

XXXVI. Cicero on Extra-Roman Speech

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From an early time the man of Rome believed that what originated in and emanated from his city was far superior to anything outside. This was especially true of the language he spoke. Thus it is that Plautus makes fun of the Praenestines for using Latin vocabulary and pronunciation that were rustic and so unacceptable to the refined city dweller. Lucilius' jibe at Caecilius' country pronunciation and Cato's attempt to identify the *homo urbanus*, or city wit, are also early manifestations of this attitude.¹

By Cicero's time this refinement had become the trademark of the cultured urbanite. It was given the label *urbanitas*, perhaps by Cicero himself, and was much discussed and loudly defended.

This urbanity manifested itself in three different, though inter-related, ways. First of all, it represented the polish and politeness of the city gentleman. Secondly, *urbanitas* signified the tasteful city humor. Finally, this word was used to describe a certain aura of urban speech that made the city man's utterance easily superior to that of any outsider.²

This feeling of exclusiveness naturally led to friction between the urbanite and his rural and provincial counterparts. The jibes of Plautus and Lucilius, already mentioned, show clearly that such a rivalry existed at least a hundred years before Cicero's time. No doubt, by the middle of the first century B.C. this natural opposition was even more pronounced because Rome was now becoming a cosmopolitan center through immigration from areas to which she was extending her power. The criticism of the alien

¹ E. S. Ramage, "Early Roman Urbanity" *AJP* 81 (1960) 65-72.

² I have discussed this Ciceronian *urbanitas* briefly in my previous article (above, note 1) 65 f. Among the more complete treatments of the subject are: O. Lutsch, "Die *Urbanitas* nach Cicero," *Festgabe für Wilhelm Creelius der fünfundsiebenzigjährigen Lehrthätigkeit in Elberfeld* (Elberfeld 1881) 80-95, and Eva Frank, *De vocis urbanitas vi atque usu* (Diss., Berlin 1932). See also my unpublished dissertation "*Urbanitas, Rusticitas, Peregrinitas: the Roman View of Proper Latin*" (University of Cincinnati, 1957) 29-53. I propose to publish a detailed analysis of *urbanitas* in the near future.

is no longer a good-natured jibe. Quintus Cicero says that in this city, which has now become a *civitas ex nationum conventu constituta*, there are treachery, deceit, and criminal acts of all kinds. A person has to put up with the arrogance, pig-headedness, ill-will, pride, and even hatred directed at him from all sides (*Comment. Pet.* 54). Marcus Tullius himself complains of this situation in a letter to Volumnius. He asks his friend to keep others from fostering vulgar sayings upon him during his absence from the city. There is much in the way of low humor that is circulating since *tanta faex est in urbe, ut nihil tam sit akythéron quod non alicui venustum esse videatur . . .* In fact, the situation has become so serious, at least as far as Cicero is concerned, that he is moved to sound the cry of battle: *urbanitatis possessionem, amabo, quibusvis interdictis defendamus . . .* (*Ad fam.* 7.32.2). His immediate concern is the Roman wit, but the broader Roman urbanity appears to be in his thoughts as well.

Not only was this refined city wit in danger from without, but the Romans' sophisticated speech was threatened with pollution. In the *Brutus* (258) Atticus is appropriately chosen by Cicero to discuss the changing situation at Rome. He says of the people of earlier times:

. . . omnes tum fere, qui nec extra urbem hanc vixerant neque eos aliqua barbaries domestica infuscaverat, recte loquebantur. Sed hanc certe rem deteriore vetustas fecit et Romae et in Graecia. Confluxerunt enim et Athenas et in hanc urbem multi inquinatae loquentes ex diversis locis. Quo magis expurgandus est sermo et adhibenda tamquam obrussa ratio, quae mutari non potest, nec utendum pravissima consuetudinis regula.

These *inquinatae loquentes* are surely the *faex* of Cicero's rather strong statement to Volumnius quoted above. That metaphor is completed here in the *Brutus*, for the *faex*, or dregs, are those who spoke foully (*inquinatae*) and caused the need for purifying the city speech (*expurgandus est sermo*).

