

City and country



Cicero



- city as positive / country as negative (e.g. *Pro Caelio*): probably responding to prosecution accusing Caelius of corrupt life in city

“.. In Rome, the idealized rustic is a powerful icon of upright living and immunity to the corrupting influences that increase as Rome controls more land and imports more culture: being rustic increasingly means not being at all Greekish” (Connors 1997: 71)

- *pro Caelio*: pro view of (urbane, not too indulgent) city living. Over-harsh comic father figure evoked associated with rustic



Cicero



“You may, on the other hand, prefer me to deal with you in a smart, modern way; if so, this is what I shall do. I shall get rid of that harsh and almost rustic old man [Appius Claudius Caecus], and choose instead a different member of your family: your youngest brother (*Pro Caelio* 36)

“It should be remembered, however, that the "typical rustic" of drama does not appear in only one guise. Rather, two contrasting types appear.” (old and young rustic) (Vasaly 1993: 161)

“The old rustic is a distinctly disagreeable character... Perhaps most familiar is the hard-bitten Demea of Terence's *Adelphi* . Here, this cynical old farmer describes himself to his urbane brother as "rustic, harsh, gloomy, stern and tenacious" (*Ad.* 866: *agresti'*, *saevo'*, *tristi'*, *parcu'*, *truculentus*, *tenax*), and he specifically attributes these traits to the hard life he has endured on the farm.” (Vasaly 1993: 161)



Cicero and the city



“[visiting figure at the start encourages the audience to] open their eyes and ears to the vitality, excitement, and energy of the world into which this imaginary stranger had been drawn.” (Vasaly)
“The *Pro Caelio* ... celebrates the possibilities to be realized in the modern and urban environment. It indicates that the *spes rei publicae* [“hope of the republic”] was not to be found in men like the rustic leaders of the past, who had been drawn from the plow to the consulship; rather, the hope of the state resided in the orator and the statesman educated and trained in the sophisticated intellectual and political milieu of the city. This ideal statesman is pictured as a morally upright individual, and yet not one who has excluded all pleasures and forms of relaxation from his life; he is man who, while not necessarily of noble birth, possesses native ability, and this ability has been carefully channelled and refined by a broad education, extensive experience, and personal application.” (Vasaly 1993: 186)



Cicero taking positive view of country

- country as positive e.g. *Pro Roscio Amerino* (Cicero defending Roscius on charge of parricide)
“you said that he was a boor and a savage, that he never talked to anyone” (*Pro Rosc.* 74 *hunc hominem ferum atque agrestem fuisse, numquam cum homine quoquam collocutum esse*)
“as for greed, how could it exist in one who has always lived in the country and occupied himself with the cultivation of his land, with which the accuser himself has reproached him- a kind of life which is entirely removed from the passion of avarice, but inseparable from duty?” (*Pro Rosc.* 39)
“do not the heads of households who have children, especially those of Roscius’s class from the country towns, think it most desirable for themselves that their sons should devote themselves as much as possible to the management of the estate and spend a large part of their labour and pains on cultivating the farms?” (*Pro Rosc.* 43)

Positive view of country



“For, seeing that you think it is a crime to superintend the cultivation of the land, you would assuredly have considered the well-known Atilius, whom the deputation found sowing his field with his own hand, a most base and dishonourable man” (*Pro Rosc.* 50)

“This was also to be expected when we keep in mind that the orator was attempting to respond to his audience’s prejudices about the world, and when we remember that the Roman audience of the late Republic had no single vision of reality. Like all of us, they were capable of entertaining various, often mutually inconsistent ideas about places and the people in them.” (Vasaly 1993: 187)

