Politics of the Late Republic H408/33

Cicero – *In Verrem I* and *Selected Letters*

Source Booklet

# About this Booklet:

*This booklet has been designed for you to use to help you study of the set texts of this course. The English translation of the texts are provided on the left page, and you are encouraged to make detailed notes about to text on the right page.*

*I have also included a context section to the speeches and letters and a list of rhetorical devices. When reading the text you are encouraged to highlight where you see the devices being used* ***and explain the effect it has on the rest of the speech.***

# Context to In Verrem I

In **70 B.C**. **Cicero** was the prosecution lawyer of **Gaius Verres (120-43 B.C.)**. Verres alleged crime was that he had **extorted 400,000 sesterces from the province of Sicily** during his governorship from 73-71 B.C.

During the Civil War between Marius and Sulla (88-87 B.C.) Verres had been a junior officer in Marius’ Legion. He saw that Sulla was going to win so went over to Sulla’s lines bearing his legions pay chest. After this he was protected by Sulla. By 73 B.C. he had been made governor of Sicily). In Sicily, Verres was alleged to have despoiled temples and used a number of national emergencies, including the Third Servile War, as cover for elaborate extortion plots.

When Cicero delivered these speeches he was also running for aedileship. The result of these speeches flung him into the political sphere. The speech allowed himself to prove himself as a Novus Homo whilst also establishing some form of Concordia Ordinum and rooting out un-Roman behaviour.

Cicero had planned to deliver 7 speeches, but after his 2nd speech Verres fled Rome and stayed in exile. The genre of these speeches are **‘Forensic Legal Oratory’.**

# Setting, Delivery, Publication

Cicero was to deliver the speech in the permanent court in Rome specifically for cases of extortion. Verres’ fame and the prestige of his defence counsel – Quintus Hortensius Horrtalus – ensured that this would be a high profile case.

People had also flocked to Rome for the elections and to enjoy the Public Festivals granted to celebrate Pompey’s military success in the East. For Cicero it was the perfect arena for him to showcase his talents.

The judge would be Manius Acilius Glabrio and the jury comprised completely of Senators. It must be remembered that Cicero was a Novus Homo with no significant network of political support.

Verres created a considerable number of setbacks to try and set the case back (see below), despite this however, Cicero had acquired a huge amount of evidence and number of witnesses. Verres left after the second speech in voluntary exile.

Through winning the case Cicero won much prestige, especially by beating Hortensius. Within the Senate Cicero was now to be called upon earlier in debates. He extended his client base considerably.

Whilst it is clear that Cicero had a lot to gain from a successful outcome of the trial, *In Verrem I* is also an interesting study of how Cicero married personal ambition and political ideals. The speech presents us with a Cicero clearly stating his political position, fighting for the status quo and traditional Roman values, elevating the optimates and the senate back up to the status he felt they had both rights to and responsibilities therefrom. He represented himself as a friend of the clients that Verres had insulted and a champion of Roman law and justice.

Cicero’s decision to publish the complete speeches was not unusual, but certainly demonstrates the importance he attached to them and pride at his success. The written version meant that is words would be monumentalised, even though he had not actually delivered them all in court, and his status solidified in the Roman public eye. It also stood as evidence of the corruption of an individual member of the senate revealed and punished, gaining him political capital and credentials.

# Roman Legal Oratory:

The art of public speaking was the essential corner stone of an education in Republican Rome. Success in Public life demanded accomplished public speaking, particularly in the courts and in politics. Oratorical skills, - the ability to persuade through speech – translated into power in a society where decisions were made after formal deliberation and discussion in the senate and within assemblies. Legal, or forensic, oratory was studied and practised in great detail by those Roman boys wealthy enough to pay for an education, in preparation for a life of public duty.

Cicero was not only a brilliant orator, but also wrote about the art of writing and delivering successful speeches, for instance his works include *De Inventione, De Oratore, De Partitionibus, Oratoriae De Optimo Genere Oratorum* and *Brutus.* The composition of speeches was taught as structurally formulaic, which of course allowed room for bending the rules.

The success of any orator depended on his script. Hand-in-hand with an education on oratory was learning how to recognise and use rhetoric to its most effective ends. Yet oratory was not simply about speeches, but also about the delivery of those speeches. Legal oratory was public courtroom drama, which was why it attracted such large audiences and why successful lawyers won fame. Juries were influences by well-presented evidence, but also by how authoritative the speaker appeared, what sort of person the accused was painted to be and what common cultural ground or values the jury shared with each of the advocates. The response of the audience also, of course, could not be ignored.

Juries might be influenced by oratorical fashion, as ‘styles’ of oratory developed over ages. For example, a formal,. Austere approach was tradition in Rome up until the period we are looking at when Hortensius adopted an ‘Asian; style of oratory which incorporated emotion, flourishes of word and drama in a way hitherto unseen at Rome. Cicero himself produced his own style amalgamating the two to great effect.

# Roman Rhetoric:

Rhetoric, or the language or persuasion, was key to Roman public life, it was, like oratory, studied in great detail and subject to as much formal categorisation. They key to forensic oratory for Cicero was to deliver a speech with the rhetoric to persuade the judge and jury to agree with his version of events and judgement (not forgetting of course the potential influence of the audience).

When considering *In Verrem I*, we shall be examining the rhetorical skill of Cicero’s arguments, what he said, how he said it and why (or what potential effect it had). In the rest of this chapter, we shall be looking not only at the listed crimes of Verres but also at how Cicero represented himself as a figure of authority and conversely how he portrayed Verres as a morally as well politically corrupt person, and how Cicero framed the senatorial jury by appealing to what assumed would be shared, traditional Roman values.

Aside from specific details, Cicero employed many features common to speeches in which the speaker wished to move his audience emotionally. A number of rhetorical topics were identified for this purpose by the anonymous author of the *Rheotirca ad Herennium* (once falsely attributed to Cicero himself) – the earliest surviving Latin text on rhetoric (from the late 80s). Such rhetorical commonplaces included:

* Appealing to how important to contentious issue or crime is to a main authority such as the senate, Roman ancestry or gods.
* Presenting sympathetically who had been affected.
* Exploring what would happen if this crime were to go unpunished.
* Appealing to the idea of setting an example to prevent encouragement of such behaviour in the future.
* Emphasising the inability to ‘turn back’ on the judgement later or mitigate its effects
* Proving deliberate premeditation by the accused.
* Emphasising the foulness of the crime.
* Noting the unique nature of the crime and preventing further examples by suitably punishing the first instance of it
* Underling the scale of the crime by comparing motives for it to those for other wrongs
* Describing the crime in such detail that they jury feels they are witnessing it for themselves.

Cicero adopted many of these approaches, and many more besides. He had recourse also to his knowledge of a very wide range of literary stylistic devices, well known for their effect. In adopting such features he was to find them effective not only in his argument but also in demonstrating his education and oratorical authority.

# First Speech Outline:

During the first speech Cicero touched very little on Verres' extortion crimes in Sicily in the first speech. In fact, the crime isn’t mentioned until the last paragraph. Instead, he took a two-pronged approach, by both inflating the vanity of the all-senator jury and making the most of Verres' early character. The second approach concerned Verres' defence’s attempts to keep the case from proceeding on technicalities.

Verres had secured the services of the finest orator of his day, Quintus Hortensius Hortalus for his defence. Immediately, both Verres and Hortensius realized that the court as composed under Glabrio was inhospitable to the defence, and began to try to derail the prosecution by procedural tricks that had the effect of prolonging the trial. This was done by first trying to place a similar prosecution on the docket before Verres' trial, one concerning a Bythnian governor also on trial for extortion. The point of the attempted derailment of the case hinged on Roman custom. At the time the case was being argued, the year was coming to a close and soon a number of public festivals (including one in honour of Pompey the Great) would commence. All work ceased on festival days, according to Roman customs, including any ongoing trials. Cicero alleged that Hortensius was hoping to draw the trial out long enough to run into the festival period before Cicero would have an opportunity to conclude his case, thereby making it a statistical impossibility that Glabrio and the jury would deliver a verdict before the New Year, when the magistrates were replaced with their newly elected successors.

Hortensius and Verres both knew, Cicero argued, that Quintus Metellus, a friend and ally would be in charge of the extortion court in the new year, and so saw a benefit to such a gaming of the system. Cicero remarked that one of his friends had heard Hortensius congratulate Verres in the Forum soon after Metellus' election, announcing that this meant that Verres was as good as acquitted.

Cicero, too, had a unique strategy in mind for his prosecution. In 81 BC, the Dictator Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix had changed the composition of criminal courts, allowing only Senators to serve as jurymen. This had, apparently, caused friction and at least the appearance of "bought" justice, particularly when Senators were the accused, or the interests of a popular or powerful Senator were threatened. There had also been, concurrent with this, an almost perpetual scandal of wealthy senators and knights bribing juries to gain verdicts favourable to them. By 70, as the trial against Verres was proceeding, Lucius Aurelius Cotta had introduced a law that would reverse Sulla's restrictions on jury composition, once again opening the juries up to Senators, *Equites* and *tribuni aerarii* as a check on such over-lenient juries. Cicero devoted a significant amount of time in his oration to the perception of Senatorial juries, arguing that not only was Verres on trial for his malfeasance in Sicily, but the Senate was on trial as well for charges of impropriety, and that whatever verdict they handed down to Verres would reflect on them to either their credit or shame. The surest way, Cicero argued, to get the *Lex Aurelia* passed and take the juries away from the Senate was to acquit Verres on all charges.

Further, to counteract Hortensius' attempts to draw the trial out, Cicero begged the court's indulgence to allow him to alter the trial's flow from the usual format. In normal trials, both prosecution and defence would make a series of adversarial speeches before witnesses were called. Cicero realized that this would inevitably drag out the proceedings past the New Year, and so he requested that he be allowed to call witnesses immediately to buttress his charges, before the speeches were made.

Essentially the first speech created a situation in which the accused, the prosecutor and the jury were all carefully framed by Cicero to render the jury morally and politically obliged to pass a guilty verdict. This, with an overwhelming arsenal of evidence, secured Cicero’s success.

# Second Speech outline

The first speech had touched more on the sharp practice of Verres and his attorney, Hortensius, in trying to derail or delay the trial. In the second, infinitely more damning speech, Cicero laid out the full charge sheet. The second speech apparently was meant to have been his rebuttal speech had the trial continued, as it alludes to witnesses as already having testified in front of Glabrio's court.

Cicero enumerated a number of charges against Verres during his tenure as governor of Sicily. The main ones that serve as the greatest portion of the text concern a naval scandal that Verres had fomented as a complex means of embezzlement. These were that he subverted Roman security by accepting a bribe from the city of Messana to release them from their duty of providing a ship for the Roman fleet and that he fraudulently discharged men from fleet service, did not mark them down as discharged, and pocketed their active duty pay. Pirates that were captured were sometimes sold under the table by Verres as slaves, rather than being executed, as Cicero argues was the proper punishment. To camouflage the fact that this was going on, Cicero further accuses Verres of administratively shuffling around the pirates to cities that had no knowledge of them and substituting others in their place on the execution block.

Moreover, Cicero alleges that Verres placed a crony of his, Cleomenes by name, as commander of a fleet expedition to destroy a group of pirates in the area (the reason being, Cicero argues, to keep him out of reach as Verres cuckolded him) and that Cleomenes, due to incompetence, allowed the pirates to enter into Syracuse harbour and sack the town. Further, after the abject failure of Cleomenes' expedition, to keep the blame off himself for allowing the fleet to go out undermanned and ill-led, Verres ordered all the ships' captains except for Cleomenes to be executed. More charges were levelled outside of this naval affair. They include:

* A scheme of extortion centred on the Third Servile War, in which Verres allegedly would accuse key slaves of wealthy landowners of being in league with the rebelling slaves on the mainland, arresting them and then soliciting large bribes to void the charges.
* He ordered ships that had valuable cargoes impounded as allegedly belonging to the rebel Quintus Sertorius. Passengers and crew on board the ships were then thrown in a prison created out of an old rock quarry by the tyrant Dionysius I in Syracuse, and were executed without trial as alleged sympathizers or soldiers of Sertorius.
* One prisoner of Verres' scheme, Publius Gavius, a Roman citizen of Compsa, escaped and protested about Verres' treatment of Roman citizens. Verres had the man flogged, and then he had him crucified, both punishments not to be inflicted on a Roman citizen without a trial in Rome (and even then, an execution by crucifixion was never to be performed on a Roman citizen). To add to the humiliation, Verres was alleged to have placed the cross bearing Gavius on a spot where the coastline of mainland Italy (symbolically the border of Verres' power) could be seen by him as he died.
* He ordered his lictors and his chief lictor, Sextus in particular, to beat an elderly man of Panormus, a Roman citizen named Gaius Servilius, to near-death for criticizing Verres' rule. Servilius later died of his injuries

# Rhetorical Devices:

**Principal Rhetorical and Literary Devices**

1. **Alliteration**: repetition of the same letter at beginning of words or syllables:

*Marcus me momordit.*

2. **Anaphora**: the repetition of a word or phrase for emphasis:

*non feram, non sinam, non patiar*

3. **Anastrophe**: inversion of usual word order (e.g., preposition after the word it

governs):

*te propter vivo* (instead of the expected *propter te vivo*)

4. **Aposiopesis**: breaking off in the middle of a sentence :

*quem ego . . . sed non possum pergere.* ("Whom I . . . but I cannot go on.")