In spite of his insistence that these alien habits of speech be vigorously combated, Atticus gives us little idea of what they are. But in the paragraphs following (259-61) he does offer a few carefully balanced examples both of orators who were free from such innovations and of others who had succumbed to them. Flamininus, it was generally agreed, spoke Latin well, even though he had little learning (*sed litteras nesciebat*). Catulus was another

who spoke well. Unlike Flamininus, however, he was a learned man. With Lucius Aurelius Cotta we come to an orator who cultivated a rustic accent and at the same time gained a fair reputation. Sisenna, on the other hand, was a reformer of sorts who spouted new and strange words. Certainly Cicero does not mean to imply that Cotta and Sisenna spoke "fouly." He is merely showing the effect of external influences on the established Roman speech. Cotta is but one of a number who have affected a rusticity, while Sisenna represents those whom foreign (that is, non-Italian) habits have attracted.

Thus we have the battle lines drawn. On the defense is the city gentleman: his protagonists are the rustic who has long been a worthy opponent and the foreigner (*peregrinus*) who is only now making his presence strongly felt. There is a third opposition group, intermediate between these two, made up, as we shall see, of the large number of well-educated Italian orators, who, Cicero tells us, were influential at this time throughout the Italian peninsula and even to some extent in Rome. How, then, in Cicero's eyes, did the speech of the rustic, Italian, and foreigner differ from that of the Roman, and how does Cicero voice his disapproval of the speech characteristics of these people and of those urbanites who exhibited influences from these quarters?

If anything, the schism between rustic and Roman was greater in Cicero's time than ever before. Half jesting, the younger Cicero tells Tiro (*Ad fam.* 16.21.7) that since he has purchased a farm he must give up his city refinements to become a rustic (*deponendae tibi sunt urbanitates; rusticus Romanus factus es . . .*). Again, when the elder Cicero judges rustics better companions than the hyperurbane Arrius and Sebosus (*Ad At.* 2.15.3), the inference is strong that the man from the country is far inferior to the true gentleman of the city.

When we turn to matters of speech we must conclude that the rustic-urban differences were especially pronounced, for Cicero goes so far as to distinguish between a *sermo urbanus* and a *sermo rusticus* (*Or.* 81). In the *De oratore* (3.42) he mentions a "sweetness [of speaking] especially characteristic of this city" (. . . *suavitatem quae exit ex ore; quae quidem ut apud Graecos Atticorum; sic in Latino sermone huius est urbis maxime propria.*). He is referring to this again a few paragraphs later (44) when he states explicitly that there is a way of speaking (*vox*) peculiar to the Roman race and to Rome in

particular which the Roman should cultivate in preference to the *rustica asperitas* and the *peregrina insolentia*. This *vox Romana* is to be contrasted with the *rustica vox et agrestis* which he has mentioned earlier (42).

It is difficult to isolate the peculiarities of rustic speech, first, because we must depend for the most part on random observations scattered throughout Cicero's works and, secondly, because we are dealing with intangibles which even for Cicero must have defied description and definition. In the passage of the *De oratore* mentioned in the previous paragraph Cicero is careful to omit vocabulary from his discussion of these speech differences. For, he says, careful thought (*ratio*), a familiarity with literature (*litterae*), and cultivation of good vocabulary habits (*consuetudo*) will lead to the purification of one's vocabulary (*De or.* 3.42). It should be noticed that while he minimizes vocabulary differences here, he does so for purposes of his discussion and does not at all deny their existence. They were there earlier,³ and from what Varro says we must assume that they are still strongly felt. He points to *quiritare* as a city word to which the countryman would prefer *iubilare* (*LL* 6.68). A little later he mentions *pellicula* which appears in the Atellan farces as a country word for *scortum* (*LL* 7.84).

Vocabulary is bypassed because Cicero is attempting to get at differences that are more subtle. In the *De oratore* passage (3.42–44) we find that Cotta's *rustica vox et agrestis* is made up of a heaviness and slowness of utterance (*gravitas linguae*) accompanied by a rustic tone of voice (*sonus vocis agrestis*). These characteristics together left the impression with the urbane Roman that the language of the country was rough and harsh sounding. Such a feeling is suggested in the next paragraphs of the *De oratore* (3.45 f.):

... ex quo sic locutum esse eius patrem iudico, sic maiores; non aspere, ut ille, quem dixi, non vaste, non rustice, non hiulce, sed presse et aequabiliter et leniter.

