

Critical Analysis of Cicero's Verrines 2.1.66-8

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These three chapters will be analyzed with regard to two criteria: host-guest duties and duties expected because of gender roles. This will facilitate understanding how Cicero used societal expectation of duties in his prosecution of Verres. The giving and receiving of hospitality was very much '*a respected form of ritual*'¹. Cicero himself wrote about this topic in his '*final work... advice on ethical matters*'². Firstly '*patere domus*'³ to open his home, though with the caveat that this is only '*hospitibus illustribus*' to an illustrious guest. Secondly '*nec libidini luxuriaeque*' not libidinousness nor luxury, that is generosity without excessive showiness. Finally, hospitality should be extended '*in ipsoque peregrino*' to the foreigner himself. These three aspects of the host-guest duties will be considered: opening the home, generosity without excess, and welcoming the foreigner.

The second criterion will be that of duties expected because of gender roles. Cicero's *De Officiis* although '*formally addressed to Cicero's son*'⁴ is generally taken as advice to (young) men. He sets out clearly four male duties '*perspicacia... in societate fide... animi excelsi... temperantia*'⁵ wisdom... justice... courage... temperance. It is a sad truth that information from the Roman Republic (and indeed much of human history) relating to men '*is far more abundant*'⁶ than that relating to women. Some indirect insight can be gained from the inscriptions on coins of the later Imperial period which highlighted '*Pietas... Fides... Pudicitia*'⁷ piety... fidelity... modesty as female duties.

The chapters considered here are the core part of the Episode of Lampsacus lying roughly in the middle of Cicero's second speech against Verres. There is considerable evidence of Cicero as a historical person, '*history has remembered Cicero*'⁸. It is likely that the second speech was genuinely prepared by Cicero for delivery in court although '*the second hearing never took place*' as the '*mountain of evidence*'⁹ presented by Cicero led to Verres fleeing. Although it can be argued that none of Cicero's evidence '*points conclusively*'¹⁰ to his interpretation of events, the Episode of Lampsacus is further example of the very detailed evidence that Cicero presented showing the '*damage he has caused to Rome*'¹¹. The immediately preceding chapters

¹ Nichols (2016) p180

² Schofield (2013) p84

³ *Cic. Off. 2.64*

⁴ Kries (2004) p378

⁵ *Cic. Off. 1.15*

⁶ Foxhall (2013) p97

⁷ Pomeroy (2010) p184

⁸ Tempest (2011) p1

⁹ Mitchell (1986) p 10

¹⁰ Steel (2004) p237

¹¹ Steel (2013) p259

have introduced the change of topic from Verres' lust for artworks '*to his sexual licence*'¹² by setting the scene geographically (Chapter 63) then introducing two key protagonists: a companion of Verres, Rubrius (Chapter 64); and a respectable wealthy citizen, Philodamus (Chapter 65).

The banquet is introduced at the beginning of Chapter 65 '*convivium comparat*' *he prepared a banquet*. The intensifying prefix *com* and the alliteration with '*con*' in '*convivium*' and '*copiosus*' *wealthy*, in the immediately preceding clause, shows the effort put into hospitality. The word '*convivium*' literally living together emphasises hospitality rather than food as '*cena*' *dinner* might. It is '*magnifice et ornate*' *magnificent and splendid* as required by the generosity duty of hospitality. However, it is not too showy being '*ut erat in primis inter suos copiosus*' *as should be for one of the most wealthy men*. Even though Philodamus has not gone too far with expenditure he does '*filium suum... mittit ad cenam*' *send away for dinner his own son*. This could be a hint at a lack of courage from Philodamus.

Chapter 66 opens with a sentence in two simple but contrasting short phrases. The first very much about hospitality '*comites invitat*' *he invites comrades*; the second ostensibly about business '*Verres certiores facit quid opus esset*' *Verres informed them what business there is*. However, Cicero '*never says*'¹³ that Verres was actually there. The first phrase is complex with regard to the duties of hospitality as Rubrius invites his comrades into somebody else's home, albeit at their request. The second positively inappropriate as we soon find out the business is actually licentiousness. The next sentence keeps the brisk pace with two verbs in just three words '*mature veniunt, discumbitur*' *they arrive early, recline [for dinner]*. The narrative continues with a short clause of short words '*fit sermo inter eos*' *There is conversation between them*. The pace of the language is inconsistent with the obligation of both host and guests to take a gentle welcoming pace. The next part, tacked on with a conjunction, is actually the key moment things start to go wrong '*et invitatio ut Graeco more biberetur*' *and invitation to drink in the Greek way*. This suggestion to take proceedings to effectively a '*rowdy Greek symposium*'¹⁴ is separated from its initiator by an impersonal deponent verb '*fit... invitatio*' which could be taken as lack of the male duty to courage. Rome had a complex relationship with the more ancient civilization of Greece, having '*awakened to ... her own intellectual inferiority*'¹⁵.

