



Pro M. Caelio Oratio

Marcus Tullius Cicero , R.G. Austin (Editor)

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In 56 B.C., M. Caelius Rufus was prosecuted for *vis* by L. Sempronius Atratinus in a trial with important social and political implications. This third edition of Cicero's speech in defense of Caelius reproduces A.C. Clark's authoritative text along with a new 17th-century conjecture on Caelius' birthplace, and updated notes and appendices on a variety of political, social, and literary concerns, including the connection between Caelius and Catallus.

Pro M. Caelio Oratio Details

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From Reader Review Pro M. Caelio Oratio for online ebook

Andy Manoske says

Pro Caelio was the bane of my existence in high school. While I was eager to tear into Latin in my reading list this year to try and salvage what command of the language I have, I left Pro Caelio for the very end out of a deep fear of how much of a struggle it was going to be.

Years later, I found Pro Caelio a lot easier to get through. Latin is not a language for punctuation, and Cicero's characteristic epic sentences of dense, onion-layers of indirect statements and subordinate clauses is still a fucking mess. But there's a lot of amazing rhetoric here, and Pro Caelio is a master class in how to make convincing arguments and sway an audience.

By far my favorite parts of Pro Caelio were Cicero's hilarious use of prosopopeia. His barbed humor ridiculing Clodia's arguments against Caelius was as biting as it was hilarious, and it's just as relevant in today's political theater as it was over a thousand years ago.

Still, Cicero is not for the beginning Latin student. Without lots of annotation and a great dictionary, this is a very daunting undertaking. It was a blast though, and it makes me want to ask of people see "Father Paul coming unto them."

Dudley Ryder says

I have intended to read over all his orations if possible to gain his way and manner of thinking, to teach me to talk handsomely and fluently upon any subject that occurs, to observe his transitions and manner of connexion that I may become as much an orator as possible

Giuseppe says

Questa di Cicerone è un'orazione un po' particolare: lo stesso autore parla, infatti, di *quodam novo genere dicendi*, nuovo non solo nella forma, ma anche (e anzi soprattutto), nei contenuti.

Cicero, infatti, liquida nel giro di pochissimi capitoli *narratio e argumentatio*, per parlare ben presto *extra causam* dei meriti di Archia in quanto poeta; meriti tra l'altro sufficienti perché fosse pressoché scontata la cittadinanza di Archia: anche ammesso che i registri di Eraclea (nei quali il poeta si era iscritto) fossero stati manomessi, di certo Archia sarebbe riuscito a ottenere la cittadinanza in altre maniere e da altre persone, grazie alle sue incredibili doti di poeta. La poesia viene qui innalzata a valore da coltivare e da apprezzare; poesia che diviene virtù, forza in grado di colpire persino i cuori più rozzi.

Tutti, dinanzi al poeta, "sacro" (perché dono divino) per tradizione, avvertono questa forza "ammaliante", *humanissima*, che nel contempo celebra il singolo e tutto quanto il *populus Romanus*.

Ed è ad Archia che Cicerone rende omaggio, poiché suo primo *princeps*, cioè guida, lungo il cammino della pratica virtuosa dell'eloquenza.

Phil says

Invective, humor, and erudition are all tools in Cicero's armory of oration. The Pro Caelio is an excellent text in which we get to witness him employ all three of them in rapid succession.

Andrew DeWar says

I had to read this for my Advanced Latin class this semester. If you haven't read any of Cicero's work before you definitely should, the man is an incredible speaker/writer. This version is particularly helpful if you're still learning Latin, as it has editor notes for uncommon vocabulary usage and a good introduction that helps you understand the speech contained within better if you aren't familiar with how Roman law practices worked.

This is also a great book if you're learning Latin due to the fact that Cicero's style of speech is easier to translate than many other Latin authors, and this particular speech is one of the easier ones of Cicero's as well, making it a very good place to start trying to read Latin instead of just tiny snippets and vocabulary words. That said, it is still difficult to translate due to the drastic difference between English and Latin, so patience is definitely a must.

As for the speech within, it's the Roman equivalent to the OJ case, and Cicero is OJ's lawyer. The man knows how to say just the right things in just the right way to get the results he wants, and it shows greatly in this speech. If this is your first time reading the speech in Latin, or just your first time reading Latin, I recommend having an English translation close by to help through it. While it loses some of its finesse in English, it's still a well-crafted speech. A good site to use if you don't wish to buy a copy that contains English and Latin is Perseus.tufts.edu and search for Pro Caelio. It has the original Latin on as well as the English translations, plus you can select a Latin word and it'll give you the info the editor believes is correct about it. Definitely make sure you give this one a read, it's worth the extra work you might have to put in to read it.