The *aspere*, while it no doubt is meant to refer to the over-all harshness of rustic speech, refers in particular to a type of word arrangement in which too many consonants come together. *Hiulce*, on the other hand, suggests a *concursum hiulcus* which

³ Ramage (above, note 1) 69.

Wilkins describes as a "disagreeable hiatus."⁴ Besides this roughness, there is a certain flatness about rustic speech (*vaste*).⁵ Putting all of these qualities together we have what Cicero calls a *rustica asperitas* (*De or.* 3.44).

The rustic flatness of Cotta's speech is revealed in his pronunciation of *i* as long *e* (*De or.* 3.46).⁶ Varro offers corroboration that *i* was pronounced in this way by the rustics when he states that the latter say *veha* for *via* (*RR* 1.2.14) and *speca* for *spica* (*RR* 1.48.2). He also speaks of regional differences in Latin (*LL* 5.97): "Ircus quod Sabini fircus; quod illic fedus, in Latio rure hedus; qui in urbe ut in multis *a* addito aedus."

Here is the flat country pronunciation in *hedus* which in Rome would be pronounced more precisely as *aedus*.⁷ It is worth noting also that this pronunciation of *ae* is common among the Sabines. Perhaps we have an indication of an influence from the outside on the speech of the *rustici Romani*.

In *hedus* we may recognize as well traces of an excessive aspiration that probably characterized country speech. Confirmation of its presence is offered by Nigidius Figulus' assertion that *rusticus fit sermo si adspires perperam*.⁸

This, then, is about as far as we can go in recreating the countryman's way of speaking.⁹ Cicero, as one might expect, was

⁴ The *concursum hiulcus* is mentioned *De or.* 3.171. See Wilkins' note on this passage in his *M. Tulli Ciceronis De oratore libri tres* (Oxford 1892).

⁵ The use of *rustice* here to define rustic speech is one of a number of indications that Cicero is encountering difficulties of analysis and definition.

⁶ See also E. H. Sturtevant, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin* (Philadelphia 1940) 107-15, where the author treats the Latin vowels *e* and *i*. Towards the end of this discussion he singles out "a long vowel intermediate between *e* and *i*" (114) and suggests that it was this sound that Cicero was criticizing in Cotta's speech here in the *De oratore*.

⁷ Sturtevant (above, note 6) 124-27 discusses this rustic pronunciation of *ae* at some length.

Cotta's flat pronunciation is the subject for discussion again in the *Brutus* (259) where the drawing out of letters is called *subagreste* and *plane subrusticum*.

⁸ Aul. Gell., *NA* 13.6.3. Sturtevant (above, note 6) 131 points to another rustic-urban speech difference which Cicero does not mention. This is the appearance of a rustic *ō* for the urban *au*.

⁹ In *Orator* 161 Cicero says: "Quin etiam, quod iam subrusticum videtur, olim autem politius, eorum verborum, quorum eadem erant postremae duae litterae, quae sunt in 'optimus,' postremam litteram detrahebant, nisi vocalis insequebatur." Perhaps here we have a hint as to another characteristic of rustic speech.

See also Eduard Mészáros, "Horatius rusticus," *Antik tanulmányok (Studia antiqua)* 2 (1955) 71-77. (Summarized in *Bibliotheca classica orientalis* 2 [1957] Cols. 85-92). The many instances of *sermo vulgaris* in Horace's poetry are discussed at some length.

outspoken in his opposition to these speech characteristics, especially when they turned up in the city. The discussion of this rusticity in the *De oratore* (3.42–45) is prefaced by the eye and ear catching “*Est autem vitium . . .*” Crassus (and so by association Cicero) means to leave no doubt as to how he feels about this affectation. This and the assertion by Crassus that he is delighted by Catulus’ *sonus et subtilitas*—that is, the *vox urbanus*—show us Cicero once again valiantly defending that elusive *urbanitas* against, in this case, the *rusticitas* from without. The true Roman must therefore learn to avoid this rustic harshness and, of course, any foreign influence at all. After praising his mother-in-law, Laelia,—and, for that matter, women in general—for preserving an older and purer *sermo Romanus*, Crassus returns to Cotta with a final condemnation (46): “*Qua re Cotta noster . . . non mihi oratores antiquos, sed messorum videtur imitari.*” In Cicero’s eyes there is good reason for this vigorous attack. Not only are many urbanites cultivating this rusticity, but the brighter ones of these are gaining good reputations. Cotta and Catulus are opposed once again in the *Brutus* (259) where Cotta is rather humorously pictured as travelling the “wild and heavily wooded trail” of rusticity to gain considerable respect as an orator. Regardless of what success he may have had, however, in the eyes of the experts he was merely an average orator (*in mediocrium oratorum numero* [*Brut.* 137]).

