

Forms of Dialogue in Cicero's Works:  
A Dialogue with the Quoted Text

Colloquium Balticum XI Lundense,  
November 8–10, 2012

Audronė Kučinskienė, Vilnius University  
[audronekucinskiene@hotmail.com](mailto:audronekucinskiene@hotmail.com)

The dramatic dialogue

*Rosc. Am. 54*

Exheredare filium voluit. Quam ob causam?

'Nescio.'

Exheredavitne?

'Non.'

Quis prohibuit?

'Cogitabat.'

Cogitabat? cui dixit?

'Nemini.'

Quid est aliud iudicio ac legibus ac maiestate vestra abuti ad quaestum atque ad libidinem nisi hoc modo accusare atque id obicere quod planum facere non modo non possis verum ne coneris quidem?

He meant to disinherit his son. On what account?

I don't know.

Did he disinherit him?

No.

Who hindered him?

He was thinking of it.

He was thinking of it? Who did he tell?

No one.

What is abusing the court of justice, and the laws, and your majesty, O judges, for the purposes of gain and lust, but accusing men in this manner, and bringing imputations against them which you not only are not able to prove, but which you do not even attempt to?

The narrative dialogue

*Clu. 71*

Itaque, ut erat semper praeposterus atque perversus, initium facit a Bulbo et eum, quod iam diu nihil quaesierat, tristem atque oscitantem leviter impellit.

'Quid tu?' inquit 'ecquid me adiuvas, Bulbe, ne gratiis rei publicae serviamus?'

Ille vero simul atque hoc audivit 'ne gratiis:

'Quo voles' inquit 'sequar; sed quid adfers?'

Tum ei quadraginta milia, si esset absolutus Oppianicus, pollicetur. [...]

Tum appellat hilari voltu hominem Bulbus ut blandissime potest: 'Quid tu' inquit 'Paete?' [...] 'qua de re mecum locutus es, quaerunt a me ubi sit pecunia.' Hic ille planus improbissimus quaestu iudiciario pastus, qui illi pecuniae quam condiderat spe iam atque animo incubaret, contrahit frontem [...] et [...] pulchre adseverat sese ab Oppianico destitutum atque hoc addit testimoni, sua illum sententia, cum palam omnes laturo essent, condemnatum iri.

Therefore, as he had always been a blundering and a perverse fellow, he begins with Bulbus, and finding him sulky and yawning because he had got nothing for a long time, he gives him a gentle spur. "What will you do," says he, "will you help me, O Bulbus, so that we need not serve the republic for nothing?" But he, as soon as he heard this—"For nothing," said he, "I will follow whenever you like. But what have you got?" Then he promises him forty thousand sesterces if Oppianicus is acquitted. [...] Then Bulbus addresses the man with a cheerful countenance, as caressingly as he can "What will you do," says he, "O Paetus?" [...] "Men are asking me where the money is about which you talked to me." On this that most manifest rogue, fed on gains acquired by tampering with the courts of justice [...] declares positively that he has been cheated by Oppianicus; and he adds this assertion, that he will be condemned by the vote which in his case every one was to give openly.

## The dialogic quoting

### *Clu. 148*

Iubet lex ea, qua lege haec quaestio constituta est, iudicem quaestionis, hoc est Q. Voconium, cum eis iudicibus qui ei obvenerint — vos appellat, iudices — quaerere de veneno. In quem quaerere? Infinitum est.

QVICUMQVE FECERIT, VENDIDERIT, EMERIT, HABVERIT, DEDERIT.

Quid eadem lex statim adiungit? recita.

DEQVE EIVS CAPITE QVAERITO.

Cuius? qui coierit, convenerit? Non ita est. Quid ergo est? dic.

QVI TRIBVNVS MILITVM LEGIONIBVS QVATTVOR PRIMIS, QVIVE QVAESTOR, TRIBVNVS PLEBIS — deinceps omnis magistratus nominavit — QVIVE IN SENATV SENTENTIAM DIXIT, DIXERIT.

Quid tum?

QVI EORVM COIIT, COIERIT, CONVENIT, CENVENERIT QVO QVIS IVDICIO PVBLICO CONDEMNARETVR.

'Qui eorum?' quorum? Videlicet qui supra scripti sunt. Quid intersit utro modo scriptum sit, etsi est apertum, ipsa tamen lex nos docet.

The law, according to the provisions of which this investigation has been instituted, orders the judge who presides over the investigation, that is to say, Quintus Voconius, with the other judges, who are his colleagues, (it means you, o judges,) to make inquiry concerning the fact of poisoning. To make inquiry with respect to whom? The subject is interminable.

"Whoever has made it, or sold it, or bought it, or had it in his possession, or administered it."

What does the same law subjoin immediately afterwards? Read—

"And bring him to a capital trial."

Whom? He who has conspired? he who has agreed? Not so. What, then, is meant? Tell me.

