, an Italian town in Lucania. Archias then reported as legally required to the praetor at Rome in order to acquire Roman citizenship.

8-9 Refutation of the case against Archias made by Grattius (prosecutor). Witnesses from Heraclea.

10-11 More reasons why Archias is a citizen, contrary to the allegations of Grattius.

Confirmatio - Further support for Archias’ case.

12-14 Cicero is not ashamed to admit his delight in literature: it relaxes him, and has also taught him the valuable lesson that glory (laus) and virtue (honestas) are the most important goals. He has used the ideal men presented by Greek and Roman writers as models for his own behaviour.

15-16 Not all great men have been learned, but where they have, it has benefited them. Roman exempla. They would never have read literature had it not helped them to cultivate virtue (virtus). Even if literature were only for pleasure, it would still be worth pursuing. Literature can be pursued anywhere, at any time.
17 Even if someone did not have an interest in literature, he should still recognise the literary achievements of others. The example of the actor Roscius.

18-20 Unconventionality of Cicero’s speech: praising Archias for his ability to compose verses extempore (which the jury might not appreciate). A poet is divinely inspired – better than the other arts. Example of Ennius. Poetic praise of the poet. Greek cities which claimed Homer. Archias should be appreciated because he used his abilities to praise great Romans, in his poem on the war against the Cimbri (German tribe defeated by Marius in 101 BC).

21 Archias’ poem on the Mithraditic War: glory shed on Lucius Lucullus and the Roman people (populus Romanus).

22 Our own Ennius (noster Ennius) was appreciated by Scipio Africanus, conqueror of Hannibal. The praise of great men also sheds honour on the Roman people. More men praised by Ennius; who was himself rewarded with citizenship for his services.

23-26 Greek – more glorious than Latin, because more widely read. Literary fame: an incentive to glorious deeds. Alexander the Great and Achilles. Praise of Pompey. If Archias had not received his citizenship by law, he would have been awarded it by a Roman general. More Romans who wanted to be written about.

26-27 Everyone is motivated by the desire for glory, and the best people [e.g. Cicero?] are most motivated by this. Ennius and Accius.

28 Cicero’s own desire for glory. Cicero’s role as consul in the Catilinarian conspiracy is the subject of a poem which Archias is now composing. What more does a virtuous man desire apart from praise and fame?

29-30 If the mind did not care about posterity, then no-one noble would put any effort into worthy actions. Better to leave behind a memory of us in words than in statues. Hint that we may survive in some form…

Peroratio - Conclusion/Peroration

31 Protect Archias, an honourable, talented man and a Roman citizen, who has honoured the Roman people. The calling of poet is sacred.

32 Reminder of the technical and non-technical aspects of the speech. Reference to Cicero’s brother as presiding magistrate.

Analysis of the structure of the Pro Archia

• How much of the speech is focused on refuting the charges against Archias?

• How much of the speech is actually about Cicero?
If I have any natural talent, members of the jury – and I am aware how limited it is; or if I have any experience in public speaking – in which I do not deny that I am moderately well practised; or if there is any technical skill in my oratory which has been derived from application and training in the liberal arts – and I admit that I have never at any period of my life been averse to such training: if I do have any of these capabilities, then Aulus Licinius here is entitled almost as of right to be among the very first to claim from me the benefits which they may bring. For when I look back in my mind over the time I have lived and recollect the remotest memories of my childhood, I am aware that from the earliest point that I can recall it was he who was my guide as I undertook and entered upon the course of my studies. So if this voice of mine, trained by his encouragement and teaching, has sometimes brought safety to other people, I must indeed do all I can to bring help and safety to the very man from whom I received the gift which has enabled me to help others and to save some.

• *Ethos* and *auctoritas* of Cicero

• Cicero’s fate and Archias’ are interdependent

• Emphasis on the practical value of studying literature, for one’s political career
Cicero’s ‘unconventional’ style \textit{(in hoc nouo genere dicendi)}

atque sic a summis hominibus eruditissimisque acceperimus, ceterarum rerum studia ex doctrina et praeceptis et arte constare, poetae natura ipsa valere et mentis uiribus excitari et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari. quare suo iure noster ille Ennius ‘sanctos’ appellat poetas, quod quasi deorum aliquo dono atque munere commendati nobis esse uideantur. sit igitur, iudices, sanctum apud uos, humanissimos homines, hoc poetae nomen quod nulla umquam barbaria uiolauit. saxa atque solitudines uoci respondent, bestiae saepe immanes cantu flectuntur atque consistunt; nos instituti rebus optimis non poetarum uoce moueamur?

