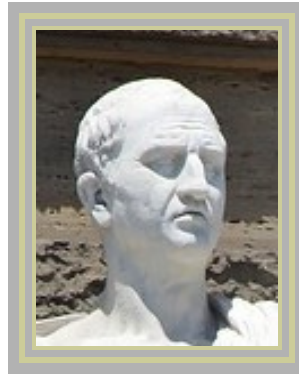


## Cicero *In Verrem* II 1



In 74 BC, Gaius Verres (c. 120–43 BC) bribed his way to a praetorship. The Senate then sent him as governor (propraetor) to Sicily.

We have already noted how important Sicily was to Rome as a source of grain. It was a rich province. If you look at a map you will see that Sicily is situated in the centre of the Mediterranean. In the Roman world it was a commercial crossroads.

The population of Sicily was generally prosperous. It was in Rome's interest that they remain contented. But Verres was greedy. He set about enriching himself at the expense of the Sicilians. Verres's treatment of the wheat-growers almost ruined them. The revenue collectors were also hit by his grasping treatment. He was eager to add to his collection of art works and he did not scruple to rob even temples as well as private citizens of their works of art. As any reader of the New Testament will know, Roman citizens had certain rights not granted to those who were not citizens. See Acts 22:25-8) Verres disregarded all this and had Roman citizens beaten, and even on one occasion crucified, if it suited his purposes. This was clean contrary to the law.

A recent slave rebellion led by Spartacus (the Third Servile War 73–71 BC) gave Verres further opportunities to extort money. He identified key slaves belonging to wealthy landowners, accused them of rebellion and sentenced them to death. If the owner wanted their slave released Verres was happy to do so – at a price. Sometimes he even invented non-existent slaves. These were charged with rebellion and when the “owners” would not produce them Verres had them charged with hiding rebellious slaves. Only a bribe of sufficient proportions would ensure the charges were dropped.

Unsurprisingly the Sicilians were enraged at this treatment. When Verres returned to Rome in 70 BC, they asked Cicero to prosecute him, secure in their knowledge of Cicero's abilities and also his character from the way he had conducted himself as Quaestor of Lilybaeum. Cicero went off to Sicily on a fact finding mission and gathered a mound of evidence despite the obstruction of the new governor who was a friend of Verres.

Verres's defender was Quintus Hortensius, a leading advocate, and he had the sympathy and support of several of the leading Roman patricians. However, it became clear that Verres was in grave danger of being convicted. The court was hostile. Hortensius therefore tried to delay and prolong the trial. He knew that the end of the Roman year was approaching when the Roman magistrates would all be replaced. In the new year the magistrate in charge of the extortion court was due to be replaced by a friend of Verres, Marcus Metellus. In the new year too, Hortensius would become one of the consuls and a brother of Marcus Metellus would become the other. Together they could make sure that witnesses in Verres trial were intimidated. Cicero knew what

they were up to and he was determined to thwart them.

Normally a trial would begin with a long series of adversarial speeches, the *actio prima*. Not until these were over were the witnesses called. If the trial followed the normal plan there was no hope of it ending before the new year. So Cicero asked to be allowed to call witnesses at once to support his charges, leaving the speeches until later.

After Cicero had made his short opening speeches and the witnesses had been called, Hortensius realised that Verres was in a bad position. He was not likely to win. He advised him to take advantage of the option open to high ranking Roman citizens of going into exile to avoid capital punishment. Verres took himself and a great deal of the loot he had gathered off to Massilia (modern Marseilles) and Cicero never had to deliver the second speech he had prepared.

Cicero published the speech he had prepared for the *actio secunda* even though it was never actually delivered in court. It is from this *actio secunda* the so called *In Verrem II* that the lines you have to study next are taken. Their relationship to the lines we have already looked at from the *Pro Plancio* will become obvious as we go along. The opening lines of the part you have to translate here are also related to the *Aenid*.

*Segesta est oppidum pervetus in Sicilia, iudices, quod ab Aenea fugiente a Troia atque in haec loca veniente conditum esse demonstrant.*

*Itaque Segestani non solum perpetua societate atque amicitia, verum etiam cognatione se cum populo Romano coniunctos esse arbitrantur.*

***Segesta est oppidum pervetus in Sicilia, iudices***

Cicero begins by saying where and what Segesta is. *Pervetus* “ancient”.

***quod ab Aenea fugiente a Troia atque in haec loca veniente conditum esse demonstrant.***

*Demonstrare* “to point out” “claim”. ...*ant* “they” i.e. the inhabitants of Segesta. Translate *quod* then go to the main verb. What do they claim? *Conditum esse* “to be founded”. This is awkward in English. We would just say “was founded”.

Translate and compare.

Segesta is an ancient town in Sicily, members of the jury, which they/the inhabitants say was founded by Aeneas when he was fleeing from Troy and came to this place.

Did you spot the **apostrophe**? See Year 2 Term 3 Week 4 Day 2.

***Itaque Segestani***

*non solum perpetua societate atque amicitia,*

*verum etiam cognatione*

***se cum populo Romano coniunctos esse arbitrantur.***

Start by looking at the main verb. It is deponent. Can you guesslate it? The subject is *Segestani*.

“*Coniunctos esse* “to be related” this is just like *conditum esse* in the previous sentence. Treat it in a similar way. Translate this last line before the two above it.

*Non solum... verum etiam* “not only... but also...”

Notice the three ablatives *Societate* “by alliance” *amicitia* “by friendship” *cognatione* “by kindred”.

Translate and compare.

And so the inhabitants of Segesta judge that they are related to the Roman people not only by alliance and friendship but also by kindred.

According to legend, Aeneas and his followers landed on Sicily. Here they were entertained by Acestes whose mother, according to Virgil, was a Trojan named Segestes. Virgil relates this in Book V of the *Aeneid*. Virgil says Aeneas founded the city of Segesta. Others said Acestes himself founded it. In the *Aeneid* on the advice of Nautes, a seer, Aeneas allows all who are weary of the journey, or injured and especially the women who are worn out with the voyage to stay behind with Acestes. Hence the idea of Segestan kinship with Rome.

Once again, you need to learn the translation by means of flashcards. I will be putting up a set here: <https://quizlet.com/gb/640752205/cicero-theft-from-segesta-complete-for-cie-igcse-2023-5-flash-cards/> on quizlet for you to use if you would prefer using on line cards to making your own. Remember you do not need to learn the translation off by heart. But you do need to learn to translate all the cards correctly when looking at the Latin.