Ana Enriques says

Se trata de un discurso de lectura amena, lleno de ingenio e ironía. Como algunos críticos han señalado, más parece un alegato contra Clodia que una defensa de Celio y, por lo mismo, se presta, entre otras cosas, para el análisis sobre la figura de esta influyente mujer y sobre el uso del ridículo como estrategia de persuasión.

Tim says

Probably one of my favorite Latin texts I worked through in uni, but Cicero is famously difficult so read him with some serious help or at least a commentary.

Jonathan says

very thorough commentary

Inês says

Leitura complexa, mas tem uma mensagem muito importante

Caroline Beadle says

Leído en latín.

Emily says

This is one of my favorite speeches of Cicero I've read thus far. Cicero's invective against Clodia is laugh-out-loud funny in some places. Cicero's toying with dramatic forms is an impressive stylistic feat and continues to entertain his audience. Austin's commentary is thorough and usually helpful in regards to grammar and historical context.

Ben says

As a reader for the Pro Caelio, I found the notes in this book generally to be quite helpful, though the omissions in the glossary in the back sent me to other Latin dictionaries on more than one occasion, which was annoying; I don't know why the preparers of this commentary chose not include a complete glossary to accompany this text.

Also, the letters between Cicero and Caelius, though interesting, form an awkward addendum to the speech. Certainly, it is fascinating to read their correspondence, but without a fuller context and with no real connection to the speech that makes up the vast majority of this commentary, they give the impression of an attempt to pad out a slim volume.

Still, the commentary is useful and makes for a relatively smooth read through the speech and letters.

Megan says

I loved this speech. It was my first full text Latin translation, and I just fell in love with it. Cicero's arguments are brilliantly amusing and just outlandish enough to work. The parts with Clodia, especially the part when he talked about all the men hiding in the Baiae was just too funny. My professor and I couldn't stop laughing at how ridiculous Cicero made the whole situation sound. I would recommend this speech to any Intermediate Latin students like myself. Oftentimes, Cicero used similar structures within the sections, so as long as you could grasp what the structure was, it was a pretty simple translation.

Baylee says

Una grazia e una leggerezza di tocco che neppure i Greci avrebbero potuto superare.

Robert Nisbet

Probabilmente la maggior parte delle persone si immagina Cicerone come un uomo dall'aria greve, accigliata, seria. Uno assolutamente incapace di far ridere chicchessia.

Ebbene, nella *Pro Caelio*, Cicerone dimostra di essere in grado di usare una ironia e arguzia in modo così elegante e misurato da essere assolutamente irresistibile anche per i giorni nostri. Ad una ad una, smonta tutte le accuse, riducendole a dicerie, maldicenze e puntando il dito contro la vera artefice di quel processo-farsa: Clodia, donna "scandalosamente priva di inibizioni" che voleva vendicarsi per esser stata scaricata.

Eppure, nella *Pro Caelio* c'è molto più di questo. Sullo sfondo si intravedono il conflitto generazionale, la disaffezione verso la politica (vista ormai solo come una corsa all'accaparramento della poltrona migliore), il ribaltamento dei vecchi valori (e quindi amore per il lusso, sperpero dei patrimoni familiari, carriere facili)... Vi ricorda qualcosa?

Un'orazione quanto mai attuale. Vi consiglio l'edizione Bur perché arricchita di un'interessantissima introduzione e correlata di note che aiutano nella comprensione del testo.

Mateo R. says

Cicerón será muy habilidoso e imagino que en su época habrá sido una luminaria (y no dudo que yo no podría hacer lo que él hace), pero no pude evitar sentirme decepcionado al leer este discurso. Pensé que iba a encontrarme con desarrollos lógicos impecables o al menos firmes y desprovistos de falacias, pero veo ataques *ad hominem* (o *ad mulierem* ponele), dobles estándares, apelaciones al *pathos* del público, mordacidades fuera de lugar... gran parte de su argumento es simplemente atacar la talla moral de la instigadora, o sea tratarla de puta. Y aún suponiendo que los que estaban en el otro bando (Clodia y Clodio principalmente) eran lo peor de lo peor y que las acusaciones hacia Celio eran todas falsas... me quedo decepcionado de las palabras de Cicerón. Cuando él y otros pensadores criticaban a los antiguos sofistas por sus trampas dialécticas y su abuso de la retórica, pensé que se referían justamente a las cosas que me encontré que el propio Cicerón hace en este discurso. Supongo que habrán sido incluso peores.
