

Cicero Verr. 2.5.95-100 (pirate raid: taking place at Syracuse while Verres was governor of Sicily)

[95] Unam illam noctem solam praedones ad Helorum commorati, cum fumantes etiam nostras naves reliquissent, accedere incipiunt Syracusas; qui videlicet saepe audissent nihil esse pulchrius quam Syracusarum moenia ac portus, statuerant se, si ea Verre praetore non vidissent, numquam esse visuros.

[loeb: “After waiting for that one night only off Helorus, the pirates left our vessels still smoking, and set off in the direction of Syracuse. No doubt they had often been told how there was no finer sight than Syracuse with its fortifications and harbours, and concluded that they were never likely to see them if they failed to do so while Verres was governor.”]

noctem : accusative of duration of time.

ad Helorum: “off Helorus” (city and river c. 25 miles south of Syracuse). Nb OLD s.v. “ad” 13 d.

commorati: deponent verb.

cum...reliquissent: uses subjunctive because slightly more than temporal; may be purpose too.

incipiunt: historic present.

videlicet: Cicero is being ironic.

audissent: relative clause with causal subjunctive: “since”.

quam; comparative “than”.

Verre praetore: ablative absolute.

si non : more emphatic- in the case that they failed (normally *nisi*).

esse visuros: note indirect statement.

[96] Ac primo ad illa aestiva praetoris accedunt, ipsam illam ad partem litoris ubi iste per eos dies tabernaculis positae castra luxuriae collocarat. Quem posteaquam inanem locum offenderunt et praetorem commosse ex eo loco castra senserunt, statim sine ullo metu in ipsum portum penetrare coeperunt. Cum in portum dico, iudices—explanandum est enim diligentius eorum causa qui locum ignorant—in urbem dico atque in urbis intimam partem venisse piratas; non enim portu illud oppidum clauditur, sed urbe portus ipse cingitur et continetur, ut non adluantur mari moenia extrema, sed ipse influat in urbis sinum portus.

[loeb “The first place they reached was the governor’s famous summer station, the actual point on the coast where Verres during the previous weeks had pitched the tents of his pleasure camp. They found the spot deserted; the governor had plainly struck camp and moved off elsewhere, and they proceeded without misgivings to push on without delay into the harbour itself. And when I say that these pirates entered the harbour, gentlemen—I must explain the lie of the land with especial care for the benefit of those who do not know it—when I say this, I am saying that they entered the city, and the innermost part of the city; for Syracuse is not bounded by the waters of its harbour; rather the harbour is itself encircled and embraced by the city, and instead of the seas washing the outermost part of the walls the harbour waters themselves flow into the city’s very bosom.”]

aestiva: “summer quarters”.

iste: i.e. Verres, derogatory tone.

conlocarat: 3rd pers singular pluperfect active indicative (syncopated).

quem posteaquam inanem locum offenderunt: *inanem* being used in a predicative way: “after they found this place to be empty”.

commosse: synocopated perfect infinitive (= *commouisse*) (after *senserunt*).

intimam: superlative form of *intra*.

venisse: after *dico*.

mari: ablative of means/instrument.

[97] Hic te praetore Heracleo pirata cum quattuor myoparonibus parvis ad arbitrium suum navigavit. Pro di immortales! piraticus myoparo, cum imperii populi Romani nomen ac fasces essent Syracusis, usque ad forum Syracusanorum et ad omnes crepidines urbis accessit, quo neque Carthaginiensium gloriosissimae classes, cum mari plurimum poterant, multis bellis saepe conatae umquam aspirare potuerunt, neque populi Romani invicta ante te praetorem gloria illa navalis umquam tot Punicis Siciliensibusque bellis penetrare potuit; qui locus eius modi est ut ante Syracusani in moenibus suis, in urbe, in foro hostem armatum ac victorem quam in portu ullam hostium navem viderint.

[loeb “And here it was that, while you were governor, Heracleo the pirate and his four small galleys sailed about without let or hindrance. God help us! with Syracuse a part of the Roman empire and governed by a Roman magistrate, a pirate galley has sailed right up to its market-place, to every one of its quays; it has reached a spot that the renowned fleets of Carthage at the height of her naval power, despite attempt after attempt in war after war, never succeeded in reaching; a spot to which the glorious navy of Rome, that until you became governor never knew defeat, in all her wars with Carthaginian and Sicilian was never able to penetrate; a spot so situated that the people of Syracuse beheld an enemy’s triumphant arms within their ramparts, their city, their market-place, before they beheld a single one of his ships within their harbour.”]

te praetore: ablative absolute. Placed near the start to emphasise that Verres is governor whilst these shocking things are happening (repeated at 98 to reiterate and build up).

myoparonibus: from a Greek word (μυοπαρών) for a light and fast-sailing ship, as used by pirates, These shouldn’t be able to get past sturdy Roman galleries, especially when there are 4 of them.

di immortales: vocative with interjection *pro*.

cum: “although”.

crepidines: sea-walls of the town.

cum mari plurimum poterant: “at a time when they were in command of the sea” (purely temporal *cum* so indicative mood). NB verbal polyptoton in reuse of verb following (*potuerunt ... potuit*).

aspirare: “to come near”.

conatae: deponent verb.

invicta: goes with “gloria illa navalis” (i.e. that glorious navy) (effect of separation?).

ante te praetorem: i.e. “before your praetorship”.

umquam tot Punicis Siciliensibusque bellis: the Romans captured the land side of Syracuse in 211 BC.

qui locus: this place (demonstrative relative).

eius modi: genitive of description.

eius modi est ut ante ... viderint: exceptional sequence in consecutive/result clause. Note Gildersleeve Lodge section 513 (exceptional sequence of tenses: sentences of result).

ante: goes with *quam* later.

