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***Prosopopoeia* and the Limits of Ciceronian Performance**

Cicero's use of *prosopopoeia* - the introduction into an oration of the direct speech of a character other than the orator - has long fascinated scholars and students. Two speeches most commonly taught to Latin beginners contain Cicero's most familiar specimens both now and in antiquity (Quintilian; Priscian). In *First Catilinarian*, Patria is summoned twice, first to address Catiline and then Cicero himself (1.18; 1.27); in *Pro Caelio*, Appius Claudius Caecus rises from the dead to rebuke his descendant Clodia (33). Thanks to Hall and Bond's recent video "Performing Cicero's Speeches," readers have a vivid image of how Cicero "acted" in presenting Caecus to contemporaries. But is the image accurate? A careful re-reading of the sources indicates that the *prosopopoeia* of antiquity was, in fact, far more prosaic than that of our contemporary imaginations.

Authors discussing the practice emphasize the voice and not bodily movements (e.g., Rhet. Her. 4.55; Quint. *inst.* 4.1.69), a not surprising omission considering the well-known limits that actors presented as a model for orators. Examined more closely, ancient attestations offer surprises: Porphyrio's example describes the Horatian poetic persona (ad *carm.* 1.28); in Quintilian the term illustrates Livy's use of *oratio obliqua* (9.2.36). Little room for bodily mimesis here, despite the fact that Caecus and Patria cry out, seemingly, for an energetic *actio*. Yet Quintilian stresses Cicero's discretion - he "softens the figure" (9.2.32) - by introducing and following his presentation of Patria with strong apologies (e.g., in *Cat.* 1.19). Moreover, Quintilian advises control, lest the *prosopopoeia* resemble the mimicry typical of the comic actor (1.8.3).

I close with an odd omission in Quintilian's account. Nowhere in his lengthy excursus on *actio* (11.3) does he refer to *prosopopoeia*. There does occur, however, an indirect allusion to Cicero's use of the technique. When the rhetorician stresses that gestures must naturally "emerge" with words (11.3.89-91), he cites - but as a practice to avoid - the overly exuberant use of the voice in a passage that he elsewhere identifies as a *prosopopoeia* (*Verr.* 2.5.162, for which see 11.1.40). Quintilian justifies this warning by comparing the practice to one found in contemporary comedy. The disapproved manifestations of *prosopopoeia* mirror that of the stage actor who steps out of his principal role to ape the vocal mannerisms of another character (11.3.91). Quintilian would hardly condone in his idol, Cicero, an action that he so strongly condemns in the case of a lowly contemporary actor.