Cotta’s rusticity is a country accent carefully cultivated by an educated Roman. There are other orators, however, who were rustic in the meanest sense of the word. These Cicero does not bother to criticize at any length. Sertorius and Gargonius are grouped together (*Brut.* 180) as ignorant (*indocti*) and unrefined (*inurbani*) to the point of being simply boorish (*rustici*). Fufius has imitated a fault of Fimbria and so utters the same depravities with the same broad pronunciation (*oris pravitas et verborum latitudo* [*De or.* 2.91]). This latter fault sounds suspiciously like a country accent, though Cicero does not describe it as such. It is significant that both these speakers are brushed aside as being of little talent.

As we have already seen, the rustics are but one of three extra-urban groups, each of which has its own peculiarities of speech. Cicero differentiates between the two other non-Roman elements in the *Pro Sulla* (22–25) where his immediate purpose is to defend

himself against his opponents' charge that he is a foreigner (*peregrinus*) because he is from a *municipium*. In the first place, he says, his birthplace has often come to Rome's aid in times of crisis. Secondly, Cato, Tiberius Coruncanius, Manius Curius, and Gaius Marius, among others, had come from municipal towns, but had never been looked down upon at Rome as foreigners. Well then, with what justification can he be charged with being a *peregrinus*? Since the municipals at this time were Italians, the point that Cicero is making is that they, as Italians, are far different from and far superior to the non-Italian foreigners.

Let us look first at what Cicero says about Italian speakers and then turn to his appraisal of foreign Latin. In the *Brutus* (169-72) he devotes a lengthy aside to the capabilities of those living in Italy outside Rome. As in the *Pro Sulla*, Cicero is unwilling to refer to them simply as foreigners, but, putting carefully chosen words into Brutus' mouth, he calls them *externi quasi oratores* (170). From among the Marsi came Quintus Vettius Vettianus whose speech was marked by a learned brevity. The brothers Valerii of Sora were not so outstanding for their oratory as they were for their erudition in Greek and Latin. Gaius Rusticelius of Bononia was a well-trained orator with a natural flow of speech. From earlier times there was Lucius Papirius of Fregellae who lived in the time of Tiberius Gracchus. But the orator from outside the city who was the most eloquent of all was Titus Betucius Barrus from the town of Asculum, several of whose speeches were given at Asculum and at least one, an excellent speech against Caepio, at Rome.

Cicero throughout this passage speaks of these *externi* with much respect and goes further than simply giving favorable estimates of each man's work. Vettianus he is proud to know personally (*quem ipse cognovi*); the Valerii are his neighbors and close friends (*vicini et familiares mei*). Why is Cicero so willing to identify himself with these orators? First of all, he is dealing here with only the best extra-Roman speakers who had gained respect for their abilities in their own bailiwicks. Probably Cicero knows Vettianus, for instance, because his reputation has reached as far as Rome. Barrus, no doubt because he had been successful at Asculum, had been asked to deliver a speech at Rome. Secondly, Cicero is sympathetic with these speakers because he felt himself, at least in part, to be one of them by virtue of his birth at Arpinum.

His stand in the *Pro Sulla*, then, is one born of personal convictions.

And yet, no matter how he feels about these Italians, Cicero's whole purpose in mentioning them in the *Brutus* is to point up the fact that they do not have the cultured tone of voice and the careful pronunciation of the city dweller. In other words, their speech does not exhibit *urbanitas*. Because Titus Tinca of Placentia, who, incidentally, was a very humorous fellow, did not have these urban speech characteristics, he was bested by Quintus Granius, the Roman herald, in a contest of wit. Tinca's efforts were just as humorous as Granius', but the latter won because of a *sapor vernaculus* in his way of speaking. This Roman flavor Tinca did not have.¹⁰

In the *De oratore* (3.43) Cicero passes a similar judgment on one of the Valerii mentioned above. Here we find Crassus speaking:

Nostri minus student litteris quam Latini; tamen ex istis, quos nostis, urbanis, in quibus minimum est litterarum, nemo est quin literatissimum togatorum omnium, Q. Valerium Soranum, lenitate vocis atque ipso oris pressu et sono facile vincat.