5. **Apostrophe**: addressing a person who is not present:

*O maiores, quid diceretis de hac re?* ("Oh ancestors, what would you say about this

matter?")

6. **Asyndeton**: omission of conjunctions:

*videt, sentit, scit.*

7. **Chiasmus**: "a-b-b-a" arrangement of words:

*magnas urbes oppida parva* (adjective, noun, noun, adjective)

8. **Ellipsis**: omission of words:

*Dixit me inventum.* ("He said I had been found." *esse* is missing).

9. **Hendiadys**: use of two nouns together to express a noun modified by an

adjective:

*luctus et labor* (meaning "grievous toil")

10. **Hyperbole**: exaggeration.

*Catilina est mons vitiorum.* ("Catiline is a mountain of vices.")

11. **Hysteron proteron**: placing first what the reader might expect to come last

*mortuus est et hostem inruit* ("He died and he rushed against the enemy")

12. **Litotes**: use of a negative to express a strong positive

*Haud stultus erat Cicero.* ("Cicero was very intelligent").

13. **Metaphor**: expression of meaning through an image

*Horatius est lux litterarum Latinarum.* ("Horace is the light of Latin

literature.")

14. **Metonymy**: substitution of one word for another that it suggests

*Neptunus me terret* (to mean, "the sea frightens me").

15. **Onomatopoeia**: use of words that sound like their meaning

*Murmurant multi* (the "m"’s produce the sound of murmuring).

16. **Oxymoron**: use of an apparent contradiction

*parvum monstrum*

17. **Personification**: attribution of human characteristics to something not

human

*Ipsa saxa dolent.* ("The rocks themselves grieve")

18. **Pleonasm**: use of superfluous words

*Oculis me videt.* ("She sees me with her eyes.")

19. **Polysyndeton**: use of many conjunctions

*et videt et sentit et scit*

20. **Prolepsis** (anticipation): use of a word sooner than it would logically appear

*submersis obruit puppis* ("he overwhelms the sunken ships").

21. **Simile**: comparison using a word like *sicut*, *similis*, or *velut*.

*Volat sicut avis.* ("He flies like a bird.")

22. **Synecdoche**: use of part to express a whole

*Prora in portam navigavit.* ("The ship sailed into the harbor." prora [prow]

for navis [ship]).

23. **Tmesis**: the separation of a compound word into two parts

*saxo cere comminuit brum* (for *saxo cerebrum comminuit:* "He smashed his brain

with a rock.").

24. **Tricolon crescens** (ascending tricolon): combination of three elements,

increasing in size

*non ferar, non patiar, non tolerabo*

25. **Zeugma**: use of one word in two different senses simultaneously

*Aeneas tulit dolorem et patrem Troia.* (Aeneas carried grief and his father from

Troy).

# Cicero – *In Verrem I – 1-4*

**1**

The thing which was desired most of all, O Judges, and which alone was thought to be the foremost factor in allaying the unpopularity of your order and the dishonour of the courts, seems, at this crucial time for the republic, to have been offered to and bestowed upon you; not by human counsel, but almost by divine influence. For now, a belief has become established, which is both destructive for the republic, and dangerous for you. The rumour is spreading, not only among the Roman people, but also among foreign nations, that in these courts as they exist now, no wealthy man, however guilty he may be, can possibly be convicted.

**2**

Now, in this time of crisis for your order and your judgements, when there are men prepared to try to kindle the unpopularity of the senate even further with speeches and the proposal of new laws, Gaius Verres has been brought to trial as a criminal. He is a man already condemned in everyone’s opinion by his life and actions, yet acquitted by the magnitude of his wealth, according to his own hope and public boast. I have undertaken this case as prosecutor, O Judges, with the greatest good will and expectation of the Roman people; not so that I might increase the unpopularity of the senate, but so that I might relieve it from the dishonour which I share with it. For I have brought a man before you whose case will enable you to restore the lost reputation of your courts, return to favour with the people of Rome, and satisfy foreign nations: a man, the embezzler of public funds, the abuser of Asia and Pamphyliae, the thief of the city’s rights, and the shame and ruin of the province of Sicily.

**3**

If you come to a decision about this man rightly and conscientiously, then that authority which ought to remain within you, will still cling to you; but if that man’s enormous riches shatter the sanctity and honesty of the courts, I would have at least achieved this: it would be clear that it was the administration of justice in the republic that was lacking, rather than a criminal for the judges, or a prosecutor for the criminal.

If I may indeed confess the truth about myself to you, O Judges, although many traps were laid for me by Gaius Verres, both by land and sea, which I avoided partly through my own diligence, and partly through the conscientiousness and service of my friends, I still never seemed to be in such danger, nor have I ever been so afraid, as I am now, here, in this very court of law.

**4**

Neither the anticipation of my prosecution, nor an assembly of this great size (although I am greatly disturbed by these circumstances) influences me so much as that man’s wicked plans, which he endeavours to plot simultaneously against me, against you, Manius Glabrio, and against the Roman people; he plots against the allies, against foreign nations, against the senate and against the very name of senator; the man who frequently says that “he who has only stolen enough for himself should be afraid, but this man has stolen enough to satisfy everyone; nothing is so holy that it cannot be corrupted, nor anything so fortified that it cannot be conquered by money.”

# Notes– *In Verrem I – 1-4*

The opening paragraph (chapter 1) of this speech sets the scene. Verres remains unnamed, as does any direct mention of the crime of extortion. Instead, Cicero instantly re-frames the trail as an opportunity to rescue the country from dire crisis. He explains that the real issue at stake is the perception of a rotten core within society, in which money speaks louder than justice. The perpetrators are, he argues, those who allow corruption to take place unpunished. The effect is distrust and dislike of the senatorial order that comprises the juries – a damaged reputation that threatens Concordia Ordinum and the stability of the Roman state.

In this opening, Cicero immediately employs one of the rhetorical commonplaces – ‘appealing to how important the contentious issue or crime is to a main authority such as the senate.’ He addresses the jury as if opening a direct conversation with them **(apostrophe),** demanding their full attention. The language is full of references to imminent threat: the situation is ‘destructive’ and ‘dangerous’. The speech is also full of **hyperbole:** it is a ‘crucial time for the republic’; the scale of the problem for the senate has become international: ‘rumour is spreading, not only among the Roman people, but also among foreign nations’, and he sweepingly dismisses room for exception – ‘no wealthy man, however guilty he may be, can possibly be convicted’. **He continues in this vein later in chapter four.**

In chapter 1 there is almost an urgency to Cicero’s speech for the jury to ‘fix’ Rome. He also puts emphasis on how they (the jury) have been viewed negatively, and thus through siding with Cicero in this decision they might be able to clear their ‘tarnished’ name. Cicero is quite blunt in saying if you have enough money in Rome you will never be convicted – this might be considered a dangerous move – might set the jury against him, but in reality this forces them to side with him – if they find Verres guilty, especially with this particular crime of extortion, they would not clear their reputations – ultimately the court should be moral and seek justice.

In chapter two we see that Cicero was more of a master of rhetoric that simply to chide and threaten the senators into supporting his prosecution of Verres. They formed the very body into which Cicero was so keen to be accepted. Rather than alienate himself, he referred many times to his own place within that problematic order. He state openly towards the start of the speech that he is acting here as prosecution: *‘not so that I might increase the unpopularity of the senate, but so that I might relieve it from the dishonour which I share with it.’* (**cf. chapter 43).** Cicero ultimately makes it seem this chapter that finding Verres guilty is the only restoration the courts can have.

Cicero also names Verres for the first time in chapter two. This delayed naming, and the consistent reference to him throughout this speech as ‘that man’ etc. further stands to alienate Verres.

Chapter 3 carries on in a similar style. Cicero suggests if Verres is found innocent, it won’t be because he didn’t commit a crime nor because there was nobody to punish him, but instead it was because of the corrupt nature of the jury – again, Cicero is consistently repeating this theme of broken republic. Unlike Greek orators, Cicero is not flattering the jury (at this point), but rather giving them an ultimatum. At the end of this chapter Cicero portrays himself as weak and fearing for what might happen – this was classic in Greek oratory – making the speaker seem vulnerable and thus eliciting sympathy from the jury.

In chapter 4 Cicero gives us the sense that it is not just him facing danger but the judge and all the Roman people – this is hyperbolic and gives the impression that Verres would stand to commit greater and more costly crimes against the Roman people. The last section of chapter 4 portrays Verres as unrelenting and utterly corrupt – almost proud of his crime, almost as if it is a challenge to corrupt anything.

# Cicero – *In Verrem I – 5-9*

**5**

But if he was as subtle in his actions as he is bold in his endeavours, perhaps he would have eventually escaped our notice somehow. It so happens, however, that a remarkable stupidity has been joined to his incredible audacity. For, just as he was overt in his monetary thefts, so in his hope of corrupting the judges he has made his plans and endeavours clear to everyone. Only once in his life, he says, has he been afraid: the time when he was first put on trial by me as a criminal. He was afraid because, having just returned from his province, he was branded with unpopularity and dishonour that was not fresh, but old and longstanding, and at a time unsuitable for corrupting the judges.

**6**

Therefore, when I had requested a very short amount of time in which to conduct my investigation in Sicily, he found a man who would require two days less to make inquiries in Achaia – not that he would do the same with the diligence and industry that I have accomplished by my labour, and constant vigilance, by day and night. For that Achaean inquisitor did not even arrive at Brundisium, whereas, in just fifty days, I attended to the whole of Sicily in order to examine the records and injustices of all of the tribes and private individuals. Therefore it was clear to everyone that a man was being sought by this inquisitor, not so that he might be brought to trial as a criminal, but so that he might occupy the time designated for my prosecution.

**7**

Now, that most audacious and insane man thinks this: he knows that I have come into court so well prepared and equipped, so that I might fix his thefts and crimes not only in your ears, but in the very eyes of all. He sees that many senators are witnesses to his audacity, that many Roman knights are too, and numerous citizens and allies besides, to whom he himself has done notable harm. He also sees that such numerous, important embassies from the cities of our closest allies have convened, armed with public authority and evidence from their respective states.

**8**

Although this is the case, he still thinks so badly of all good men, and still believes the judgements of the senators to be corrupt and depraved to such an extent that he keeps boasting openly that he was not greedy for money for no reason, since he now finds it offers such great protection, and that he has bought the time of his trial itself (which would have been the hardest thing of all), in order to be able to buy everything else more easily afterwards; so that, since he was in no way able to evade the force of the accusations made against him altogether, he might avoid the most violent gusts of the storm.

**9**

But if he had placed any hope at all, not only in his cause but, indeed, in an honest defence, or in the eloquence or influence of anyone, surely he would not collect and chase after all of these things so eagerly. He would not despise and scorn the senatorial order to such an extent that, by his will, one of its members would be chosen to be held as a criminal who must plead his case before Manius Glabrio while, in the meantime, this man was preparing whatever he needed.

# Notes – *In Verrem I – 5-9*

In chapter 5 Cicero presents Verres as a brazen criminal. He also mentions his previous history with Verres in this chapter which further stands to emphasise Verres’ criminal past and present his already documented criminal past.

As Cicero alludes to in chapter 6, Cicero had requested 110 days to collect and prepare the evidence he needed for the case. Verres and his supporters introduced a trumped-up charge or extortion against another governor (of Achaia), asking for 108 days to gather evidence. The effect of this would be to place the ‘new’ extortion case ahead of the Verres trial in the extortion court and, in doing so, edge it out the year’s calendar. Cicero’s response was to work at incredible speed successfully to gather the evidence even faster ensuring the Verres trial was still first in the queue for the extortion court.

Throughout the speech Cicero regularly details or refers to the audience **(apostrophe).** We see this in chapter 7. The effect of this draws the audience into the speech and breaks up the narrative. It makes them seem as if they have more of a vested interest and duty of prosecute Verres. It could also make the audience feel uncomfortable here. Cicero is subtly suggesting that people have sat by and let Verres get away with his crimes up until now and thus something should be done about him.

At the start of chapter 7 Cicero again refers to how brazen and audacious Verres is – Cicero is ‘de-crowning’ Verres here. He then refers to Verres as ‘he’ in this chapter – this further gives him a lack of identity and stands to alienate him

As Cicero mentions in chapter 8, Verres’ reason for wishing to postpone the case to the following year was, as Cicero puts it, to avoid the trial running during ‘the most violent gusts of the storm.’ Cicero goes on (through to chapter 10) to explain the allusion at length. With an excellent and reputable judge, and a similarly upstanding set of jury men, Verres’ case would have the likelihood of winning. However, by postponing the case until the following year, his defence counsel would be the new consul. Marcus Caecilius Metellus - a relative of the other consul elect and a man supportive of Verres – would be praetor and the president of the extortion court. Rid of most of the outstanding members of the jury of 70 B.C. (since they had been voted offices of the state the following year), Verres would have as favourable court as he could have hoped in 69 B.C.

In chapter 8 Cicero flatters the jury by presenting them as ‘good men’ whom Verres is trying to corrupt. Cicero is repeating the theme that Verres believes he can bribe the court. This has the effect of suggesting that he is disrespecting the court, making it easier to prosecute him as it is further assuming his guilt.

In chapter 9 Cicero eloquently puts it that if Verres was innocent he wouldn’t be going to such lengths to disrupt the court and proceedings.