"Whoever is a military tribune of the four first legions, or a quaestor, or a tribune of the people." Then all the magistrates are named.

"Or who has delivered or shall deliver his opinion in the senate?"

What then?

"If any one of them has agreed, or shall agree, has conspired, or shall conspire, to get any one condemned in a criminal trial."

"Any one of them:" Of whom? Of those, forsooth, who have been enumerated above. What does it signify in which way the law was framed? Although it is plain enough, yet the law itself shows its own meaning;

*Phil. XIII, 34–35*

Sed maximum crimen audite.

*'Denique quid non aut probastis aut fecistis quod faciat, si reviviscat!...*

– Quis? credo enim, adferet aliquod scelerati hominis exemplum –  
... *'Cn. Pompeius ipse'...*

O nos turpis, si quidem Cn. Pompeium imitati sumus!

... *'aut filius eius, si modo possit.'*

Poterit, mihi crede: nam paucis diebus et in domum et in hortos paternos immigrabit.

*'Postremo negatis pacem fieri posse, nisi aut emisero Brutum aut frumento iuvero.'*

Alii istuc negant: ego vero, ne si ista quidem feceris, umquam tecum pacem huic civitati futuram puto.

*'Quid? hoc placetne veteranis istis? quibus adhuc omnia integra sunt.'*

Nihil vidi tam integrum quam ut oppugnare imperatorem incipiant quem tanto studio consensuque oderint.

*'Quos iam vos adsentationibus et venenatis muneribus venistis depravaturi.'*

An corrupti sunt quibus persuasum sit foedissimum hostem iustissimo bello persequi?

*'At militibus inclusis opem fertis. Nihil moror eos salvos esse et ire quo libet, si tantum modo patiuntur perire eum qui meruit.'*

Quam benigne! denique usi liberalitate Antoni milites imperatorem reliquerunt et se ad hostem metu perterriti contulerunt: etc.

But listen to the most serious charge of all.

*'In fact, what have you not sanctioned,—what have you not done? what would be done if he were to come to life again, by?—'*

By whom? For I suppose he means to bring forward some instance of a very wicked man. *'Cnaeus Pompeius himself?'*

Oh how base must we be, if indeed we have been imitating Cnaeus Pompeius!

*'Or his son, if he could be at home?'*

He soon will be at home, believe me; for in a very few days he will enter on his home, and on his father's villas.

*'Lastly, you declare that peace can not be made unless I either allow Brutus to quit Mutina, or supply him with corn.'*

It is others who say that: I say, that even if you were to do so, there never could be peace between this city and you.

*'What? is this the opinion of those veteran soldiers, to whom as yet either course is open?'*

I do not see that there is any course so open to them, as now to begin and attack that general whom they previously were so zealous and unanimous in defending. [35] *'Since you yourselves have sold yourselves for flatteries and poisoned gifts.'*

Are those men depraved and corrupted, who have been persuaded to pursue a most detestable enemy with most righteous war?

*'But you say, you are bringing assistance to troops who are hemmed in. I have no objection to their being saved, and departing wherever you wish, if they only allow that man to be put to death who has deserved it.'*

How very kind of him! The soldiers availing themselves of the liberality of Antonius have deserted their general, and have fled in alarm to his enemy; [...]

*Fin. II. 96–97*

Audi, ne longe abeam, moriens quid dicat Epicurus, ut intellegas facta eius cum dictis discrepare:

*'Epicurus Hermarcho salutem. Cum ageremus', inquit, 'vitae beatum et eundem supremum diem, scribebamus haec. tanti autem aderant vesicae et torminum morbi, ut nihil ad eorum magnitudinem posset accedere.'*

Miserum hominem! Si dolor sumum malum est, dici aliter non potest. sed audiamus ipsum:

– *'Compensabatur', inquit, 'tamen cum his omnibus animi laetitia, quam capiebam memoria rationum inventorumque nostrorum. sed tu, ut dignum est tua erga me et philosophiam voluntate ab adolescentulo suscepta, fac ut Metrodori tueare liberos.'*

97. non ego iam Epaminondae, non Leonidae mortem huius morti antepono, quorum alter cum vicisset Lacedaemonios apud antineam atque ipse gravi vulnere exanimari se videret, ut primum dispexit, quaesivit salvusne esset clipeus. [...] Refert tamen, quo modo. <beatus> sibi videtur esse moriens. magna laus.

– *'Compensabatur', inquit, 'cum summis doloribus laetitia.'*

98. Audio equidem philosophi vocem, Epicure, sed quid tibi dicendum sit oblitus es. [...]

– *'Praeteritis', inquit, 'gaudeo.'*

Quibusnam praeteritis?

But I must not digress too far. Let me repeat the dying words of Epicurus, to prove to you the discrepancy between his practice and his principles: *'Epicurus to Hermarchus, greeting. I write these words,' he says, 'on the happiest, and the last, day of my life. I am suffering from diseases of the bladder and intestines, which are of the utmost possible severity.'*

Unhappy creature! If pain is the Chief Evil, that is the only thing to be said. But let us hear his own words.