The *lenitas vocis atque ipse oris pressus et sonus* are the *sapor vernaculus*, the *urbanitas*, of the *Brutus*. These extra-urban orators, then, do not speak with the precision of the city dweller. The *lenitas vocis* recalls Cicero's criticism of rustic speech where *leniter* is used as the opposite of *aspere* which in turn is used to describe an unpleasant consonantal effect resulting from poor word arrangement in rustic speech (*De or.* 3.45). Perhaps the educated Italian exhibited this shortcoming also.

Cicero may have this criticism in mind when elsewhere in the *Brutus* (242) he briefly characterizes the Caepasii as *oppidano quodam et incondito genere dicendi*. Here is a small town way of speaking that sounds confused or rude because it lacks the smoothness and precision characteristic of urban speech. Perhaps, as was the case with the rustic idiom, certain vocabulary not acceptable to the refined city dweller played its part in making the Caepasii sound rough and provincial. Although Cicero is careful to omit vocabulary from his discussion of the shortcomings of the *externi oratores* (*Brut.* 171) he does admit that when you go to Gaul *audies tum quidem etiam verba quaedam non trita Romae. . .*

¹⁰ Varro, *LL* 5.77, uses *vernaculus* in much the same sense when discussing the names of sea animals. Its opposite in this passage is *peregrinus*.

If Cicero as an urban critic cannot approve of the Latin speech of a Cotta or a Barrus, we should expect him to object even more violently to that of the non-Italian foreigner, the *peregrinus*. As we have seen, immigration from areas outside Italy was now gaining momentum. Cicero is only too conscious of the negative influence that these new arrivals are having on Roman ways. In a letter to Paetus (*Ad fam.* 9.15.2) he lashes out at this *peregrinitas* which is "pouring into the city":

. . . accedunt non Attici, sed salsiores, quam illi Atticorum, Romani veteres atque urbani sales, ego autem—existimes licet quidlibet—mirifice capior facetiis, maxime nostratibus, praesertim quum eas videam primum oblitas Latio tum, quum in urbem nostram est infusa peregrinitas, nunc vero etiam bracatis et Transalpinis nationibus, ut nullum veteris leporis vestigium appareat. Itaque, te quum video, omnes mihi Granios, omnes Lucilios,—vere ut dicam—Crassos quoque et Laelios videre videor.

Although the discussion involves only one aspect of *urbanitas*, that of urbane humor, the *peregrinitas* encompasses more than just a foreign humor. It includes everything foreign that is contrary to anything Roman, whether the contrast be in manners or speech.

So far as Cicero is concerned Africans, Spaniards, and Gauls are repugnant because they stand for all that is gross and barbarous in humanity (*Ad Quint. fr.* 1.1.27). The Roman is far superior to these foreigners (*De or.* 1.15), so far superior, in fact, that the most illustrious personage in Gaul will come off poorly in a comparison with the lowest Roman citizen (*Pro Font.* 27).

Speech enters into the discussions of this foreign influence rather often. Quintus says that the consul-to-be must be a man well-versed in the many different ways of speaking which he will now find in the city (*Comment. Pet.* 54). Reference has already been made to Cicero's assertion in the *Brutus* (258) that both at Athens and Rome it was the influx of inferior speakers that caused the undermining of the urban speech refinements. Foreigners must have been involved.¹¹

Returning to our much cited passage of the *De oratore* (3.42-46), we find (44) that, just as the intelligent Roman is to shun a rustic

¹¹ Cf. *Brutus* 51 where Cicero says that the Athenian eloquence, as soon as it left the Peiraeus and went on its way through the islands and Asia, lost that health and vigor of Attic diction along with its purity.

harshness, so he should learn to avoid a *peregrina insolentia*. Otherwise his speech will sound or smell foreign (*sonare aut olere peregrinum*). Once again the terminology is vague; we are unable to analyze this "foreign strangeness" except in a general way. No doubt vocabulary played its part. Sisenna's *sputatilica*, formed on the analogy of the Greek *kataptysta*,¹² shows that the foreign element was penetrating deeply. That vocabulary is involved is also indicated by the fact that in other contexts *insolentia* is used applying mainly to choice of words (e.g. *De or.* 3.50).