# Cicero – *In Verrem – 10-13*

**10**

And I see clearly the circumstances for which he hopes, and upon what his mind is fixed. But how he truly believes that he is able to accomplish anything with the current praetor and this bench of judges, I cannot understand. This one thing I do know (which the Roman people also realised when he rejected the judges) is that he had this hope: that he would place all his chances of safety in money and if this defence was taken from him, he thought nothing would help him.

For what genius is so great, what ability or means of speaking is able in any way to defend the life of that man, convicted as he is of so many vices and crimes, and long since condemned by the will and judgement of all?

**11**

And, to say nothing of the dishonours and disgraces of his youth, what else happened in his quaestorship (the first step of honour); except that Gnaeus Carbo was robbed of public money by his own quaestor? That the consul was plundered and betrayed? His army deserted? His province abandoned? The religious duties and rites assigned to him by lot were violated? His lieutenancy was the ruin of all Asia and Pamphylia, provinces in which he pillaged many homes, most of the cities and all of the temples. This was when he renewed and repeated his former crime as a quaestor against Gnaeus Dolabella; when he not only deserted him at a time of peril, but even attacked and betrayed the man to whom he had been lieutenant and proquaestor, and whom he had brought into disrepute with his crimes.

**12**

This man’s only city praetorship was characterised by the destruction of the sacred temples and public works, and also, in terms of his legal decisions, the adjudicating and awarding of property contrary to all established rules. Now, however, he has established vast and numerous monuments and proofs of all of his vices in the province of Sicily, which he harassed and ruined for three years to such an extent that it is utterly impossible for it to be restored to its previous state. Moreover, it seems scarcely able to be revived in any way, even through many years’ governance by virtuous praetors.

**13**

When this man was praetor, the Sicilians held neither their own laws, nor the decrees of our senate, nor common rights. Each person in Sicily has only as much left as either escaped the notice of that most avaricious and lustful man, or was left behind due to him being sated.

No legal decision was concluded for three years, unless it was in accordance with his will. No man’s property was safe; even if it had been given to him by his father and grandfather, he was deprived of it on that man’s command. Countless sums of money were taken from farmers’ property via new and nefarious system. The most faithful allies were included in the number of enemies; Roman citizens were tortured and killed like slaves; the greatest criminals were acquitted in court through bribery; the most honest men with the greatest integrity were prosecuted while absent, condemned and exiled without the chance to speak in their defence. The most fortified harbours, the greatest and most secure cities were left open to pirates and thieves; the sailors and soldiers of Sicily, our allies and friends, died of hunger; the best and most useful fleets, to the great disgrace of the Roman people, were lost and destroyed.

# Notes – *In Verrem – 10-13*

The speech itself, however, is not about the sum of 400,000 sesterces, but focuses upon the character of Verres, his history of crime of all sorts and his absolute belief in the ultimate power of money. Cicero is prosecuting an established member of the Nobiles, with a jury made up of senators. How can he gain a sympathetic hearing given Verres’ inevitable existing ties of Amicitia with powerful senators? Cicero’s approach is to ‘alienate’ Verres from the culture and society in which he is established. How, he implies, can Verres be described as a friend, as a Roman when he abuses the very social, political and legal codes that make up Republican Rome? At the end of chapter 10 Cicero begins the main part of his speech, quantifying Verres’ established criminal character by listing his crimes while holding offices of responsibility to the Roman state. In Chapter 10 Cicero is careful again not to use Verres’ name to further alienate him. Furthermore, using a rhetorical question Cicero suggests that Verres cannot be defended and is therefore using underhanded ways to try to defend himself. The effect of the rhetorical question is to make the jury question Verres’ recent attempts to derail as a further indication of his guilt whilst also ask how this man could ever be found innocent.

In chapter 11 we see multiple rhetorical questions being used to list Verres’ crimes. Every position he has held he has mistreated. Cicero is emphasising their multitude as if to say ‘what else happened?’ and thus list multiple crimes. Cicero also uses an excellent example of praeteritio at the end of chapter 10 leading into chapter 11. He says he won’t mention anything of Verres’ disgraces and dishonours in his youth, but by saying he is not mentioning it deliberately means he has to mention it and bring it to everyone’s attention. This further stands to incriminate Verres’ character and suggests to the jury Verres has always been a corrupt and dishonourable figure.

In character mentions how Verres had ‘attacked and betrayed the man whom he had been lieutenant and proquaestor, and whom he had brought into disrepute with his crime.’ This has nothing to do with the crime Verres is accused of but instead is included to further paint a negative view of Verres.

In chapter 12 Cicero mentions that when Verres was a praetor in Rome he was guilty of ‘the destruction of the sacred temples and public works, and also, in terms of his legal decisions, the adjudicating and awarding of property contrary to all established rules.’ This is a very clever accusation from Cicero. Not only does this make the jury question Verres’ pietas – casting him as a sacrilegious figure that will unite the jury against him as all are meant to show piety to the gods, going against this has serious repercussions, but Cicero also highlights that in his legal positions Verres is not able to administer justice, this makes the jury question why they should find him innocent if Verres himself cannot use his legal and political power properly.

In chapters 12-13 Cicero begins to talk of Verres’ governorship of Sicily in 73-71 B.C. that crowned Verres’ criminal achievements and best illustrated his disrespect for Roman values. According to Cicero, inheritances we cancelled, farmers robbed, criminals unpunished, good innocent men found guilty of crimes in their absence cities were left undefended, the seas full of pirates and civilians started to death. This is a suggestion of Verres using a lack of democratic functions apparent in Rome. It is again casting Verres as unmoral and ‘un-Roman’ to an extent. This is emphasised by the fact they are using a court room and democratic system to find Verres guilty now and Cicero has already implied how honourable the jurors are at this trial – therefore Cicero is again making a subtle suggestion that this jury will find him guilty as not to appear corrupt themselves.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 14-17

**14**

That same man, while praetor, plundered and stripped all the most ancient monuments; some built by the wealthiest kings who wanted them as ornaments for their cities, some even built by our generals, which they either gave or restored as conquerors to the communities of Sicily. He not only did this in the case of public statues and ornaments, but he also despoiled all the shrines which were consecrated by the holiest rites. In short, he left no god for the Sicilians which he considered to have been made with acceptable skill, or with any of the craftsmanship of the ancients. I am prevented by shame from mentioning the criminal lust of that man, shown by his sexual activities and scandals. At the same time, by recalling such acts, I do not wish to increase the damage done to those men who were unable to keep their wives and children untouched by that man’s wanton lust.

**15**

But surely these crimes were committed by him in such a way that they would not be known to all men? I think that there is no man who, upon hearing his name, is not also able to relate his evil deeds; thus I ought to be more afraid of being thought to omit many of his crimes rather than inventing any charges against him. Indeed, it does not seem to me that this crowd, which has assembled to hear this case, wishes to learn the facts from me, but rather wishes to refresh its memory of what it already knows

Since this is the case, that insane and corrupt man seeks another form of combat with me. He does not conduct the trial so that he would oppose anyone’s eloquence for me; he depends upon nobody’s influence, authority, or political power. He is pretending that he trusts these things but I see what he is really doing (for he is not exactly acting inconspicuously); he places empty titles of nobility before me, that is, the names of arrogant men who do not hinder me so much by being noble as they help me by being notorious. He pretends that he relies on their protection, when in the meantime he is devising some other plan, and has been doing so for a long time now.

**16**

Now I will now briefly explain to you, O Judges, what hopes he has and what he is trying to do. But first, I beg you to recognise how the affair has been arranged by him from the beginning. When he first returned from the province, he made an attempt to bribe this court with large amounts of money; and to that end, he continued to uphold this proposal until the appointment of judges was concluded. After the judges had been appointed, the whole proposal to bribe the courts was abandoned; since by drawing lots for them, the fortune of the Roman people had defeated his hopes, and in rejecting the judges, my diligence had defeated his impudence.

**17**

Things were going splendidly. Lists of your names and of this jury were in everyone’s hands. No mark, or colour or dirt seemed to be able to influence the decisions of these men. All of a sudden, that man, previously so cheerful and happy, became so low and downcast that he seemed to be condemned, not only by the Roman people, but even by himself. But look! Suddenly, in these few days, with the consular comitia having taken place, he has returned to the same old plan with even more money, and the same plots are being prepared through those same people against your reputation and against everyone’s fortunes. These facts, O Judges, were first made clear to me by a slight hint and indication, but afterwards, when my suspicions had been aroused, I became unmistakably aware of all the secret meetings of that group.

# Notes – *In Verrem* – 14-17

In chapter 14 Cicero is able to bring in the idea of Verres transgressions not just against the people of Sicily but against Roman ancestry and important figures from the past. This again unites the jury against Verres – going against ancestors was a very bad crime. He also suggests that Verres has been sacrilegious by despoiling shrines. Again this is an attempt to show his utter recklessness and his lack of morality against something all Romans are meant to be unified by – the gods.

As in chapters 10-13, chapter 14 carries on in the same vein as previously, demonstrating the severity of Verres’ crimes. In short, Verres’ history, painted in so much detail by Cicero, pointed to a man who had led a life of greed and illegality, safely cocooned, he believed, by enough money to bribe any court that might try to prosecute him for his unacceptable and un-Roman behaviour. Having spelled out Verres’ political crimes, Cicero went on to denigrate Verres’ character further by casting his private life also in a culturally abhorrent light. Chapter 14 is another classic example of Ciceronian praeteritio. The whole section implies that Verres has committed many atrocious sexual crimes against children and married women, crimes so awful that it would be indecent to describe them. At the same time as damning Verres, Cicero paints himself and the audience as morally superior, as he (and the audience) is too considerate of those men whose families have been affected to give full names and details as it would only add further public dishonour to the victims. The vagueness of this could allow the implication that there were men present at the trial whose families might have been affected in this way by Verres, perhaps without them knowing it. Cicero goes on to explain that listing the crimes would also be unnecessary as the whole audience already knew about this aspect of Verres’ character without naming one specific crime, or giving one piece of evidence, this example pf praeteritio has succeeded in planting in Cicero’s audience’s mind the notion that it is incontrovertibly and universally known that Verres was a sexual monster and threat, despite this not being part of the legal case against him.

From chapter 15 Cicero adds further drama and relevance to this trial for the jury by dedicating a significant proportion of his speech to the lengths to which Verres tried to corrupt and disrupt the trial itself, He identifies a number of significant occasions in preparation for the trial upon which Verres bribed important individuals. In chapter 15 Cicero highlights the fear he has of being thought to have missed out a crime rather than any fear of being accused of making them up. This again implies that the crowd is against Verres and if they have any problem with Cicero’s speech it will only be because he has not found him guilty enough!

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 18-21

**18**

For as Hortensius, the consul elect, was being accompanied to his home from the Campus by a large crowd of people, Gaius Curio (a man whom I wish to be named out of honour, rather than disparagement) happened to fall in with that crowd. I will tell you the things which, if he had been unwilling to have them mentioned, he would not have spoken of so openly and plainly in such a large assembly. Such things, however, I will mention carefully and cautiously, so that it is seen that my account is in keeping with our friendship and his dignity.

**19**

He sees Verres in the crowd by the arch of Fabius itself; he calls to the man and with a loud voice, congratulates him. He does not say a single word to Hortensius himself, who had been made consul, or to those of his friends who were present, when he stops to speak to this man, who embraces him and bids him to forget about his worries. “I tell you,” he says, “that you have been acquitted by today’s *comitia*.” Since so many most honourable men had heard this, it was immediately reported to me; or, indeed, anyone who saw me made a point of telling me about it. To some it seemed shameful; to others ridiculous. Or at least, ridiculous to those who thought that this case depended on the credibility of the witnesses, the reasoning of the charges, and the power of the judges, rather than on the *consular comitia*; and shameful to those who looked deeper and saw that this congratulation was a reference to the corruption of the judges.

**20**

They argued in this manner: the most honourable men spoke among themselves and with me in such a way; clearly and evidently, there were no longer any courts of justice.

The very criminal who, the day before, thought that he was condemned is acquitted after his defender was made consul. What then? Will the presence at Rome of the whole of Sicily and of all the Sicilians, all the traders, and the public and private records, influence nothing? Apparently it will influence nothing unless it is in accordance with the will of the consul elect! What? Will the judges not follow the charges, the witnesses, or the opinion of the Roman people? No. Everything will be decided by the power and guidance of one man.

I will speak truthfully, O Judges: this state of affairs disturbed me greatly. For any very good man was speaking in this way: “certainly, that man will be taken away from you, but we will not hold our jurisdiction for much longer; for who, when Verres is acquitted, will be able to object to the power to administer justice being transferred from us?”

**21**

It was a troubling matter for all, but the sudden elation of that corrupt man did not disturb them as much as the recent congratulation of a most honourable one. I wished to hide my own annoyance at it; to cover the disquiet of my mind with a smile on my face, and conceal it with silence. But look! On those very days when the praetors elect were dividing their duties by lot, and the role of holding trials regarding the extortion of money fell to Marcus Metellus, I was informed that he was receiving such congratulations that he also sent boys to his house to announce the news to his wife.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 18-21

Verres had, Cicero claims, already offered large sums of money to agents to bribe this very jury. But Verres was also playing a much wider hand, for he had invested in large-scale bribery in the political elections that year to ensure that friends and supporters of importance were elected to key offices to influence the outcome of his trial. In chapters 18 and 19 for example we see that one of these was Hortensius who had been elected consul for the following year. According to Cicero, Gaius Scribonius Curio had highlighted the importance of this on Verres’ extortion case by shouting in public that day ‘I tell you, [he said], that you have been acquitted by today’s comitia.’ Cicero uses direct speech here to draw the jurors in and emphasise the exact words that were said.