Indeed, we have it on the highest and most learned authority that, whereas the studies of other things are made up of knowledge, rules, and technique, a poet is created by nature itself, activated by the force of his own mind, and inspired, as it were, by a kind of divine spirit. Rightly, therefore, does our own great Ennius call poets ‘sacred’, because they seem to us to be marked out by a special gift and endowment of the gods. So let the name of poet, gentlemen, which no barbarian race has ever treated with disrespect, be a sacred name among you, the most enlightened of men. Rocks and deserts respond to the poet’s voice; ferocious wild animals are often turned aside by singing and stopped in their tracks; shall we, then, who have been brought up to all that is best, remain unmoved by the voice of a poet? (18-19)

- Unusually poetic language and descriptions for a courtroom setting
- Authority of Ennius
- Allusion to the mythical status of the poet
- Difference between poetry and the other \textit{rerum studia}: the poet’s divine inspiration
- For the divinely inspired poet, see e.g. the opening lines of \textit{Iliad} I; Plato’s \textit{Phaedrus} and \textit{Ion}; Lucretius, \textit{DRN} I. 921-934.

\textbf{Poetry and the Roman People}

nosta semper feretur et praedicabitur L. Lucullo dimicantur, cum interfectis ducibus depressa hostium classis est, incredibilis apud Tenedum pugna illa nautalis, nostra sunt tropaea, nostra monumenta, nostri triumphi. quae quorum ingenii effrentur, ab eis populi Romani fama celebratur. carus fuit Africano superiori noster Ennius, itaque etiam in sepulcro Scipionum putatur is esse constitutus ex marmore. at eis laudibus certe non solum ipse qui laudatur sed etiam populi Romani nomen ornatur.
That astonishing naval battle off Tenedos, when Lucius Lucullus killed the enemy commanders and sank their fleet, will always be spoken of and proclaimed as ours; ours are the trophies, ours the monuments, ours the triumphs. Those who use their talents to write about such events serve therefore to increase the fame of the Roman people. Our own Ennius was held in affection by the elder Africanus, and it is even thought that a marble statue of him was placed on the tomb of the Scipios. Yet the praises of a poet shed glory not only on the person who is praised, but on the reputation of the Roman people also. (21-22)

- Ennius again as the paradigmatic example of the place of a poet in Roman society
- Appeal to the jurors’ patriotic sentiment
- Association of the poet’s praise of a patron with the glory of the Roman people more generally

**Cicero and glory**

atque ut id libentius faciatis, iam me uobis, iudices, indicabo et de meo quodam amore gloriae nimis acri fortasse, uerum tamen honesto uobis confiteor. nam quas res nos in consulatu nostro uobiscum simul pro salute huius urbis atque imperi et pro uita ciuium proue uniuersa re publica gessimus, attigit hic uersibus atque inchoauit, quibus auditis, quod mihi magna res et iucunda uisa est, hunc ad perficiendum adornaui. nullam enim uirtus aliam mercedem laborum periculorumque desiderat praeter hanc laudis et gloriae. qua quidem detracta, iudices, quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo uitae curriculo et tam breui tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

So that you will do this [honour poets] all the more readily, members of the jury, I shall now reveal my feelings to you and own up to what I may call my passion for glory – a passion too intense, perhaps, but nevertheless an honourable one. The measures which I took during my consulship, with your collaboration, for the security of this city and empire, for the lives of our citizens, and for the country as a whole, these have become the subject of a poem on which Archias has now started work. When I heard what he had written I thought it was an important project and an agreeable one, and so I engaged him to complete the task. For merit looks for no reward for the toil and danger which it has to face, save only praise and glory. If you take that away, gentlemen, what incentive do we have, in life’s brief and transitory career, to involve ourselves in great undertakings? (28)
**Immortality of the soul?**

Many distinguished men have been careful to leave statutes and portraits behind them, likenesses not of their minds, but of their bodies; ought we not greatly to prefer to leave behind us a representation of our designs and characters, moulded and finished by artists of the highest ability? For my part, even when I was actually carrying out the actions I took, I considered that I was spreading and disseminating a knowledge of them for the world to remember for ever. And whether I shall have no awareness, after I have died, of the world’s memory of me, or whether, as the wisest men have maintained, that recollection will indeed touch some part of my being, I do at least derive pleasure at this moment from the thought and hope that my achievements will be remembered. (30)

- Cicero occasionally introduces allusions to Greek philosophy in his speeches
- Move from great men in general to Cicero in particular
- What is the purpose of the *Pro Archia*?

**Presentation, Week 3**

**Text:** Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* (*On the Nature of the Universe*) Book III, lines 1-93 and 830-1094

**Question:** In what ways, if any, is *DRN* III political?