We should expect to find that the man from abroad could not have *urbanitas*. It is to this that Cicero is referring when he speaks of Latin sounding and smelling foreign. He is a little more precise when he comes to criticize the speech of the poets of Corduba (*Pro Arch.* 26). These he characterizes as *pingue quiddam sonantibus et peregrinum*. These are native Cordubans, but whether they are of Roman or Spanish stock it is difficult to say. Strabo (3.141.1) informs us that Corduba from its beginning was inhabited by Romans and others chosen from the native population. It seems likely, then, that these poets in question were a mixture of the two stocks and that Cicero is criticizing their Latin and not any poetry which they may have written in their local dialects. The impurity of their Latin, then, would presumably stem from the influence of the native tongues which were no doubt still prevalent.

The verb *sono* suggests that Cicero is thinking not so much of a silent reading of these poems, but that he is referring to a recital of them by the poets themselves. Also, the vague *quiddam* shows that something more subtle than merely strange vocabulary is included in Cicero's estimate. I should suggest that the choice and ordering of Latin words contribute, but that the main reason for these poems sounding slow and heavy or thick (*pingue*) is the accent with which they were read. *Pingue*, then, and *peregrinum* are opposites of *presse*, *aequaliter*, and *leniter* which, as we have noticed already, Cicero uses to describe the urban accent (*De or.* 3.45). It is tempting to see here an early reference to what we should today call a thick foreign accent.

In spite of his violent opposition to the foreign element in the

¹² *Brutus* 260. O. Jahn and Martha in their editions of the *Brutus* suggest this Greek original. Piderit (rev. by Friederich) believes that the Latin word is a translation of the Greek *kataspysta*.

city, Cicero has but little to say by way of criticism of those Romans who exhibit *peregrinitas* in their speech. Even the jab at Sisenna (*Brut.* 260) for coining his horrendous word under foreign influence is relatively mild. This disapproval is further mitigated by statements that, though he was not the finest orator in the world (*De leg.* 1.7), he was considered moderately successful (*Brut.* 228).

Neither does Cicero offer specific criticism of those who spoke Latin in the areas outside Italy. He had no love for the Gauls, since the *peregrinitas* which was pervading Rome emanated from the Transalpine Gauls in particular (*Ad fam.* 9.15.2). Presumably the inhabitants of Narbonese Gaul had ample opportunity to learn Latin, since he points out in the *Pro Fonteio* (11 f.) that there were many Roman citizens (*negotiatores, coloni, publicani, aratores*) living here. Probably, then, in the *peregrinitas* that was threatening Rome from this quarter Cicero is including their peculiar, foreign manner of speaking. What Gallic Latin was like at this time we cannot know, except, as we should expect, that it had absorbed much of the native Gallic vocabulary (*Brut.* 171).¹³

A passage of the *Divinatio in Q. Caecilium* (39) gives us partial insight into what Cicero thought of Sicilian Latin:

. . . si te multum natura adiuuaret, si optimis a pueritia disciplinis atque artibus studuisses et in his elaborasses, si litteras Graecas Athenis, non Lilybaei, Latinas Romae, non in Sicilia didicisses, tamen esset magnum tantam causam, tam expectatam et diligentia consequi et memoria complecti et oratione expromere et voce ac viribus sustinere.

Natural ability is the first requisite for anyone pursuing studies of any kind. Then there is a need for long study. Here the passage rises to a climax when Cicero states rather emphatically that an education in Greek should be acquired at Athens, not at Lilybaeum, and that Latin should be studied in Rome, not in Sicily. In the next lines *diligentia*, which is for the most part innate, and *memoria*, which can be cultivated, parallel the natural ability and prolonged study mentioned earlier. The *oratio, vox,* and *vires* would presumably parallel the *litterae Graecae et Latinae* since success with these is closely dependent upon the proper study

¹³ On the Romanization of Gaul see A. Budinzky, *Die Ausbreitung der lateinischen Sprache* (Berlin 1881) 79–116.

of Greek and Latin. The whole complexion (*oratio*) of one's oratory, then, depends on where you study Latin. What the *vox* is it is difficult to say. But when we remember the *vox Romani generis urbisque propria* (*De or.* 3.44) and because it is so closely connected with Rome in the passage under discussion, it is entirely possible that Cicero is using it to refer at least in part to that peculiarly Roman tone and pronunciation, *urbanitas*.