The threat to the harmony of orders is the focus again here in chapter 20: if the senatorial jury in this instance find Verres innocent when everyone knows that he is not, then the senate’s privileged position in the law courts will be grasped by the equites. Cicero is highlighting not only the crimes of Verres but the crimes apparent In the Roman justice system in this chapter.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 22-25

**22**

Understandably, this situation did not please me, but yet I did not know what I had to fear so much from this particular allocation of duties. I discovered this one thing from reliable men, from whom I received all of my intelligence: many bags of Sicilian money had been sent by a certain senator to a Roman knight. Out of these, around ten bags had been left with the senator labelled for use in my *comitia* for the aedileship, and that the men who were to distribute this money amongst all of the tribes had been called to attend him by night.

**23**

Of these men, one, who thought himself to be under the greatest obligations to my cause, came to me that same night. He described the speech that man had employed; that he reminded them how liberally he had treated them before when he himself had sought the praetorship, and at the most recent consular and praetorian *comitia*; then he reminded them that he had promised to pay them immediately as much money as they desired if they could ensure that I would fail to be made aedile. He reported on this that some had refused even to dare try it, and others had answered that they did not think it could be accomplished; but that a brave friend had been found, a man from the same family, Quintus Verres, of the Romilian tribe, well-practiced in the best method of bribery, and a pupil and friend of that man’s father, who promised that if five hundred thousand sesterces were provided, he would make it happen; and that then there were some who said that they would cooperate with him. As this was the case, he warned me, with the best intention, to take great care.

**24**

I was worried about many important matters all at once, and with little time to act. The *comitia* were upon us; and during their course I was to be opposed by vast sums of money. This trial was approaching and the bags of Sicilian money also threatened this affair. My fear of the *comitia* deterred me from conducting matters relating to the trial freely; likewise, on account of the trial, I was unable to attend to my candidacy wholeheartedly. In short, it was out of the question to threaten those carrying out the bribery, because I saw they understood that I was distracted and tied down by this trial.

**25**

And at this same time, I heard that notice had been given to the Sicilians by Hortensius, to visit him at his home; sensibly the Sicilians acted with real independence in this matter, refusing to go when they understood the reason they had been sent for. In the meantime, my *comitia* had begun, of which that man thought himself to be master (as he had been for the rest of the comitia this year). That influential man began to run about the tribes with his charming and popular son, who called upon and assembled all his father’s friends; that is to say, those taking part in the bribery. When this was noticed and observed, the Roman people with their most generous good will ensured that I would not be deprived of my honour by the money of that man, whose wealth had been unable to make me abandon my good faith.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 22-25

The actions of the opposition in chapter 25 further stand to highlight Verres’ obvious guilt.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 26 – 29

**26**

After I was freed from that great anxiety concerning my candidacy, I began, with a much emptier and more open mind, to think and do nothing else unless it was related to this trial. I found, O judges, that these plans were set up, and those men began to carry them out, so that they might steer protract matters, by whatever means possible, and end up pleading their case before Marcus Metellus as praetor. I understand that in this instance they would enjoy the following advantages: firstly, that Marcus Metellus was most friendly to them; secondly, that not only would Hortensius be consul but Quintus Metellus too, and listen to how friendly he is to them; for he in fact gave him a token of his goodwill of such a sort, that he seemed to be giving it as a return for the votes of the tribes which had been secured by him.

**27**

Did you think that I would remain silent on matters as important as these? That, at a time of such danger to the republic and to my reputation, I would consult anything rather than my duty and my dignity? The other consul elect sent for the Sicilians; some came, on account of the fact that Lucius Metellus had been praetor in Sicily. To them he speaks in this manner: that he is the consul, that one of his brothers has obtained Sicily as his province; that the other is to be judge in all prosecutions for extortion; and that care had been taken in many ways to ensure that there was no way Verres would be harmed.

**28**

I ask you, Metellus, what is perverting the course of justice if not this? Frightening the witnesses, especially the Sicilians, timid and oppressed men, not only with your authority but also with fear of the consul and the power of two praetors? What would you do for an innocent man or relative, when for this most corrupt man, entirely unconnected to you, you depart from your duty and dignity, and allow what he is constantly saying to appear to be true to anyone who does not know you?

**29**

For they said, that Verres said this: that you had not been made consul by destiny as the rest of your family had been, but by his assistance. Two consuls, therefore, and a judge, will hold office as a result of his will. “We shall,” he said, “not only escape having too diligent a man conduct the investigation – Manius Glabrio, who is too subservient to the will of the people – but we will also have this advantage: the judge is Marcus Caesonius, colleague of our prosecutor, a man who possesses a proven record and is well known for making judgement on legal matters. It is little help to us for that man to be on the bench in this jury, which we are trying to corrupt one way or another; previously, when he was a judge in the tribunal headed by Junius, he was not only greatly offended by that most shameful crime, but even betrayed it in public”.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 26 – 29

In chapter 26 Verres also, states Cicero, ensured through bribery that Marcus Caecilius Metellus should be praetor and president over the extortion court the following year.

In Chapter 28 we see Cicero directly speak to Metellus using rhetorical questions to highlight the wrongs of Roman politics. Naming Metellus in this way further implicates him with Verres’ guilt.

In Chapters 29 and 30 we see Cicero flatter the jury. In these chapters he adopts what he claims to be Verres’ point of view, considering why it would be better for him to have a different judge and jury by delaying the trial until the following year. Quite apart from the content of what he says, the rhetoric of the prosecutor pretending in court to be the accused thinking out loud is entertaining and almost comical with its mocking exposure of (and therefore superiority over the mind of the criminal. ‘Verres’ (i.e. Cicero) makes the whole scene particularly effective by naming the judge and individuals of the jury and considering aloud how tricky they are going to be to corrupt owing to them being ‘too diligent’ (Glabrio), to their fame and experience (Caesonius), their horror of corruption (Gaius Junius), their strict and lofty principals (Sulpicius), their ‘keenest discipline’ (Crepereius), or being ‘from a family know to be most harsh in all other matters but particularly in judicial ones’ (Licois Cassius), or ‘a man of the greatest conscience and diligence’ (Gnaeus Tremellius). This is courtroom theatre at its best, and Cicero knew that entertainment and flattery was an extremely effective form of persuasion. By flattering the jury, Cicero also placed pressure on them to find Verres guilty: since this was the best ever panel of jurymen, he claimed, they must seize the opportunity to make this display of rectitude or else admit that the senatorial order was incapable of fulfilling its legal duties and had over the role to the equites.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 30 – 33

**30**

After the Kalends of January, we shall not have this man as judge, nor shall we have Quintus Manlius or Quintus Cornificius, two most severe judges of the greatest integrity, because they will then be tribunes of the people. Publius Sulpicius, a solemn and upstanding judge, must enter into his magistracy on the Nones of December. Marcus Crepereius, of that keenest discipline and family of equestrians; Lucius Cassius, from a family known to be most harsh in all other matters but particularly in judicial ones; Gnaeus Tremellius, a man of the greatest conscience and diligence; these three experienced men are all military tribunes-elect. After the Kalends of January, they will not be judges. We will also appoint a successor by lot in the place of Marcus Metellus, since he is to be in charge of the inquiry for this very trial. And so, following the Kalends of January, with both the praetor and almost the entire jury having been changed, we shall elude the great threats of the prosecutor and the great expectations of this trial, which will be conducted in accordance with our will and at our pleasure.”

**31**

Today is the Nones of August. You began your meeting at the eighth hour. This day they do not even count. There are ten days before the votive games which Gnaeus Pompeius is going to celebrate. These games will take fifteen days, and then the Roman games will follow immediately. And so, when almost forty days have passed, only then will they think that they will have to respond to the things which we will have said, and they think that both by making speeches and excuses they will easily draw out the process until the games of Victory. The plebeian games are connected with these, following which there will either be no days or very few for continuing proceedings. So, when the charge has grown weak and cold, the matter will come fresh before Marcus Metellus as praetor. If I lacked confidence in the honesty of that man, I would not have retained him as a judge.

**32**

But now I am of the opinion that I would prefer this matter to be settled while he is a judge, rather than a praetor; and to trust to his tablet now whilst he is under oath, rather than to the tablets of others when he is unsworn.

Now, O Judges, I consult you as to what you think I ought to do, for you will surely give me advice even without speaking, which I know I must inevitably take. If I use my time for speaking legitimately, I shall reap the rewards of my hard work, industry and diligence, and (out of this prosecution) I will make it clear that no one in the memory of man is seen to have come before a court more prepared, more vigilant, or with his case better arranged. But as I receive this praise for my industry, there is still a great danger that the criminal may escape. What is there, then, that can be done? I consider it neither obscure nor concealed.

**33**

I reserve for another time that fruit of praise which will be learnt from a long uninterrupted speech; for now I prosecute this man with written records, witnesses, and the letters and authorities of public and private individuals. This whole thing will be between you and me, Hortensius. I will speak openly. If I thought that you would contend with me in speaking and refuting the charges made in this case, I too would put a great deal of work into my prosecution setting out the charges elaborately; but now, since you have decided to combat me not in accordance with your nature but rather wickedly, on his conditions and stipulations, it is necessary for me to oppose the that sort of approach with another strategy.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 30 – 33

In chapter 31 Cicero exposes that Verres wanted to postpone the trial until 69 B.C. and thus have a more favourable trial.

In chapter 33 Cicero highlights how he is going to do things slightly differently.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 34 – 38

**34**

Your plan is to begin to respond to me after two sets of games have passed; mine is to have the adjournment over before the first set has even begun. The result will be that your plan is thought to be clever, but this action of mine necessary.

But as for what I had decided to say – that this matter is between you and me – this is the way of it. When I took this case at the request of the Sicilians, I thought it a great and distinguished thing for me that they, who knew of my integrity and self-control, were willing to risk it all on my loyalty and diligence. Then, when I had undertaken this business, I proposed some greater action to myself; one by which the Roman people would be able to see my goodwill towards the republic.

**35**

For it seemed to me to be by no means worthy of my hard work and effort, for that man to be called by me to trial – a man already condemned by the judgement of all – unless that intolerable power of yours, and the greed which you have displayed in various trials during the past few years, was interposed also in the case of that desperate man. Now, indeed, since this complete domination and rule of the courts pleases you so much, and there are men who are neither ashamed nor grow weary of their own desire and infamy, who seem, almost deliberately to aim to incur hatred and displeasure from the Roman people, I profess that I have undertaken this; it may well be a great burden, and a great danger to myself, but nonetheless truly worthy of the application of my diligence and all the vigour of my age.

**36**

Since the whole senate is being pressured by the wickedness and audacity of a few, and is being threatened by the infamy of the courts, I profess that as a prosecutor, I am an enemy to this type of man; a harsh and unrelenting adversary who is to be hated. I accept this for myself, I claim this for myself; this role which I will continue in my magistracy in the post which the Roman people wished for me to take from the Kalends of January, I shall act alongside them in matters concerning the republic and wicked men. I promise the Roman people that this will be the most honourable and most noble function of my aedileship. I am advising, and I am warning, before I start threatening those men who are accustomed to putting down, or accepting, or guaranteeing, or promising money; who either act as go-betweens, or agents in corrupting the administration of justice; who have promised either their influence or impudence in this affair; to stay well clear of this trial, and keep their hands and minds away from this nefarious crime.

**37**

Hortensius, then, will be consul with the highest imperium and power. I, however, will be aedile; that is, little more than a private citizen. That which I promise to deliver, however, is of a nature so pleasing and agreeable to the Roman people, that in this case the consul himself will appear (if it is possible) even less than a private citizen when compared to me. All those things shall not only be placed on record, but even, where certain matters have been explained, shall be fully discussed; things which in the last ten years, after the office of judge was transferred to the senate, have been done nefariously and criminally in judicial matters.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 34 – 38

Continuing with the theme of Verres’ bribery, Cicero indicates that Verres had even offered 500,000 sesterces to any agent prepared to bribe the electorate not to vote for Cicero as aedile. One of the strengths of Cicero’s argument lay in his public naming and shaming of individuals in this web of corruption. He promised that he was to produce plentiful evidence for all his accusations.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 39 – 42

**39**

why it is that in the cases of the senators Gaius Herennius and Gaius Popilius – they were both condemned for embezzling public funds – why it is that in the case of Marcus Atilius – who was convicted of treason – it was made clear that the jury had all accepted money for the purpose of influencing their judicial decisions; why it is that senators have been found who, when Gaius Verres was drawing the lots as urban praetor, voted against the criminal whom they were condemning, without even knowing the details of his case; why it is that a senator was found who, when he was a judge, in one and the same trial, took money not only from the defendant – which he divided among the judges – but also from the prosecutor to condemn the defendant.

**40**

But in what way shall I lament that stain that disgrace, that disaster of the whole senatorial order: that this thing actually happened in this city whilst the senatorial order were providing the judges, so that the votes of men who were under oath were marked by coloured tablets? I promise that I will deal with all of these things diligently and severely.