'Yet all my sufferings,' he continues, 'are counterbalanced by the joy which I derive from remembering my theories and discoveries.

I charge you, by the devotion which from your youth up you have displayed towards myself and towards philosophy, to protect the children of Metrodorus.'

When I read this I rank the deathscene of Epicurus on a level with those of Epaminondas and of Leonidas. Epaminondas had defeated the Lacedaemonians at Mantinea, and perceived himself to be mortally Avounded. As soon as he opened his eyes he inquired if his shield were safe. [...] Epicurus counts himself happy in his last moments. All honour to him.

'My joy,' he writes, 'counterbalances the severest pain.'

The words of a philosopher, Epicurus, command my attention; but you forget what you logically ought to say. [...]

He says 'I take pleasure in my past feelings.'

What past feelings ?

*Fam.* V.1 Q. Metellus Celer to Cicero

*Existimaram pro mutuo inter nos animo et pro reconciliata gratia nec absente<in unquam me abs te> ludibrio laesum iri nec Metellum fratrem ob dictum capite ac fortunis per te oppugnatum iri. quem si parum pudor ipsius defendebat, debebat vel familiae nostrae dignitas vel meum studium erga vos remque publicam satis sublevare. nunc video illum circumventum, me desertum, a quibus minime conveniebat. [...]*

*Fam.* V. 2.1–6 Cicero to Q. Metellus Celer

*Scribis ad me te existimasse pro mutuo inter nos animo et pro reconciliata gratia numquam te a me ludibrio laesum iri. quod cuius modi sit satis intellegere non possum; sed tamen suspicor ad te esse adlatum [...]*  
*Quod autem ita scribis, 'pro mutuo inter nos animo', quid tu existimes esse in amicitia mutuum, nescio; equidem hoc arbitror, cum par voluntas accipitur et redditur [...]*  
*Quod scribis de reconciliata gratia, non intellego cur reconciliatam esse dicas quae numquam imminuta est.*  
*Quod scribis non oportuisse Metellum, fratrem tuum, ob dictum a me oppugnari, primum hoc velim existimes, animum mihi istum tuum vehementer probari et fraternam plenam humanitatis ac pietatis voluntatem; [...]*

In view of our reciprocal sentiments and the restoration of our friendly relations I had not expected that I should ever be held up by you to offensive ridicule in my absence, or that my brother Metellus would be attacked at your instance in person or estate because of a phrase. If his own honorable character did not suffice for his protection, the dignity of our family and my zeal on behalf of you and your friends and the commonwealth should have been support enough. Now it seems that he has been beset, and I deserted, by those whom it least behoved.

You write that you had not expected ever to be held up to offensive ridicule by me, in view of our reciprocal sentiments and the restoration of friendly relations. What that means, I cannot precisely tell. But I suspect you have heard a report [...]

As for your reference to 'our reciprocal sentiments', I do not know how you define reciprocity in friendship. I conceive it to lie in good will equally received and returned. [...]

You refer to 'the restoration of friendly relations'. I fail to understand why you should speak of the restoration of relations which have never been impaired.

You write that your brother Metellus should not have been attacked by me because of a phrase. Now in the first place I would ask you to believe that your sentiment here, your fraternal spirit redolent of good feeling and natural affection, has warm approval. [...]

**Literature:**

Berger Dorothea, *Cicero als Erzähler. Forensische und literarische Strategien in den Gerichtsreden*, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin–Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1978, 181–186.

Hall Jon, „The *Philippics*“, *Brill's Companion to Cicero. Oratory and Rhetoric*, ed. by James M. May, 2002, 273–304.

Hutchinson O. Gregory, „Ciceros Briefe als Literatur (Ad Att. I,16)“, *Hermes* 121 (1993): 441–451.

Hutchinson O. Gregory, *Cicero's Correspondence: A Literary Study*, Oxford, 1998 (Chapter Dialog, p. 113–138).

Kučinskienė Audronė, „Cicerono Tryliktoji filipika: dialogas su nesančiu žmogumi“ (Cicero's *Thirteenth Philippic*: Dialogue with an Absent Person), *Literatūra* 51(3) (2009): 28–34.

Kučinskienė Audronė, „Filosofinio dialogo struktūros ir jų pėdsakai Cicerono kalbose“ (The Structures of the Philosophical Dialogue and Their Traces in Cicero's Speeches), *Literatūra* 45(3) (2003): 58–68.

Kučinskienė Audronė, *Dialogue in Cicero's Speeches*, A Summary of Doctoral Dissertation, Vilnius University, 2005.

Laurand L., *Études sur le style des discours de Cicéron*, 4e éd., Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert. L. Laurand, 1965, vol. III, 256–260.