Plutarch tells us that Sertorius established a school at Osca in Spain so that the sons of the Iberian nobility might learn of Roman and Greek ways (*Sert.* 14). Schulten places this foundation in 77/6 B.C. and adds:¹⁴

Während es bisher in Spanien höchstens Elementarschulen und diese nur für die Römer gab, wurden in Osca die iberischen Knaben in der griechisch-römischen Bildung, und zwar nicht allein in den Elementen, sondern auch in der Grammatik und Rhetorik unterwiesen. Wer will, mag Osca die älteste spanische Universität nennen, wie denn die hier im 14. Jahrhundert gegründete Universität an Sertorius anknüpfte.

But the influence of this school cannot have penetrated far inland by 54 B.C., for in the *Pro Plancio* (84), Cicero lashes out at a Laterensis: "‘Rhodi enim,’ inquit, ‘ego non fui’—me vult fuisse—‘sed fui,’ inquit—putabam in Vaccaeis dicturum—‘bis in Bithynia.’”

The contrast is between Rhodes, the seat of learning, especially in oratory, and the Vaccaeii, a people of north central Spain, who in contrast would represent a general lack of learning and culture. These, evidently, are the Spanish who are in Cicero's eyes *immanes et barbari*. Perhaps Cicero had had some direct contact with these people. On the other hand, their name may have been synonymous at Rome with a lack of refinement.

The only direct reference that Cicero makes to the Latin of Spain is in the *Pro Archia* (26):

Quid? a Q. Metello Pio, familiarissimo suo, qui civitate multos donavit, neque per se neque per Lucullos impetravisset, qui praesertim usque eo de suis rebus scribi cuperet, ut etiam Cordubae natis poëtis, pingue quiddam sonantibus atque peregrinum, tamen aures suas dederet?

¹⁴ A. Schulten, *Sertorius* (Leipzig 1926) 80.

We have already discussed the shortcomings of these poets. Quintus Metellus so badly wanted his activities chronicled that he went so far as to employ these aliens with their wholly unacceptable accent. The implication is strong that as far as Cicero is concerned, these poets are not worth a hearing.

In this criticism of the tainted Latin speech of these Cordubans, we have, I believe, a clue as to why Cicero is not as outspoken against the alien influences on Roman speech as he is against the rustic. The rustic element in Rome went back to the beginnings of the city. Thus it was that large numbers of educated Romans accepted and affected such an accent in the belief that they were imitating a purer utterance from the past. Cicero, because he is convinced that this attitude is wrong, feels that he must do everything he can to combat it. The foreigner, on the other hand, is a relatively recent acquaintance. His ways are strange and he is considered gross and barbarous by Roman standards. That any true Roman would wish to affect (or, for that matter, to tolerate) an obviously inferior accent such as that of the Corduban poets is preposterous!¹⁵ The *peregrinitas* which nettles Cicero as yet involves only externals. In matters of speech the influence is felt in subject matter and in vocabulary, but the subtle city accent is not yet in danger from this quarter.

To summarize our findings: Cicero cannot accept the rustic, Italian, or foreign ways of speaking Latin because in each case the city flavor is lacking. Pronunciation and vocabulary constitute the main points of difference.

Cicero chides those urbanites who have affected a rustic way of speaking allegedly in imitation of the past simply because he feels they have not achieved their objective. He shows considerable respect for the well-trained Italian orators, partly, no doubt, because of his own origin. At the same time he points to their lack of *urbanitas* as putting them on level well below that of most Romans. Cicero cannot show such respect for the foreigner who speaks Latin with an accent. For that matter, anyone who has learned his Latin at some foreign center and not at Rome cannot be expected to speak the language successfully.

In his views on extra-urban speech Cicero shows himself once

¹⁵ Mészáros (above, note 9) points to the fact that, while Horace who is so definite in his dislike of the *profanum volgus* could use the *sermo vulgaris* for his own purposes, he could never affect a *peregrina insolentia*.

again to be the most Roman of Romans carrying on a crusade to defend what tradition tells him is best. In some ways he was perhaps successful since the Ciceronian style became the norm of writing for future generations. One cannot help but feel, however, that his attempt to preserve the pure Roman accent was doomed to failure because of constant pollution from without.