And in what frame of mind do you think I will be, if I find in this very courtroom a violation or undertaking of a similar kind? When I am able to show clearly, and with many witnesses, that Gaius Verres often said in Sicily, while many people were listening, that he had a powerful friend in whose confidence he was plundering his province; that he was not seeking money for himself alone, but that he had distributed the proceeds of his three year Sicilian praetorship in such a way: he could say that he had done splendidly if he gained for himself the profits of just one year; the profits of the second year were given to his patrons and defenders, and he reserved the whole of the third year, the most fruitful and profitable, for the judges.

**41**

Consequently, it came to my mind to say this (which I had mentioned recently before Manius Glabrio, at the time when the judges were being rejected and I perceived that it was causing unrest amongst the Roman people): that I thought that foreign nations would send ambassadors to the Roman people to have the law of extortion repealed and trials stopped. For if there were no trials, they would think that each man would only take as much as he thought enough to satisfy himself and his family; currently because there are trials of this sort, everyone carries off as much as they need to satisfy themselves, their patrons, advocates, the praetor, and the judges. This is truly an endless sum of money. They think that they are able to satisfy the desire of the greediest man, but not the legal victory of the guiltiest.

**42**

O trials worthy of memory! O splendid reputation of our order! And, O when the allies of the Roman people do not wish to have trials for extortion take place; trials which were established by our ancestors for the sake of our allies! And would that man ever have had such good hopes for himself if he had not formed in his mind such a dreadful opinion of you? For this reason, he ought to be hated by you to an even greater extent than he is hated by the Roman people, since he thinks that you are just like him in avarice, wickedness and perjury.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 39 – 42

The first paragraph of chapter 40 against highlights the fixing that has taken place during this trial. This also highlights how words don’t always work when political intrigue is apparent. This therefore goes against Plato’s view of rhetoric being misleading – power and money already do this.

In Chapter 42 we see Cicero use sarcasm in the tricolon to further emphasise problems in the court system.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 43-47

**43**

By the immortal gods, O Judges, seek advice and make provisions for this situation. I advise and I warn of that which I know – that this opportunity has been given to you by divine influence, so that you might liberate your whole order from hatred, unpopularity, infamy and shame. There is no severity believed to exist in our courts, nor any concerns for religion; in short, there are thought to be no courts at all. Therefore, we are held in contempt and despised by the Roman people: we are branded with a heavy, and now longstanding, infamy.

**44**

For there has never been any other reason for which the Roman people have sought to restore the power of the tribunes with such zeal. When the people were asking for it, it seemed in words that this was all they wanted, when in reality, they were asking for the proper administration of justice. This did not escape the notice of Quintus Catulus, a most wise and honourable man who, when the powerful and famous Gnaeus Pompeius proposed a motion regarding tribunician power and asked for his opinion, used the following opening for his speech, which he made with the greatest authority. He said that the conscript fathers oversaw the courts badly and shamefully; but if in resolving judicial matters, they had been willing to satisfy the opinion of the Roman people, men would not clamour so much for the return of the tribunes’ power.

**45**

Finally, Gnaeus Pompeius himself, during the first speech he gave to the city as consul elect, made it clear that he would restore the power of the tribunes (which seemed to be greatly anticipated). At this point, a shout was heard and a grateful murmur spread throughout the assembly. And, when the same man had said in the same assembly that the provinces were plundered and plagued; that the law courts had become disgraceful and wicked; and that he wished to look into and make provisions for this situation; then indeed the Roman people showed their assent not with a shout, but with the greatest uproar.

**46**

But now men are on the watchtowers; they are observing how each one of us behaves in respecting religion and keeping the laws. They see that so far, since the passing of the law to restore power to the tribunes, only one senator (and a most feeble one at that) has been condemned. Although they do not blame this, they do not have anything they can praise much either. For there is no praise for being upright and just in a case where there is no one who can, or is even trying, to corrupt it.

**47**

This is a trial in which you will be judging the defendant, and the Roman people will be judging you. In the case of this man, it will be established whether very guilty and very rich men are able to be condemned when senators are acting as judges. Moreover, he is a criminal of such a sort, that there is nothing in his character except for the worst crimes and excessive riches. Thus, if he is acquitted, no other opinion of him will be held except that which is most shameful. Such numerous and terrible vices will not be seen to be lessened by influence, by family, by some things being done correctly or even by some other tolerable vice.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 43-47

In chapter 43 Cicero starts by calling to the gods using apostrophe. This is clever as it reminds the audience about the gods and the idea of justice/divine intervention. In this way it gives the idea of Cicero supplicating during the speech and thus makes the jury seem in a privileged position of power – more so than they are perhaps? Furthermore, in chapter 43 Cicero picks up on a point he made in chapter 2 about not attacking the senate but trying to uphold its good name.

In chapter 45 Cicero makes a point of illustrating how much anger there is among the people concerning the corruption in the courts. The hero of the people – Pompey – when making his first speech outside Rome. In short, the bribery and corruption of which Verres was guilty was universally recognised and (according to Cicero) a disliked phenomenon, and had even come to the attention of powerful popularis political leaders as well as the common people. The threat, Cicero is arguing, posed by this case was potentially damaging to the very structure of Republican society and to the mutual respect and order that had enabled the Republican political system privileging the Senate to run so well for so long. The crime to be judged by the jury, then, has moved from simply being one of extortion to one of corruption and bribery, the appalling condition of the Roman justice system and a threat to the stability of the very fabric of the Roman state.

Cicero pushes the point even further in chapter 47 by stating that the trial will effectively also stand for posterity as a trial of the senate and jury itself. Cicero has dedicated the best part of his opening speech defining the case as a symbolic enormity for the Roman state, rendering the role of this jury more pivotal than any before and placing them firmly under the spotlight of the whole Roman world both now and in the future. The end of chapter 47 presents Verres as beyond help and that justice is needed.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 48 – 52

**48**

In short, I will conduct the case by acting in this way, O Judges: I will bring forward matters so well known, so well supported by witnesses, so important, and so evident that nobody will try to use his influence to obtain from you the acquittal of this man. I have a reliable path and method by which I am able to investigate and follow all the attempts made by those men. The matter will be conducted by me so that not only the ears, but even the eyes of the Roman people will seem to be present at all their meetings.

**49**

You are now able to remove and destroy the shame and infamy which, over the years, have been attached to your order. It is understood among all men, that since these trials which we now have were established, there is yet to have been a jury of this splendour and this dignity. But if anything here is to be done incorrectly, all men will think not that other more suitable judges should be appointed from that same order (which is impossible) but that another order entirely must be established for administering judicial affairs.

**50**

So, firstly, I beg from the immortal gods this same thing which I seem to hope for myself: that in this trial, O Judges, nobody is found to be wicked other than that man who has long since been known to be so. Secondly, if there are many wicked men, I promise this to you, O Judges, and to the Roman people; by Hercules, my life shall fail before my strength and perseverance in prosecuting their wickedness.

**51**

Indeed, this wickedness, which, if it is sanctioned, I promise to prosecute severely; with hard work; incurring danger and enmity to myself; and if anything should befall me then you will be able to make provisions for it, Manius Glabrio, with your authority, wisdom and diligence. Accept the cause of the law courts. Accept the cause of severity, integrity, loyalty and religion. Accept the cause of the senate, that by its conduct in this court, it may return to favour and regain influence over the Roman people. Think who you are, in what position you are placed, what you ought to give to the Roman people, what you ought to repay to your ancestors. Call to mind the Acilian law passed by your father, by which the Roman people enjoyed the very best decisions, and the most severe judges in cases of extortion.

**52**

High authorities surround you which will not permit you to forget the renown of your family; which will remind you that by day and night your father was a most brave man, your grandfather most wise, and your father-in-law most serious. If, in this regard, you have inherited the strength and vigour of your father in resisting most audacious men; if you have inherited the prudence of your grandfather, Scaevola, in foreseeing plots which are prepared against your reputation and that of these men; if you have any share in the steadfastness of your father-in-law, Scaurus, so that no one can move you from your genuine and fixed opinion; the Roman people will understand that with a most upright and honourable praetor and a well-chosen jury, large amounts of money are more likely to bring a criminal into suspicion, rather than provide a means for his safety.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 48 – 52

In chapters 50-52 we can clearly see that Cicero – an ‘outsider; in almost every way – needed to create an authority for himself that would integrate him further if he wished for a sympathetic judgement. He did this by appealing to a shared code of values of patriotic love and duty. His own self-styled role as ‘defender of the state’ is referred to directly or indirectly throughout the speech, even claiming he would rather ‘lose [his] life itself….than fall short of the vigour and perseverance needed’ (chapter 50).

When addressing the presiding judge by name in chapters 51-52, Cicero appeals directly to his shared love for duty towards Rome. Furthermore, Cicero also reminds Glabrio of the honour and positive qualities of his father in these two chapters when he passed the Acilian law. Cicero also references ‘high authorities’. This use of apostrophe is important as again it breaks the narrative and reminds us of higher powers held in reserve. This has the effect of encouraging Glabrio to set a good example and live up to his noble ancestry by prosecuting Verres. It would seem that Prosecuting Verres would benefit the Roman people in the same way Cicero flatters Glabrio by suggesting the Acilian law benefits the people of Rome thanks to Glabrio’s father.

In chapter 51 we have a tricolon ‘authority, wisdom and diligence.’ The effect of this is to add emphasis to these qualities in his speech. We see this a few lines later with an extended tricolon when he says ‘accept the cause of severity, integrity, loyalty and religion.’ Cicero also uses anaphora in this chapter, repeating the word ‘accept’ to emphasise to Glabrio the qualities he should be upholding as judge.

In Chapter 52 we see a lack of conjugations (Asyndeton) when listing certain qualities. This gives the passage a greater sense of intensity, heightening the nature of these qualities.

# Cicero – *In Verrem –* 53 - 56

**53**

I am resolved, that in this case I will not permit our praetor or jury to be changed. I will not permit the matter to be delayed to a point when the Sicilians, who until now were not disturbed by the servants of the consuls elect, can be called by the lictors of the consuls as they all were in an unprecedented case. I will not permit those wretched men, previously allies and friends of the Roman people, now their slaves and suppliants, to lose not only their rights and fortunes by their command, but even their power to despair of their situation.

**54**

I will certainly not, when the case is concluded by me, permit them to finally respond to us after forty days, when my accusation has already fallen into oblivion by the passage of time. I will not permit the matter to be decided when this crowd from the whole of Italy has dispersed from Rome, which has assembled from all over at this one time on account of the *comitia*, the games, and the census. I think that both the potential reward of praise (should you decide justly) and the potential danger of unpopularity (should you decide unjustly) ought to be yours; the labour and anxiety ought to be mine; and the knowledge of what has been done and, the memory of what has been said by each person, ought to belong to everyone.

**55**

I will adopt this course, not a new one, but one that has been adopted before by those who are now the leading men of our state; that is, to call the witnesses immediately. What you will recognise as new from me, O judges, is that I will arrange my witnesses so that the whole accusation is explained, and that when (by examining my witnesses) I have strengthened my argument and speech, then I will fit my witnesses to the accusation so that there will be no difference between the customary method of prosecution and this new one, except that according to the usual method, when everything has been said, only then are the witnesses called. Here, they will be produced as each individual matter is reached, so that for the other side also, there is the same opportunity for cross-examination, arguing, and making speeches. If there is anyone who would prefer a continuous speech and prosecution, he will hear it in another trial: let him understand that what we are doing now is unavoidable. We are doing it this way so that we might resist their malice with our own strategy.

**56**

This will be the first act of the prosecution. We say that Gaius Verres has done many licentious deeds, many cruel ones against Roman citizens and allies, and many wicked acts against gods and men; but especially that he has stolen four hundred thousand sesterces from Sicily contrary to the laws. We shall make this clear to you with witnesses, with public records, and with private authorities, so that you might decide that even if we had space and we had spent empty days speaking at our convenience, there was still no need for a long oration.

I have spoken.

# Notes – *In Verrem –* 53 - 56

Again in chapter 54 Cicero breaks his narrative up by referencing the audience **(apostrophe).** This directly includes them in this speech and presents them as a unified force against Verres. Cicero assumes the guilt of Verres as common knowledge and plants a suggestion that this is immoral behaviour and thus everyone present is naturally against Verres. This has the effect of ensuring the audience all agree in favour of the prosecution – people are following the crowd in finding Verres guilty.

Cicero concludes his first Verrine oration with the actual crime for which he is prosecuting Verres (chapter 56).

In chapter 55 Cicero mentions that to counteract Verres’ now-exposed plot he proposed somewhat radically (but not, he took pains to state, without legal precedent) to change the order of the running of the trial. Such cases were usually opened with very long set speeches, but instead Cicero chose to deliver a hard-hitting first speech, followed immediately by the examination of a plethora of witnesses and presenting the abundant evidence he gathered from Sicily. He persuasively argue that this change in running order was acceptable not simply due to precedent but also out of necessity that to Verres’ attempts to delay the trial.

Cicero makes an apt point at the end of chapter 56 – he remarks that even if he had the time it would be wasteful to spend such time making lengthy speeches. This speech has been rather short itself and therefore he has justified his reasoning to do so here.

