

To the memory of Elizabeth Rawson (1934-1988)

The upper-class house as symbol and focus of emotion in Cicero

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In such moments Anne had no power of saying to herself, 'These rooms ought to belong only to us. Oh, how fallen in their destination! How unworthily occupied! An ancient family to be so driven away! Strangers filling their place!' No, except when she thought of her mother, and remembered where she had been used to sit and preside, she had no sigh of that description to heave.

(Jane Austen, *Persuasion* [1818] ii.1)

Introduction

From the *Odyssey* onward, throughout life and literature, the *oikos* of the Greeks and the *domus* of the Romans provided a strong focus of emotion. Recent scholarship has increased our understanding of the concept of *domus*, the physical realities of the Roman house and the life of the household, and of the rhetorical exploitation of a sense of place.¹ The purpose of this paper is to assemble and discuss passages illustrating real feeling and rhetorical appeals to real feeling about the house in two types of writing by one late republican author. The data will be drawn from two sources, the letters and forensic and political speeches of Cicero.

1 Versions of this paper were presented at the seminar organised by F. G. B. Millar and E. M. Steinby on the 'Roman aristocracy: *familiae* and *domus*', at Oxford University, in 1996; as the William C. Grummel Memorial Lecture at the University of Washington, in 1996 at the University of Chicago, in 1997, and at the College of the Holy Cross, in 1998. I am most grateful to F. Millar, M. Steinby, M. Halleran, P. White and W. Ziobro for inviting me and to the participants for stimulating and helpful discussion. I am indebted to members of a graduate seminar in 1997, from both Stanford and Berkeley, and to P. Chénier, whose thesis on *Identity and the élite Roman home* treats many of the sources discussed here and who has often led me to new insights. I also thank J. Bodel for kindly letting me see the typescript of the article which became "Monumental villas and villa monuments" (*JRA* 10 [1997] 1-37) and the journal's learned readers and editor for expert advice. The scope of this paper is strictly limited to a consideration of the emotional content of the *domus* for Romans, as it is reflected in Cicero's speeches and letters. The essay grows out of a larger project which attempts to use these texts as evidence for conventional feelings and moral attitudes in Cicero and his audience or readers. Here I occasionally cite other Ciceronian texts in support, but consciously avoid citing later sources or much of the rich modern bibliography which might be adduced.

Cicero's works are cited by abbreviated title (note especially *A* for *Ad Atticum*, *F* for *ad Familiares*); letters by the number given by Shackleton Bailey (henceforward SB), followed by the traditional volume and letter-number, and the paragraph.

Examples of bibliography essential to this study: K. Bradley, *Discovering the Roman family. Studies in Roman social history* (Oxford 1991); E. Rawson, "The Ciceronian aristocracy and its properties," in M. I. Finley (ed.), *Studies in Roman property* (Cambridge 1976) 85-102 = Rawson, *Roman culture and society. Collected papers* (Oxford 1991) 204-22; R. Saller, "Familia and domus: defining and representing the Roman family and household," in *Patriarchy, property and death in the Roman family* (Cambridge 1994) 74-101; A. Vasaly, *Representations. Images of the world in Ciceronian oratory* (Berkeley 1993); A. Wallace-Hadrill, "The social structure of the Roman house," *PBSR* 56 (1988) 43-97, revised in *Houses and society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (Princeton 1994) Part 1; T. P. Wiseman, "Conspicui postes tectaque digna deo: the public image of aristocratic and imperial houses in the Late Republic and Early Empire," in *L'Urbs. Espace urbain et histoire (Ier siècle av. J.-C. - IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)* 393-413 = *Historiography and imagination* (Exeter 1994) 98-115, 154-61. For overviews of senators' properties see I. Shatzman, *Senatorial wealth and Roman politics* (Coll. Latomus 142, 1975); for Cicero's, W. Warde Fowler, *Social life at Rome in the age of Cicero* (London 1908) chapt. 8, which gives explicit attention to ideas of 'home', remains worth reading. For houses in Rome, see articles on *domus* in E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon topographicum Urbis Romae* II (Rome 1995).