The response to the suggestion of Greek drinking is ambiguous '*hortatur hospes*' *the host urges*, it is unclear whether the host is Rubrius or Philodamus. Next '*poscunt maioribus poculis*' *they drink with bigger cups* which seems to breach the duty to avoid excess showiness. Although earlier it was not clear who the host was, the next action is explicitly done by Rubrius. He addresses Philodamus in the vocative almost making his question a command "*Philodame, cur ad nos filiam tuam non intro vocari iubes?*" *Philodamus, why don't you tell your daughter to come in?* Rubrius' request puts two female duties in opposition to each other. Philodamus' daughter ought to show fidelity in obeying her father as *pater familias* but in doing so would

¹² Gildenhard (2011) p121

¹³ Steel (2004) p238

¹⁴ Gildenhard (2011) p148

¹⁵ Poynton (1934) p3

show a lack of modesty by joining a rowdy group of men. This is emphasised by the explicit reiteration of his parent role '*parens esset*' and that it is '*improbi dicto*' improper speech. Of course, it should not be forgotten that it is possible '*Rubrius simply did not understand how offensive*'¹⁶ this was. There is another very short sentence of just two words to show bluntness '*instare Rubrius*' with the infinitive enhancing vividness.

Philodamus then behaves in an ingenious way '*negavit moris esse Graecorum*' he said it was not the Greek custom. He uses anithesis of male and female '*vivorum... mulieres*' men... women to emphasise the impermissibility. This both allows him to not deny the guest's request himself (Greek custom denies it) whilst also highlighting the host-guest duty to respect different culture's customs. As the chapter closes matters break down into chaos as '*alius ex alia parte*' someone from somewhere shows a lack of the male duty of courage to make themselves known rather than shout from the crowd, but still issues a command '*vocetur mulier*' summon the woman. The use of the word *mulier*, rather than say *femina*, seems to be '*a suggestive turn of phrase*'¹⁷ questioning her female duty to modesty. Fundamentally, *mulier* means a sexually experienced woman, which indeed is highlighted in Chapter 63 by Cicero's dichotomy '*virgo aut mulier*' virgin or experienced woman. In practice, it could mean a prostitute or a respectable matron, however, in Chapter 62 when Cicero uses '*matribus*' for the latter. Finally, Rubrius '*ut ianuam clauderent... imperat*' commands that the doors be closed. Giving such orders in someone else's home seems against the hospitality duty to open one's own home, and also the male duty to temperance. This is emphasised by use of the especially powerful word of command '*imperat*'. The impropriety of his orders is emphasised by the s-alliteration as if an animal hissing. In Chapter 66 the banquet rapidly descends into a drinking party as Rubrius and comrades show a lack of male temperance; a lack of respect for female fidelity and modesty; and a lack of respect for hospitality duties to the home. In contrast Philodamus ingeniously tries to use hospitality duties to defuse the situation.

Chapter 67 briskly continues, opening with a connecting relative '*quod*' as the action spreads. Philodamus, like Rubrius earlier, issues commands with s-alliteration '*servos suos ad se vocat*' calls his slaves to him but commands they should '*ipsum neglegant, filiam defendant*' disregard him, defend his daughter. There are a number of uses of s-alliteration throughout the text; the next notable one being in Chapter 70 when Cicero hypothesises excuses Verres could not give for his actions '*cum seditionem sedare vellem*' when I wanted to calm sedition. The asyndetic parallelism emphasises the contrast between male and female duties. Philodamus has shown the male duty to wisdom in taking command of his staff but also the duty to courage in defending himself whilst commanding his staff to respect the female duty to modesty by protecting his daughter. He also commands that someone go to fetch his son due to '*tantum domestic mali*' so much wickedness at home and '*clamor interea... tota domo*' chaos though the whole home. The polyptoton of words related to the home reinforces the sense that the duty of the guest-host relationship to respect the home has been violated. In the chaos '*hospitis iactatur domi suae*' the host is thrown about in his own home. The explicit naming him host and use of the reflexive pronoun further underscoring lack of respect for host's home. The chaos of the

¹⁶ Steel (2004) p239

¹⁷ Adams (1982) p195

situation is mirrored in the chaos of the sentence with the subject all the way at the end '*homo honestissimus*' *a most noble man* and h-alliteration sound like a sigh strengthens the pathos for the noble home violated.

The action takes a more serious turn towards bodily injury as '*Philodamus perfunditur*' *Philodamus is flooded* with boiling water. It is not clear whether the repeated f sound is purposeful alliteration but they '*go well together at the sound level*'¹⁸ and do engage the sense of touch by creating a feeling of the flowing of the scalding water. It is a very domestic choice of weapon and in that sense diminishes Rubrius' male duty to courage. The lack of courage is underscored by the passive verb. When the son returns home it is '*ut et vitae patris et pudicitiae sororis succurreret*' *to protect both the life of his father and the modesty of his sister*. The female duty to modesty is elevated to the same value as the father's life by the parallelism created by the repetition of conjunction '*et... et both... and*'. After the son's arrival participation in events widens further to '*omnes... Lampsaceni*' *all Lampsacenes* who are '*iniuriae magnitudo movebat*' *moved by the scale of the injustice*. They engage with the male duty to justice.