# Context to *Selected Letters*

Cicero was a prolific letter-writer. Within the small selection of his huge corpus of letters that make up our prescribed sources, we get a sense of how important correspondence was to Cicero, was well an opportunity to see the innermost thoughts of one of the most political players in the late Roman Republic. The letters form an invaluable source of political, historical and cultural information for this turbulent era. With the mixture of intimate and formal content, we can view both Cicero’s publicly sworn political principals and his own personal struggles to reconcile these with the crumbling political system in which he believed and for which he would give his life.

More than 900 of Cicero’s letters have survived, ordered into collections, including *Epistulae ad Atticum –* Letters to Atticus (his closest friend) and the *Epistulae ad Familiares –* Letters to Friends and Family (including Caesar, Pompey and others).

Letter writing illustrated and strengthened the amicatiae between individuals in ancient Roman society and politics. Cicero dedication to his epistolary output reflects the importance he placed on keeping alive such ties of relationships, both friendly and formal. Cicero’s oratory and literary skills were his strength and his sword: he had no family lineage to rely upon for ready-made familial bond, he had no adequate funds for effective bribery and he could never have commanded the loyalty of legions in manner of Pompey or Caesar.

Born in 110 B.C., Atticus, Cicero’s closest friend, was the recipient of a lifetime’s correspondence and was privileged with what appear to be the most intimate insights into Cicero’s thoughts and beliefs. Titus Pomponius Atticus was given the name Atticus (‘the Athenian’) in recognition of his great love for Athens and Greek culture. Cicero met him during his early school years and they remained friends for the rest of Cicero’s life. When Cicero further his academic study later in Rhodes he was accompanied by Atticus. When Cicero could afford to buy his villa in Tusculum, it was Atticus who enjoyed furnishing the Greek-style ‘Academy’ Cicero created there – choosing suitable Greek words of art to fill it. A member of the equites, like Cicero, Atticus however did not become involved in the public life of politics at Rome. He was to be an extremely useful supporter of Cicero owning ‘a circle of friends larger than any man’s in Rome’ (Tempest *Cicero* P.82). Their Amicitia was also more formally cemented by the marriage of Cicero’s brother Quintus to Atticus’ sister Pomponia. It is clear from the corpus of letters sent to Atticus that Cicero loved his deeply and valued his friendship above all others. Atticus; political policy of diplomacy and abstention secured him a comfortable life until he died in 32.

Morello, in *Writer and Addressee in Cicero’s Letters*, P198 describes how the form and structure of the letters is characterised by the fact they are: *‘an interactive genre – one half of dialogue… It is, indeed, a cliché of epistolary theory that letters are a substitute for a conversation. They anticipate an answer, and … maintain an apparent realism and seek to minimise the sense of geographical separation between writer and addressee.’*

A definite contrast of style stands between some of Cicero’s letters to close friends and relatives like Atticus with those letters to, for example, Caesar and Pompey. Many of the nuances of literary style, however, are lost in translation. Grant, in *Cicero. Selected Letters,* p23, discusses at length the challenges faced by the translator of Cicero’s letters who would wish to write ‘contemporary readable English’, as Cicero’s works are filled with stylistic flourishes unpalatable to a contemporary style such as hyperbole or a string of rhetorical questions. Cicero enjoyed, for example, using Greek quotations to express himself or quote another (particularly in his letters to Atticus) – a stylistic feature that modern translators sometime convey through the adoption of French or German phrases, as one might in a certain register of writing in English. Cicero tended to avoid such erudite literary frills when writing serious political letters, where, the expected traditional Roman register was one simply of clarity.

Letter-writing in ancient Rome was a system of exchange or communication between two people linked by some degree of Amicitia. Cicero’s letters can thus be categorised relatively straightforwardly into letters to individuals with whom he had a close personal ties (informal letters) and those with whom he had or hoped to have a more formal bond of Amicitia (formal letters).

Cicero’s informal correspondence covered a huge range of topics, bit it all served to strengthen ties of friendship. In our prescribed sources we see examples of him writing to friends for all sorts of reasons, His relationship with Atticus is extremely important: as he once wrote ‘I speak with you as if with myself’ (*Att* 8.14) and indeed the frankness of intimacy with which he appears to share his innermost thoughts and feelings is striking.

Powell, in *Cicero’s Style,* pp49-50, discusses the challenge in categorising letters as formal genres of writing: *‘In one sense there is no more essentially written medium than the letter….On the other hand, casual correspondence can appear to be virtually a transcription of spoken language.’* When trying to identify letters as; ‘formal’ or ‘informal’, we should be wary of dividing them into ‘literary artefact’ versus ‘a kind of conversation on paper’. Powell, in tune with many other modern scholars, remind us how: *‘it take a good deal of artistry to achieve a natural-sounding style in letter writing.’* When discussing the letters of Cicero, focus on the tone or register of the language, the content and stylistic features. Try not to assume one letter is more ‘honest’ than another and consider at all times how useful each letter is as a reliable source of information about the period.

One common theme in Cicero’s letters was his political idealism regarding libertas, since he used his skill in letter-writing to persuade both the powerful and his close friends to act towards the attainment of peace and harmony. This was, he believed threated by the loss of individual libertas resulting from political change.

The motion that Cicero’s letters fall into two categories – ‘private’ or ‘public’ – has been questioned by recent scholarship e.g. Stowers *(Letter writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity)* has identified our modern interpretation of private versus public letters as inherited from the 19th century Romanic movement and unfamiliar to the Roman correspondent. He argues that distinction between ‘warm, personal, spontaneous, artless, common-private-friendly letters and impersonal, conventional, artificial literary letters is extremely misleading.

While the style of writing to intimate friends is sometimes less formal than that when writing to public officials on matters of state, the public/private division is perhaps unhelpful when looking at Roman letters. There is no doubt, however, that a very small number of them were written with the intention of being read by more than one person, or indeed being published for broader consumption, see, for example. Cicero’s letter to Caesar in 49 B.C. A letter’s ‘privacy’ of course relied upon its successful delivery to the intended recipient. In a society and time where there was no established postal service for general consumption, correspondents had to rely on private messengers or couriers. The administration of the vast territory of the Romans state meant that such people were needed to carry instructions and reports to and from Rome between military officials, governors and the senate. Living in a period of political unrest, Cicero often alluded to his need for messengers he could trust to deliver some of his letter to, for example, Atticus, which may have been intimate in tone, but would regularly contain potentially dangerous political views if read by the wrong person. The logistics of travel themselves should also be acknowledged – letters could only travel up to about 50 miles a day.

Most modern scholars agree that Cicero wrote the majority of his correspondence without thought of its publication; or in other words, the majority of Cicero’s letters were written as private correspondence, although he did not rule out the publication of some of them at some point. The collection of Cicero’s letters addressed to friends and members of his family was created and published by his freedman and once-secretary – Tiro – soon after Cicero died in 43 B.C. The letters to Atticus were published some time later, collated and published by Atticus. Whilst the majority if Cicero’s extant letters cluster around the most challenging period of life, for example, his forced exile or the early months of 49 B.C., the letters when published were grouped not into chronological order or theme, but according to addressee. They are sub-grouped in rough chorological order. This suggests that rather than building up a biographical picture of the author, the published letters were intended to reflect Cicero’s relationships both formal and informal, intimate and grand, reminding us that Cicero was a Roman product of his acquaintances and master of communication.

### To His Friends 5.7: To Pompey

Rome, 62 BC

From your official dispatch, I – along with everyone else – take incredible pleasure. For you have given us that strong hope of peace of which I, trusting so completely in you, was assuring everyone. But I must inform you that your old enemies – now posing as your friends – have received a stunning blow by this despatch, and, being disappointed in the high hopes they were entertaining, are thoroughly distressed. The private letter to me contained a somewhat slight expression of your affection, yet I can assure you it gave me pleasure. There is, however, nothing in which I find greater satisfaction than in the knowledge of serving my friends. And, if on any occasion I do not meet with an adequate return, I am not at all sorry to have the balance of kindness in my favour. I feel no doubt that even if my extraordinary enthusiasm on your behalf has failed to unite you to me, the interests of the state will certainly create a mutual attachment and coalition between us.

To leave you in no doubt of what I missed in your letter, I will write with the candour which my own disposition and our common friendship demand. I did expect some congratulation in your letter on my achievements, both for the sake of the ties between us and that of the republic. This I presume to have been omitted by you for fear of hurting anyone’s feelings. But let me tell you; what I did for the salvation of the country is approved by the judgement and testimony of the whole world. When you return home, you will know the great wisdom and courage I showed, and you – a much greater man than Africanus was – will find it easy to admit me – one who is not much inferior to Laelius – into association in politics and friendship.

### Notes - To His Friends 5.7: To Pompey

This letter was written in the summer of 62 B.C. It was sent to Pompey who was in Asia at the time whilst Cicero was in Rome. The tone of the letter is formal. The significance of the letter is that in the year following his consulship, Cicero writes ahead of Pompey’s return to Rome (having acquired huge swathes of territory for the Roman state, including Asia Minor, Syria, and Crete), and mentions his successful crushing of the Catilinarian conspiracy. The themes evident in this letter are: 1. Cicero-Pompey relationship, 2. Appeal to shared love of Rome.

This letter was in response to a brief letter from Pompey in which he had said littler to Cicero about his consulship the previous year. Pompey had triumphed in Asia at the time, and many have judged the letter he presumably sent to Cicero to be harbouring resentment at Cicero’s fixation with his own success (particularly regarding the Catilinarian conspiracy), and perhaps at Cicero’s opposition to the land reform bill of Rullus, which would have benefitted Pompey’s veterans. It is an excellent example of the role of letters in attempting to forge new ties, building Amicitia from relatively little common ground.

*‘The private letter to me contained a somewhat slight expression of your affection, yet I can assure you it gave me pleasure…I feel no doubt that even if my extraordinary enthusiasm on your beheld has failed to unite you to me, the interests of the state will certainly create a mutual attachment and coalition between us…You…will find it easy to admit me…into association in politics and friendship.’*

The plentiful use of first and second person pronouns throughout the text succeeds in brining Cicero and Pompey together if only in abstract; the reference to Pompey’s letter allows Cicero to demonstrate that he is building upon some element of friendship that has already been encouraged implicitly by Pompey’s own correspondence with him. With little other common ground, Cicero appeals to Pompey’s love of Rome and care for the welfare of the state to form an alliance with him. Cicero – the great orator – needed association with the hero of the hour – Pompey – with his military brilliance and popular backing. To that end, and with Pompey away from Rome, only a letter could build successful channels of communication.

Closely linked to the theme of libertas, Cicero’s letters also refer regularly to love of Rome and the duty of the individual to the state. Sometimes he describes his own outstanding patriotism towards Rome; for example as in this letter to Pompey, he boars unreservedly about his performance as consul – ‘But let me tell you; what I did for the country is approved by the judgement and testimony of the whole world’, and ‘When you return home, you will know the great wisdom and courage I showed.’

### To His Friends 2.18: To Atticus

Rome, June 59 BC

I have received several of your letters in which I could see how you were craving for news. Well, we are held down on all sides. We do not object any more to the loss of our freedom, but we fear death and exile as greater evils, when really they are lesser ones. That is how things are; everyone groans over the situation, yet no one speaks against it. What those in charge have in mind, I suspect, is to make sure that there is nothing left which anyone except themselves might be able to offer as a bribe! The only one to speak or openly offer opposition is young Curio. Honest people give him a tremendous round of applause and a very respectable reception in the forum, and many other signs of goodwill. On the other hand, Fufius is pursued with shouts, jeers, and hisses. From such circumstances it is not hope but resentment which is increased, for you see the citizens allowed to express their feelings, yet debarred from carrying them out with any vigour. And to omit details, with things as they are, there is now no hope of the magistrates, or indeed private citizens, ever being free.

Nevertheless, despite this oppression, conversation, at least in society and at dinner tables, is freer than it was. Indignation is beginning to overcome fear, although that does not prevent a universal feeling of despair. For this Campanian Law contains a clause imposing an oath to be taken by candidates in public meeting, that they will not suggest any tenure of public land other than that provided in the Julian laws. All the others take the oath without hesitation: Laterensis is considered to have shown extraordinary virtue in retiring from his canvass for the tribunenate to avoid the oath. But I don’t care to write any more about politics. I am dissatisfied with myself, and cannot write without the greatest pain. I hold my own position with some dignity considering the general repression, but, considering my past achievements, with less courage than I should like. I am invited by Caesar in a very gentlemanly manner to join his staff and act as his legate, and even to go on a mission at state expense. But the latter does not give sufficient security, since it depends too much on the scrupulousness of Clodius and removes me just when my brother is returning; the former offers better security, and does not prevent my returning when I wish. I am retaining the latter, but do not think I shall use it. However, nobody knows about it. I don’t like running away; I am longing to fight. There is great warmth of feeling for me. But I don’t say anything positive: you will please not mention it. I am, in fact, very anxious about the freeing of Statius and some other things, but I have become thick-skinned now. I could wish, or rather ardently desire, that you were here; then I should not want for advice or consolation. But anyway, be ready to fly to me should I call for you.

### Notes - To His Friends 2.18: To Atticus

This letter was written in 59 B.C. It is addressed to Atticus on his way to Epirus whilst Cicero was in Rome. It is an informal letter. The significance of this letter is that Cicero explains how, at the time of the establishment of the First Triumvirate he has been approached by Caesar to join them, but has turned the offer down. We see the themes of: 1.dusempowerment of the senate and people, 2. Libertas, 3.Struggle to match his political ideas with practice, 4. Cicero-Atticus relationship.