[98] Hic te praetore praedonum naviculae pervagatae sunt, quo Atheniensium classis sola post hominum memoriam trecentis navibus vi ac multitudine invasit; quae in eo ipso portu

loci ipsius portusque natura victa atque superata est. Hic primum opes illius civitatis comminutae depressaeque sunt; in hoc portu Atheniensium nobilitatis, imperii, gloriae naufragium factum existimatur. Eone pirata penetravit quo simul atque adisset non modo a latere sed etiam a tergo magnam partem urbis relinqueret? Insulam totam praetervectus est, quae est urbs Syracusis suo nomine ac moenibus, quo in loco maiores, ut ante dixi, Syracusanum habitare vetuerunt, quod, qui illam partem urbis tenerent, in eorum potestatem portum futurum intellegebant.

[loeb “ Under your governorship, those tiny pirate vessels sailed about freely where only once within human memory had a fleet forced an entrance, the vast and mighty fleet of Athens with her three hundred ships—and it was defeated and crushed in that same harbour by the sheer strength of that harbour’s position. There it was that the hitherto triumphant power of that famous state was shattered and brought low; it was in this harbour that we think of the pride and power and glory of the Athenian people as suffering shipwreck. What, has a pirate pushed his way in to a spot where the city was not only no longer in front of him but a great part of it left behind him? He sailed right beyond the Island, and the Island at Syracuse counts as a city in its own right and with its own walls; it is the region where, as I have mentioned, our ancestors forbade any Syracusan to dwell, because they saw that the inhabitants of that part of the city would be able to control the harbour.”]

hic: “there” (usually “here”).

naviculae: diminutive.

Atheniensium classis: active in the harbour in 414 and 413 BCE.

trecentis: three hundred but often used vaguely.

multitudine: ablative of manner or of accompaniment. “*vi ac multitudine*” = “by force and number”.

quae = relative connective.

portus = genitive.

natura = ablative.

victa atque superata: nominatives.

primum: “for the first time”.

factum: understand “esse”.

eone pirata penetravit quo: “eo”= adverbial, “there”, in combination with the local relative “quo”.

simul atque = “as soon as”.

adisset = “adiisset” = “adivisset”.

relinqueret: Leaving (accusative) from (*a* + ablative) He advanced having the “*magnam partem urbis*” (accusative) not only “a latere” but also “a tergo”, to show how freely that pirate was moving to the very centre of the city.

Insulam: i.e. Ortygia.

quod: causal, “because.”

qui illam partem urbis tenerent: verb in subjunctive because it gives the relative sentence a conditional meaning.

futurum: supply “esse” (*intellegebant* introduces indirect speech).

[99] At quem ad modum est pervagatus! Radices palmarum agrestium, quas in nostris navibus invenerant, iactabant, ut omnes istius improbitatem et calamitatem Siciliae possent cognoscere. Siculosne milites, aratorumne liberos, quorum patres tantum labore suo frumenti exarabant ut populo Romano totique Italiae suppeditare possent, eosne in insula Cereris natos, ubi primum fruges inventae esse dicuntur, eo cibo esse usos a quo maiores eorum ceteros

quoque frugibus inventis removerunt! Te praetore Siculi milites palmarum stirpibus, piratae Siculo frumento alebantur!

[loeb “And how triumphantly he sailed to and fro, his men brandishing the wild-palm roots they had found on board our ships, to tell everyone of Verres’ villainy and Sicily’s misfortunes, how Sicilian soldiers, the sons of those farmers whose toil grew corn enough to feed the people of Rome and all Italy—how these men, the natives of Ceres’ own island, where corn, they tell us, was first discovered, had had to eat the wretched food from which, by the discovery of corn, their forefathers rescued themselves and all the world beside. Sicilian soldiers fed on palm roots, Sicilian corn was the food of pirates—when you were governor of Sicily!”]

radices: fleet sent to sea by Verres was so ill-provided for that the sailors had to forage for palm-roots to eat.

ut: “so that”.

Siculosne milites...: accusative and infinitive; the various “-ne” add a sense of question. Sicily was famous for its corn: its inhabitants farmed it. The island was deemed sacred to Ceres and Proserpina and in some traditions (e.g. Diod Sic 5.2) it was believed that wheat was first discovered here.

istius: refers to Verres.

frumenti: partitive genitive, dependent on *tantum*.

eosne: accusative of exclamation; picks up *Siculosne milites* after long intervening descriptive relative clause. ‘to think that they...’, *ne* adds a sense of question.

cibo: ablative, after infinitive *esse usos* (utor takes ablative). The subjects of this infinitive are the accusatives “*Siculos milites*”, “*liberos*” and “*eos natos*”.

frugibus inventis : ablative absolute.

[100] O spectaculum miserum atque acerbum! ludibrio esse urbis gloriam, populi Romani nomen, nostrorum hominum conventum atque multitudinem piratico myoparoni! in portu Syracusano de classe populi Romani triumphum agere piratam, cum praetoris inertissimi nequissimique oculos praedonum remi respergerent!...

[loeb “Think of that pitiful, miserable scene! think of the glory of Rome, the honour of the Roman people, the multitude of Roman^a citizens dwelling there, mocked and insulted by that pirate galley! think of that pirate celebrating his victory over the Roman fleet by a triumphal procession in the harbour of Syracuse, his oars dashing spray in the face of this indolent scoundrel of a governor!...”]

the same exclamative structure; 4 accusative subjects; “sum” with two datives: *ludibrio* : (predicative dative) “source to mockery” and *piratico myoparoni* (“to the pirate ship”).

esse : infinitive in exclamation.

piratam : accusative of exclamation.