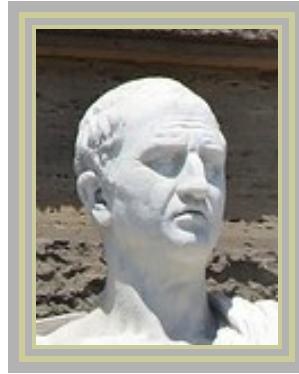


Cicero *Pro Plancio* 2



Here are the next two sentences of Cicero's speech.

vere mehercule hoc dicam: sic tum existimabam, nihil homines alius Romae nisi de quaestura mea loqui. frumenti in summa caritate maximum numerum miseram; negotiatoribus comis, mercatoribus iustus, mancipibus liberalis, sociis abstinens, omnibus eram visus in omni officio diligentissimus: excogito quidam erant a Siculis honores in me inauditi. itaque hac spe decedebam ut mihi populum Romanum ultro omnia delaturum putarem.

We will go through it bit by bit again.

*vere mehercule **hoc dicam**:*

vere is the same as *vero*. *Mehercule* is an affirmation “by Hercules”

sic tum existimabam,

Sic “thus” i.e. “in this way”. *Tum* is “then” here “at that time” works well. *Existimare* “to think”. Remember what that ...*bam* ending indicates?

nihil homines alius Romae nisi de quaestura mea loqui.

Homines Romae loqui de nihi alius nisi quaestura mea.

Translate and compare in the usual way.

Truly, by Herclues, I say this: I was thinking in this way at that time: the men of Rome are speaking of nothing else except my quaestorship.

I have translated this literally here as *loqui* is the present infinitive. However this is clumsy in English. We would say "...I was thinking in this way at that time, that the men of Rome were speaking of nothing else..."

*frumenti in **summa** caritate maximum numerum **miseram**;*

frumenti is the genitive of *frumentum* "corn". *Numerus* "quantity" *Maximus* "greatest". *Caritate* is "dearness" so in *summa caritate* freely "when it was at the highest price".

For the next part of the sentence go straight to the verb *visus eram*. In fact it might be better to begin with *omnibus* which is dative "to all/to everyone". *Negotioribus, mercatoribus, mancipibus* and *sociis* are all dative "to..."

negotiatoribus comis,

negotiator "wholesaler" or "banker" *comis* "kind"

mercatoribus iustus,

mancipibus liberalis,

manceps "contractor" *liberalis* "generous"

sociis abstinens,

abstinens "restrained"

*omnibus **eram visus***

in omni officio diligentissimus:

officium "business"

Translate and compare.

I had sent the greatest quantity of corn when it was at its highest price, to everyone I had seemed friendly to the bankers, fair to the merchants, generous to the contractors, restrained to [our] allies, in all business most hard-working.

Notice the structure of this sentence. It begins with a statement of Cicero's main achievement. Then follows a list of four pairs of words with the same grammatical pattern (showing how he achieved it); then comes the main verb and then, to sum it all up, a phrase ending with a superlative *diligentissimus*. Read it out loud and see how it builds to a climax.

Sicily was a major grain supplier of the city of Rome. The quaestor was responsible for securing the city's grain supply. Cicero is saying he did this even when the price of grain was high (perhaps due to poor harvests or other factors) and all by pleasant fair dealing.

Did you spot the passive *visis eram* ?

excogito quidam erant a Siculis honores in me inauditi.

The subject is *quidam honores* you can guess what they were. They were *inauditi* “unheard of” and they were *excogito* “thought out” *a Siculis* (“Sicilians”).

Translate and compare.

Certain unheard of honours were thought out for me by the Sicilians.

*itaque hac spe **decedebam***

decedere “to depart” “to leave”

ut mihi populum Romanum ultro omnia delaturum putarem.

Delatus “about to convey” *putarem* subjunctive literally “I would think” but translate “I thought”

ultro “spontaneously” “without being asked”.

Translate and compare.

And so I departed in this hope, I thought that to me the Roman people [were] about to convey everything to me without being asked.

Cicero explains that when he left Sicily he was so convinced of the gratitude of the Roman people for his securing of the grain supply in such a skilful and energetic way that he thought they would heap honours and gifts on him.

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