In 59 B.C., when the First Triumvirate was newly established and Cicero was upset by the paralysing effect it had on the workings of the senate, he had written to Atticus in distress: *‘But I don’t care to write anymore about politics. I am dissatisfied with myself, and cannot write without the greatest pain.’* The simplicity of the prose style – the repetition of the verb in the first person – immediately gives a sense of openness – Cicero is at a loss as to what to do. The language is unambiguous, direct and heartfelt. *‘I could wish, or rather ardently desire, that you were here; then I should not want for advice or consolation. But anyway, be ready to fly to me should I call for you.’* The language appears devoid of consciously turned stylistic flourish and the content stands in stark contrast to many of his letters in which he readily gives advice or judgement. Such intimate informality appears to portray a vulnerable Cicero only to be found in his letters to close personal friends.

In this letter Cicero also mourns the servitude that all were now lioving in due to the arrangement of the triumvirs to allocate extraordinary power to themselves without recourse to the senate: ‘there is no hope of the magistrates, or indeed private citizens, ever being free.’

### To His Friends 2.4: To Curio

Rome, 53 BC

As you know, there are many types of letters, but there is one kind that is unmistakable, and this is the reason that letters were invented. Indeed, letter-writing was invented so that we might inform those absent if there was anything they should know, or that we ourselves should know. This type of letter you would not expect to receive from me. In regards to your home affairs, you have writers and messengers. As for my own affairs, they are without anything new. There remain two types of letter which greatly delight me; one familiar and funny, the other serious and grave. Which of the two would be less suitable, I do not know. Am I to joke with you by letter? By Hercules! I do not think there could be a good citizen who is able to laugh at this time. Am I to write something more serious? What could Cicero write to Curio about which could be more serious than the republic? But on this subject, my case is this; I do not dare to write what I feel, and I do not wish to write what I don’t feel.

Since, then, there is no theme left for a letter, I shall fall back upon my usual words and urge you to aim for the highest praise. For you have a serious rival here, firmly established and prepared for you, in the extraordinary expectations which people have of you. This rival you will easily overcome if you do one thing; that is, by deliberately developing, with continuous effort, the necessary qualities with which you will achieve your purpose.

On these thoughts I would write more, if I were not confident that you are eager enough on your own! And if I have mentioned this subject, it is not be inflame your ambitions, but to demonstrate my love for you.

### To His Friends 2.11: To Caelius

Laodicea, 4th April 50 BC

Would you have ever thought it possible that my words would fail me, and not only the oratorical sort, but common vernacular language? They do fail me, and for this reason: I am extraordinarily anxious about what will be decided about the provinces. It is surprising how I long for Rome, you cannot believe how I long for my friends, in particular yourself. As for the province, it bores me, either because I have gained fame, to such an extent I do not desire to increase it, rather to fear its reversal; or, because is not is worthy of a man of my dignity, who before can and has borne heavier burdens to serve the state; or because I fear great war hanging over us, that I seem likely to escape if I leave on the appointed day.

Now, about the panthers; it is being carefully attended to, as per my orders, by those who are accustomed to hunting them. There are, however, very few, and those there are, I am told, complain that in my province they are the only living creatures for whom traps are set. So it has been decided that they should leave the province for Caria. But still, attempts are being made, in particular by Patiscus. Whatever comes to hand will be yours, but how many it will be, I do not know. By the Gods, your aedileship is of great concern to me. This day reminds me of it, because I write this on the day of the Megalensia itself. I would like you to write carefully about the entire political situation, for I shall regard that which I get from you to be the most trustworthy information.

### Notes - To His Friends 2.4: To Curio

This letter was written in the middle of 53 B.C. from Cicero in Rome to Gaius Scribonius Curio. The tone of the letter is informal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero appears to be writing to Curio about having nothing to write. The political situation, he implies, makes freedom of speech impossible. Themes evident in this letter are: 1. the art of letter writing, 2. the stifling of freedom of speech due to the political situation.

Cicero writes informally to friends to keep channels of communication open, feeding his existing bonds of friendship for the sake of keeping his friends close to him. In this letter to Curio of 53 B.C. he states he is demonstrating *‘my love for you’* he claims he has nothing specific which to write.

This letter to Curio consists of a discussion about the art of letter-writing. Despite later joining Caesar in the civil war, Cicero writes to him at this time as a friend, Politically, the situation was tense: Pompey, Caesar and Crassus had been chasing their ambitions empowered by their formal Amicitia of the triumvirate; Crassus died in 53 B.C. at the battle at Carrhae; there was no successful consular elections for the following year and the streets of Rome were overrun by violent and opposing mobs. Cicero fills this letter bemoaning the lack of content for a letter. He identifies three good types of potential content: Information, Intimate and Humorous, Serious and Profound. All of these are considered suitable for writing informally. The first is not useful in this instant, he says, as he has nothing new to report, the second might imply he send Curio jokes, but the severity of times makes that impossible. The third would imply politics, but as Cicero writes *‘on this subject my case is this: I do not dare to write what I feel, and I do not wish to write what I don’t feel.’* We are reminded of the danger inherent in speaking out through a letter, however ‘private’. In some ways this letter about the impossibility if finding suitable content for a letter can be viewed as a strong statement by Cicero about the curtailing of his freedom to speak honestly in the political climate of 53 B.C.

### Notes -To His Friends 2.11: To Caelius

This letter was written on the 4th April 50 B.C. to Marcus Caelius Rufus who was in Rome at the time. Cicero was in Laodicea (Cilicia). The tone of this letter is informal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero, in Cilicia as governor, writes in friendly terms to Caelius, refusing to send Caelius some free exotic beasts for his spectacles to boost his political profile with the electorate in his campaign for aedileship. Themes we see in this letter are: 1. Political principles – Cicero will not support Caelius’ career financially by exploiting provincial office. 2. Needs political information from Rome.

Cicero deliberately spent as little time away from Rome as possible in his earlier years, recognising it as the heart of political life and where important changes could happen in a day. When he was therefore forced to leave Rome, his anxiety at being politically ‘out of the loop’ looms large in his letters. When he was governor in Cilicia in 50 B.C. for example. He wrote to Caelius Rufus begging for regular updates from Rome: *‘It is surprising how I long for Rome! You cannot believe how I long for my friends, in particular you…, I would like you to write carefully about the entire political situation, for I shall regard that which I get from you to be the most trustworthy information.’* Cicero is deliberately mixing flattery in with this request as it is obviously an enormous ask!

### To Atticus 9.11a: To Caesar

Formiae, 19th or 20th of March 49 BC

When I received your letter from our friend Furnius, in which you asked me to come to Rome, I was not so much surprised that you wanted my ‘advice and status’, but I asked myself, however, what you meant by ‘influence and help’. Hope, however, led me to think that, due to your singular wisdom and outstanding statesmanship, you might want to pursue negotiations for peace and civic harmony. For this end, I consider myself suitable enough by nature and personality. If it is so, if you care to preserve our friend Pompey and reconcile him to the republic, you will find no one better suited to the cause than I am. When speaking with him and the senate I always advocated peace at the first opportunity. When arms were taken up, I had no part in the war. My considered opinion is that the war involved an infringement of your rights, in view of the opposition, by envious and unfriendly people, to an honour conferred upon you by the Roman people.

But as then I not only supported your position myself, but urged others to come to your aid, so at the present moment I am strongly moved by consideration for the position of Pompey. It is some years since I chose you two to cultivate above all others, as what you still are, my very dear friends.

Accordingly I ask you, I beg and implore you will all my heart, to spare some time, amidst your great concerns, to consider how by virtue of your kindness, I can best behave well, gratefully and loyally to Pompey, so as to remember my obligation to him. If this request concerned only me, I should still hope you would grant my request; I believe, however, that your honour and the republic is also at stake as I – a friend of peace and of you both – should be preserved by you as the most appropriate agent for restoring harmony between you two and among our the citizen body.

I thanked you before for saving Lentulus, who had saved me. But now I have read the letter which he has sent me, full of thanks for your kindness and generosity in rescuing him, in rescuing him you have rescued me too. If my gratitude to Lentulus is apparent to you, then I beg that I am able to show the same to Pompey.

### To Atticus 8.8: To Atticus

Formiae, 23rd February 49 BC

Oh what a dishonourable and therefore miserable thing! For I feel that misery lies mainly or solely in dishonour. He developed Caesar, then he suddenly began to fear him; he rejected all offers of peace; he made no preparations for war; he left Rome; he was to blame for the loss of Picenum; he confined himself in Apulia; he went to Greece; leaving us all without a word, or letting us in on his extraordinary plan upon which so much depended. Suddenly, a letter came to him and his Consuls from Domitius. It seemed to me to be as though the light of honour flashed from Pompey’s eyes, and the real man he ought to be exclaimed:

“So let them scheme as they must,
And attempt every trick,
Yet right is on my side.”

But Pompey bids a long goodbye to honour, and proceeds for Brundisium. As for Domitius, they say upon hearing this, he and those with him surrendered. Oh, what a terrible business! I am too distressed to write much more – I hope for your letters.

### Notes - To Atticus 9.11a: To Caesar

This letter was written by Cicero at Formiae on the 19th of March in 49 B.C. and sent to Caesar. The tone is amicable but still formal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero responds to Caesar’s invitation to come to Rome to meet with him, to use his ‘advice and status’ as well as his ‘influence; and ‘help’; Pompey has left with the senate for Brundisium. Themes evident in this letter are: 1. Cicero’s aims for harmony, 2. Cicero’s proclaimed neutrality throughout – how he felt Caesar aggrieved behaviour was fair, but now appeals to fair treatment of Pompey, 3. Cicero’s relationship with Caesar – careful to claim openly his friendship with both sides.

Cicero’s letter to Caesar here in march 49 B.C. adopts a similarly formal style to that of Cicero’s letter to Pompey back in 62 B.C., but the importance of the subject matter and the fact that Cicero intended for it to be published (and for the letter therefore to act as an all-important public statement of Cicero’s own position) meant that the prose is even more formal and structured. Civil war had broken out, Caesar had asked Cicero to meet him in Rome and Cicero was staying at his Villa in Formiae, unable to decide what course of action to take. Despite being appalled by Pompey’s decision to leave Italy and gather forces in Greece, Cicero decided to take this opportunity to try to reconcile the two leaders, Caesar and Pompey. This letter shows Cicero at his most articulate and careful.

Again, Cicero’s letter to Caesar is liberally sprinkled with personal pronouns at every opportunity, and Cicero appeals to common friends such as ‘our friend Furnius’ – it is the text of an unfolding conversation. By carefully referring to specific words and phrases from Caesar’s own letter, Cicero is establishing his authority to his readership and showing how Caesar is in need of Cicero’s own skills, despite his military power. In terms of structure, Cicero reaffirms the Amicitia that exists already between himself and Caesar, then declares his own natural stand in the outbreak of the civil war and make a point of showing sympathy with Caesar’s insulted feelings at the infringement of his rights. By opening his letter with references to Caesar’s own letter, Cicero remind Caesar that he has first approach Cicero for something, giving Cicero an edge in the forthcoming negotiation. He then goes on to say, reasonably, that he (Cicero) should be allowed to carry out decently the duties incumbent upon him in his Amicitia with Pompey too. He aims to act as an agent ‘for the restoring the harmony between you two and among our citizen body.’ The argument is balanced – ‘I did X for you, so too should I do X for Pompey.’ It also has a common appeal – all three of the surely wished for ‘harmony…among our citizen body?’ The rhetoric is a clear and public statement of Cicero’s aims at putting the Republic first, without blaming any one individual for the crisis in it.

### Notes - To Atticus 8.8: To Atticus

This letter was written on the 24th of February in 49 B.C. from Cicero in Formiae to Atticus. The tone is informal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero openly describes Pompey’s actions, but civil war has been declared (when Caesar crossed the Rubicon on 10th January) and later in the year he will side reluctantly with Pompey – the man most likely to restore the republic. Themes evident in this letter are: 1. Cicero’s moral drive – disgrace is the worst state to suffer, 2. Cicero’s dislike of both parties is clear – utter disappointment with Pompey for leaving Rome, 3. The ‘light of honour’ = to stay and fight in Italy, defending Rome, 4. Cicero’s distress.

When Caesar crossed the Rubicon on 10th January 49 B.C., Cicero was faced with a choice between both two sides of civil war led by two powerful individuals. His principals led him to favour Pompey, supporting as he did the remnant of a Roman Republic. But as we see in his letter to Atticus in February, he was angry also with Pompey for the way he had mismanaged his relationship with Caesar and finally run away. Cicero’s unenviable position he summed up in another letter to Atticus in March 49 – ‘I know whom to flee, but I know not whom to follow’ (*Att* 8.11.2)

### To Atticus: 9.4

Formiae, 24th February 49 BC

Though I do not relax nowadays, except while I am writing to you or reading your letters, I still feel at a loss for subject-matter for a letter and I believe that you feel the same. The easy, personal exchanges we are used to are out of the question in these critical times, and we have already exhausted every topic relating to the crisis. However, so as not to succumb completely to morbid reflection, I have put down certain questions relating to political behaviour which apply to the present crisis. As well as distracting me from my present miserable thoughts, it has given me practice in judging the problems:

Should one stay in ones country if it is under oppressive rule? Is it justifiable to use any means to get rid of such rule, even if they endanger the fabric of the state? Secondly, do precautions have to be taken to prevent the liberator becoming a tyrant himself?