A lictor, that is an official bodyguard, '*a Rubrio... occiditur*' *is killed by Rubrius*. The passive verb with Rubrius just as agent takes attention away from him and places it on the victim. Moreover, the lack of mention of a manly weapon further shows Rubrius' lack of respect for the male duty to courage. The use of the historic present makes this more vivid. The death of the lictor takes place whilst Rubrius is '*quasi in praesidio ad auferendam mulierem*' *as if on guard of the women to be abducted*. The contrast between his '*official bodyguard*'¹⁹ who is '*in praesidio*' *on guard* and the abduction underscores the abuse of justice for the corrupt aims of Verres and his comrades. The use of the ambiguous '*mulierem*' again draws attention to the female duty to modesty. When '*Rubrius in turba sauciatur*' *Rubrius is wounded in the crowd* again the verb is passive and the assailant is unknown, yet again Rubrius' lack of courage is shown. As the chapter ends '*cupere aliqua evolare, si posset*' *he desired some escape, if possible*. The historic infinitive '*cupere*' makes his desperation more vivid and the indefinite pronoun '*aliqua*' and conditional '*si posset*' *if possible* show his lack of the male duty to '*perspicitia*' *wisdom* in being able to effect his escape. In Chapter 67 the violation of the host's household widens to the whole town and Rubrius shows a distinct lack of courage.

Chapter 68 begins with temporal signposts that the action has moved to the next day '*postridie... mane*' *early morning the next day*. The (male) citizens gather and the male duty to wisdom is shown as '*quaerunt quid optimum factu sit*' *they ask what is best to be done* with the indirect question showing the sense of contemplation. The male duty to temperance is shown as each man '*auctoritatis... ad populum loquebatur*' *spoke to the people... according to his authority* with the qualifier of temperance '*auctoritatis*' brought to the beginning of the phrase to show its importance. The use of an imperfect verb emphasises duration showing that plenty of time was allowed for thoughtful discussion. The scene '*projects familiar elements of Rome's political culture*'²⁰ as consensus is reached '*inventus est nemo cuius non haec... sententia*'

¹⁸ Gildenhard (2011) p156

¹⁹ Steel (2004) p240

²⁰ Gildenhard (2011) p160

nobody was found whose opinion was not thus; the impersonal verb emphasizes the collective nature of the agreement, conforming to the male duty to justice.

The Lampsacenes consider how *'iure legati populi Romani... uterentur'* *the legates of the Roman people use justice* contemplating whether or not Verres and his comrades have shown the male duty to courage. They particularly consider this with regard to the Roman treatment of *'socios nationesque exteras'* *allies and foreign nations*. The possible hendiadys carefully obscures the question of whether the Lampsacenes are allies or foreign or both. They also consider *'pudicitiam liberorum servare ab eorum libidine tutam'* *to save the modesty of children from their [the legate's] lust*. This is a rhetorically particularly *'carefully constructed phrase'*²¹. The female duty to modesty is intertwined with the male duty to courageously save by the chiasmus of the phrase. The importance of modesty is underscored by hyperbaton sending the unnecessary *'tutam'* to the end of the phrase for emphasis. The repeated fluid I sounds creates a slippery sensual feel and could be regarded as *'alliteration'*²². This makes more vivid the *'sordid story'*²³ of the lusts of Verres which jars with the daughters of Lampsacus being described with the innocent gender neutral *'liberorum'* *children* in contrast to the earlier adult gendered *'mulier'* *woman*. The similarity of the word to *'liber'* *free* could also be intended to reiterate their status as free-born Romans. Cicero's consistency in repeating the phrase *'pudicitiam liberorum'* later in Chapter 76 reinforces his point. The male duty to courage is reiterated as the chapter and the account of the events at Lampsacus come to a close with a warning of the risk of *'tanta vi atque acerbitate'* *such violence and bitterness*. The (male) Lampsacenes have shown the duty to wisdom with a very calm and Roman public discussion. The female duty to modesty has been seen to be tightly interwoven with the male duty to courage.

The duties Cicero describes in *De Officiis* for the male citizen and for the host-guest relationship have been used here along with female duties inferred from imperial numismatics as lenses to consider the events described in the Episode of Lampsacus which forms a core part of Cicero's successful speeches against Verres. Reference to all the duties, except the female duty to modesty, appear to greater or less extent. The guest-host duty that has been most prominent has been that of respect for the home. The home is of course particularly where male and female duties came together in a society where women were largely expected to focus on domestic activities. The account considered here ends with particular rhetorical focus on showing the interweaving of male and female duties, particularly those of courage and modesty. By showing how these different strands of duties have been violated by Verres and his comrades, Cicero has put together an effective argument to convince his audience that Verres is dangerous to the very fabric of society.

²¹ Gildenhard (2011) p162

²² Gildenhard (2011) p163

²³ Steel (2004) p241

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