If one’s country is under such rule, what are the arguments in favour of helping it by words rather than by war?

Is it statesmanlike when one’s country is under a tyranny to retire to some other place and remain there inactive, or should you face danger in order to free it?

If one’s country is under a tyranny, is it right to concede to its invasion or blockade? Should you, even if not in agreement with war as a means of abolishing tyranny, join up with the right-minded party in order to fight against it?

Should one in matters which concern one’s country share the dangers of one’s benefactors and friends, even if their policy seems to be without wisdom?

If one has done great service to one’s country, and because of this received spiteful and jealous treatment, should one nevertheless voluntarily endanger oneself for the sake of one’s country? Or is it legitimate to eventually have some thought for oneself and one’s family, and to cease fighting against the people in power?

Occupying myself with these questions, and gathering the arguments on either side in Latin or Greek, I take my mind off my cares for a short time. Though the problems I am posing here are far from irrelevant to them. But I am afraid I am being a burden to you, for if the man carrying this letter makes good time he will bring you the letter on the day you are due your fever.

### Notes - To Atticus: 9.4

This letter was written on the 12th of March 49 B.C. by Cicero in Formiae to Atticus. The tone is informal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero has to choose between Caesar and Pompey in the Civil War and here examines his political principals in a letter to his close friend Atticus. Themes evident in this letter are: 1.Cicero’s philosophy of politics and idealism. 2. Informal versus formal letter writing and the risks correspondence raises in times like this.

In 49, with the advent of civil war, and the week before he wrote to Caesar (appealing there also to the ‘national interest’). Cicero wrote a heart-wrenching letter to Atticus philosophising about the political dilemmas by which he was being challenged. Each question searches for a practical solution to an ethical and/or political problem thrown up by tyranny. The final question, so clearly a personal and emotional one for Cicero, asks when, if ever, one can absolve oneself of one’s patriotic duty. We know for Cicero’s *Philippics* against Antony in 44-43 B.C. that Cicero, exhausted emotionally by years if unsuccessful fighting for the Republican cause, did not give up.

In this personal letter to Atticus, Cicero explained to him the philosophical dilemmas presented to him by his political principals. Without solutions, Cicero claimed he spent his time presenting both sides of each argument, first in Latin, then in Greek, in the style of the exercises that Roman schoolboys traditional did while learning skills of argument, rhetoric and oratory. In an attempt to help his country ‘by words’, Cicero wrote to Caesar a week later on the 19th of March in 49 B.C. trying to reconcile him with Pompey, using his skills of persuasion and appealing to a common cause to try to mediate. A week later Cicero was to meet Caesar at Formiae, but again turned down his invitation to join him in Rome, allowing himself a brief sense of self-approval. In June 49 B.C., Cicero set sail for Greece to join Pompey and the senate. The defeat at Pharsalus and the death of Pompey helped Cicero to decide he had had enough of the war and he decided to return to Italy. Caesar pursued the remains of the Republican cause to North Africa, where Cato’s army was defeated; Cato committed suicide at Thapsus in 46 B.C.

### To Atticus 13.40: To Atticus

Tusculum, 17th August 45 BC

Indeed? Brutus reports that Caesar has joined the Optimates? Good news! But where is he going to find them – unless he hangs himself? As for Brutus, how foolish of him to say such a thing! Where is that artwork of yours I saw in the Parthenon with Ahala and Brutus as Consuls? But what can he do? I was very pleased to read that ‘not even the man who had begun the whole criminal business had a good word to say about our nephew’. I feared that even Brutus liked him. For that seemed the meaning of the sentence in his letter to me: ‘But I could wish that you had a taste of his conversations with me.’ But, as you say, more of this when we are face to face. But what do you advise? Am I to remain here or fly off to Rome? I am immersed in my books and I do not want to receive him here. I hear that today his father went off to meet him at Saxa in a very bad temper; I rebuked him! But I am chopping and changing this way and that myself – so we must wait and see.

See what you think about my coming to Rome and let me hear the whole business tomorrow morning so that I know them immediately.

### To Atticus 14.4: To Atticus

Lanuvium, 10th April 44 BC

Now, what do you think I hear in Lanuvium? In contrast, I suspect there in Rome you hear news every day. Things are boiling up, if Matius talks like that, what do you think the rest will do? On my part I am sorry that what has happened is unprecedented in a state; that freedom has been restored without a free state. It is horrible what talk and threats there are. Also, I am afraid of wars in Gaul and where Sextus will end up.

Yet come all, the Ides of March console us. Our heroes achieved all they were able, gloriously and magnificently. The things which remain, they require men and money; of which we have none. This from me to you – if you have any news (for I expect you hear some every day) send it to me. If you have nothing, nevertheless do not interrupt our custom. I shall not.

### Notes - To Atticus 13.40: To Atticus

This letter was written on the 7th/8th of August in 45 B.C. Cicero was in Tusculum at the time. The tone of this letter is informal. The significance if this letter is that despite being ‘forgiven’ by Caesar for siding with Pompey, Cicero here shows little allegiance to Caesar in this letter to his close friend Atticus. Themes present are: 1. Cicero’s cynicism towards Caesar, 2. the role of the optimates in the assassination of Caesar (lead up).

Certainly Cicero shared his political outlook with Atticus on a regular basis. In his letter from Tusculum in 45 B.C. he mixes political observation with gallows-honour in a sarcastic comment about Julius Caesar: *‘Indeed? Brutus reports that Caesar has joined the Optimates? Good news! Bu where is he going to find them – unless he hands himself?’*

### Notes - To Atticus 14.4: To Atticus

This letter was written on the 9th/10th of April 44 B.C. It was written to Atticus whilst Cicero was in Lanuvium. The tone of this letter is informal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero begs for political news from Atticus in Rome three-and a half weeks after the assassination of Julius Caesar. Themes apparent in this letter are: 1. Cicero’s reliance on correspondence for information in Rome, 2. Cicero’s philosophical politics are proved wrong about libertas; idealism versus pragmatism, 3. Full support given to the act of assassination.

*‘Now what do you think I hear in Lanuvium? In contrast, I suspect there in Rome you hear news every day…If you have any news (for I expect you hear some every day) send it to me immediately. If you have nothing, nevertheless do not interrupt our custom. I shall not.’*

The language of desperation is clear. This this last quote we see Cicero employ imperatives – ‘send it to me…do not interrupt our custom’. The language is one of insistence, the vocabulary of urgency – ‘immediately’, and the repetition of ‘every day’. It is unambiguous – concluded by the abrupt final sentence which is short and direct – ‘I shall not.’ Cicero’s more formal letter-writing tends to be reserved for people whom he is less close personally, but with whom he needs to conduct serious business. It too, like his informal correspondence, focuses hard on Amicitia: we see him not only building upon ties of friendship, but forgiving new relationships, as well as attempting to leverage existing bonds for political ends. The choice of language is striking – we see Cicero at his most deliberate and persuasive.

Furthermore, after the death of Caesar, Cicero is perhaps naively shocked to discover that removing the tyrant did not immediately and necessarily liberate the Republic: on my part I am sorry that what has happened is unprecedented in a state that freedom has been restored without a free state.

### To His Friends 10.28: To Trebonius

Rome, c. February 2nd, 43 BC

How I would have liked you to have invited me to that most beautiful feast on the Ides of March! We should have had nothing remaining. But with matters as they are, the heavenly service you have given to the republic is qualified by some grumbling. Truly, the fact that this curse of the country was taken out of the way by you – the most loyal of men – and thanks to your generosity, is still alive, makes me a little angry with you at times (although it is hardly right!). Since you have left more trouble for me with to deal with by myself, than for the rest of the world put together!

For as soon as the Senate could be held freely after the most dishonourable departure of Antony, I resumed my old spirit, which you and that most patriotic citizen, your father, have always praised and loved. For, when the tribune of the plebs had summoned the senate on the 20th of December and were putting another question to the house, I reviewed the whole constitutional situation and spoke with intense spirit rather than eloquence. I restored to the weary, wilting senate its ancient and traditional valour. That day, my intense pleading gave the Roman people hope of recovering their freedom. From that time, I have devoted every moment not only to thinking about the republic, but being active in it.

If I had not judged that you already receive reports of all that happens in the city, I would write them out in great detail myself, despite the important business which takes up my time. You will learn that from others; so a little from me, and only a summary. We have a strong senate; some of the ex-consuls are afraid, others you sense are unsound. Servius is a serious loss. Lucius Caesar is loyal; but because he is Antony’s uncle, he does not speak his mind forcefully. The Consuls are excellent, Decimus Brutus is famous; the boy Caesar is excellent, and I have great hopes for his future. Indeed, this you can be sure of; had he not quickly conscripted the veterans, and had two legions of Antony’s not been brought over to his command, and had Antony not been terrified, there was no crime, no cruelty Antony would not have committed. Though I expect you have heard all of this, I still want you to know about it. I shall write more when I have more free time.

### Notes: To His Friends 10.28: To Trebonius

This letter was written on the 2nd of February in 43 B.C. by Cicero who was in Rome to Gaious Trebonius (governor in Asia). The tone is amicable but formal. The significance of this letter is that Cicero urges Trebonius to ally himself with the republic cause. Themes evident in this letter are: 1. Idealism versus reality, 2. Cicero and Octavian, 3. Cicero and Mark Antony, 4. Use of metaphor – Ides of March = feast, 5. Cicero as restorer of the Republic (his delivery of a *Philippic* in the state in December 44, rallying them all).

In this letter to Trebonius in 43 B.C. Cicero refers to how ‘my intense pleading for the Roman people hope of recovering their freedom.’

Furthermore in this letter, we see that Cicero refused to give up for the Republican cause. He took pains to tell Trebonius in February 43 how on December 44 he: *‘Resumed my old spirit, which you and that most patriotic citizen, your father, have always praised and loved … I reviewed the whole constitutional situation and spoke with intense spirit rather than eloquence, I restored to the weary wilting senate its ancient and traditional valour. That day, my intense pleasing gave the Roman people hope of recovering their freedom. From that time, I have devoted every moment not only to thinking about the Republic, but being active in it.’*

This letter gives the correspondent an update on political progress in the capital; unfortunately, Trebonius had died in January 43 – a month before Cicero even penned the letter – this goes to show the logistics of letter writing in Ancient Rome, with letters only traveling around 50 miles a day.

### To His Friends 10.6: To Plancus

Rome, 20th March, 43 BC

The statement of our friend Furnius about your views on the republic was most agreeable to the senate, and most pleasing to the Roman people. However, the letter which was read out in the senate seemed in no way to agree with what Furnius had said. For you are an agent of peace when your colleague, a most distinguished man, is being blockaded by a gang of vile brigands, which ought to lay down their weapons and beg for peace; or if they demand a battle, then peace is acquired by victory not treaty. But whether or not your letters, or Lepidus’, are accepted, you will learn from that best of men, your brother, and from Furnius. I would never think you yourself to be without good judgement, or for you to be without the good sense and loyalty of your brother and Furnius, yet still I wish for some advice to reach you under my influence.

Therefore, believe me, Plancus, all those ranks of honour you have so far attained (and you have attained the most glorious of these); these will be regarded not as badges of honour, but as empty titles, unless you join yourself with the freedom of the Roman People and authority of the Senate. Separate yourself, I beg, from those whom you joined not by your own deliberate decision, but the chains of circumstance. In the confusion, several men have been called consular, although none is regarded as a consular unless they have shown true consular spirit towards the republic. Such therefore is your opportunity, firstly to separate yourself from disloyal citizens with whom you have nothing in common; then you should offer yourself to the senate as an advisor, leader and general; and lastly you must understand that peace cannot be achieved by merely putting down your weapons, but by dispelling the fear of conflict and slavery. If you feel and do this, then you will not only be a consul and a consular but a great one. Otherwise, your most distinguished and honourable titles; will not only be undistinguished, but will be the greatest dishonour. Good intention has prompted me to write these words, although they are a little harsh. Put them to the test of practice – which is the only method worthy of you – and you will find them to be true.

### Notes - To His Friends 10.6: To Plancus

This letter was written on the 20th March in 43 B.C. Cicero was in Rome at this point and Plancus is the governor of Gallia Comata. Key themes in this letter are: Cicero’s use of Amicitia and Cicero’s use of political pragmatism – ‘peace cannot be achieved by merely putting down your weapons’.

This letter demonstrates how Cicero changes his style between formal and informal depending on whom he is writing to. Here, Cicero is writing to Plancus, the governor of Gallia Comata (northern and central France), later described by the writer Velleius Paterculus as pathologically treacherous – ‘a watchful and obsequious timeserver who, by frequent changes of sides, was to outlive the whole period of civil war into successful old age under Augustus’ (Grant, *Cicero. Selected Letters,* P98). Cicero in Rome, needed to persuade the notoriously slippery Plancus not to swap sides and join Antony. The letter is divided into the following structure: 1. an update from Rome and assertion of Amicitia, 2. a threat, 3. Advice, 4. a threat, 5. a reassertion of Amicitia.

When urging Plancus to do the ‘right thing’ Cicero insists ‘you join yourself with the freedom of the Roman people and the authority of the Senate’ it is a letter not just about Amicitia but also about broader Roman values.