

sary and no more; doubtless Cato believed that all-day speeches were, on occasion, necessary.

Cicero, although he deplores Cato's Stoic rigidity,<sup>30</sup> shows a high opinion of his eloquence, and praises his ability to make philosophical *sententiae* acceptable not only to the Senate, but even to the people. There is nothing so incredible, so prickly, and so uncouth, Cicero says, that it cannot be illuminated by eloquence, and Cato, while he discussed the soul, virtue, death, the gods, and patriotism, used the adornments of oratory.<sup>31</sup> Significantly, Cicero chose Cato as the exponent of Stoicism in the *De finibus*.

The letter to Caesar *De re publica*, now generally ascribed to Sallust,<sup>32</sup> gives a further notice about Cato. Sallust, after castigating the Optimates for inefficiency and inertia, admits that Cato has *ingenium versutum, loquax, callidum*.<sup>33</sup> He implies that while Cato's statecraft was deplorable, his talents were outstanding.

We can see that Cato often used Stoic maxims, as Cicero, Sallust, and his own letter show. Lucidity, the chief virtue of the Stoic style, is admirably illustrated in his letter. The Stoic belief in the orator's mission to instruct his audience rather than to move or to delight is demonstrated by Cato's warnings against innovation. Cato's interest in the Stoics' effort to bring language into harmony with nature—the Stoics' infallible guide—may be inferred, for neither Sallust nor Plutarch gives any evidence of pomposity or triviality; Cato himself chooses words and constructions of gravity and weight. His interest in the correct use of words, another Stoic preoccupation, is shown both in the *De finibus* and in Sallust's report of the speech against the Catilinarians. He could also be witty: Caesar alone, he remarked, came sober to the task of overthrowing the state.<sup>34</sup>

Cato tried to convey to others his own deep concern with Roman politics. In this respect he departed from the Stoic doctrine of *apatheia*. Sallust shows that he appealed to fear; Plutarch shows that he appealed to patriotism and love of freedom; Cicero shows that he was both fearless and eloquent. Cato had *auctoritas*; the impact of his life, even translated into legend, has not yet faded. Surely a major factor in his impact on the world was his ability to move his fellow-citizens, and to make them feel, even briefly, that the life of civic virtue was the *summum bonum* of the Roman.

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### EPICURUS: THE SUMMUM BONUM FALLACY

The aim of this writing is to show how the lack of a definite article in Latin obliterated the doctrine of Epicurus that life itself and not pleasure is the greatest good. It will also be shown how the recovered doctrine serves to explain certain verses of Maecenas.

Epicurus is on record as assuming that "only Greeks are capable of succeeding in philosophy,"<sup>1</sup> and Philodemus wrote:<sup>2</sup> "The only men we know to have become wise employed some Greek tongue." This view was a matter of patriotism with Epicurus, and he went so far as to denounce certain philosophers of Cyzicus, who sponsored the introduction of astral gods from the Orient, as "enemies of Hellas."<sup>3</sup> These strange gods, it will be remembered, were spherical in shape, not even anthropomorphic, much less capable of speaking Greek. That the gods were held to speak some form of Greek is certified by the testimony of Philodemus.<sup>4</sup>

This involvement of language with philosophy and patriotism dominated the mind of Lucretius also. It is not likely that he was unaware of the views of Epicurus. Interpreted flatly, these would have signified that no one whose language was Latin could become a wise man or really philosophize. So far from being deterred, however, Lucretius viewed his difficulties as a challenge, and manifestly found huge enjoyment in wrestling with the rigidities of his native tongue. His references to its poverty, *egestas*, suggest rather the joy of combat than lamentation.<sup>5</sup>

A similar association of language with philosophy and patriotism reappears in Cicero. His pride as a Roman seems to have been stung by the attitude of Lucretius, and it is surely no mere coincidence that the surrounding context is Epicurean where he makes his rejoinder:<sup>6</sup> "This is my judgment, and I have often aired it, that the Latin language is not only not lacking in copiousness but is actually richer than Greek."

The absurdity of this claim is demonstrated by the lack of the definite article alone. In Greek the end or *telos* of an art or activity is called "the good" of that art or activity. Life itself is an activity, and its *telos* is above all others "the good." Thus the *telos* and "the good" are equivalents.

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 226 (Usener).

<sup>2</sup> *On the Gods* iii. col. 14. lines 12-13 (ed. Diels; = *Abh. d. königl. preuss. Akad. d. Wissenschaften*, Jahrg. 1916, Phil.-hist. Klasse, No. 4 [Berlin, 1917], p. 37).

<sup>3</sup> Diog. Laert. x. 8. Editors emend "Cyzicenes" to "Cynics," but E. Bignone has rightly defended the MSS (*L'Aristotele perduto* [Florence, 1936], II, 76-80).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* (note 2, above), iii. col. 14. lines 6-12.

<sup>5</sup> Lucr. i. 136-39, 830-32, iii. 258-61.

<sup>6</sup> *De fin.* i. 10.

<sup>30</sup> E.g., *Att.* ii. 1. 8; i. 18. 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Brutus* 118-19; *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, Praef. 1-3.

<sup>32</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.* (note 18, above), pp. 185-86.

<sup>33</sup> Sallust *De re publica epist.* 9. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Suetonius *Caes.* 53; cf. Quintilian *Inst. orat.* viii. 2. 9.

For neither of these is there an equivalent in Latin. So translators adopted *summum bonum* as a makeshift. Its demerit is ambiguity, and through this the fallacy originated. In Greek the practice is to say "the greatest good" and not "the highest good," and to Epicurus "the greatest good" was not pleasure but life itself. In other words, to him the *summum bonum* was not the *telos*.

This doctrine was an integral part of a logical context. To Plato and Aristotle life was an imprisonment of the soul in the body, and death was a release. The youthful Aristotle went so far as to compare the union of soul with body to the Etruscan cruelty of lashing a corpse to a living being, which Virgil has described for us.<sup>7</sup> Epicurus, holding body and soul to be alike corporeal, placed the two on a parity, and one of his definitions of happiness is "a healthy mind in a healthy body."<sup>8</sup> Moreover, denying both pre-existence and immortality, he was bound to see all values concentrated within the brief span of mortal life. Thus life itself became "the greatest good."

Epicurus had no patience with Platonic dialectic; he said there were "two kinds of inquiry, the one about realities and the other about sheer verbiage."<sup>9</sup> It was his determination to dethrone reason and set up Nature as the norm. The feelings, for instance, were one of Nature's criteria. In order to identify "the greatest good" he instituted a simple test. The greatest good is bound to be associated with the greatest pleasure or joy. Now, no joy is greater than the escape, let us say, from imminent shipwreck. This joy results from the preservation of life. Life, therefore, is the greatest good. The pertinent text is as follows:<sup>10</sup> "That which causes the unsurpassable joy is the bare escape from some awful calamity, and this is the nature of 'good,' if one apprehends it rightly and then stands by his finding, instead of walking around uselessly and harping on the meaning of 'good.'"

Recognition of life as "the greatest good" is on record in *Vatican Collection* 42: "The same span of time embraces both beginning and end of the greatest good." The meaning of this is not obscure. It marks life as limited by birth and death. It denies both pre-existence and survival of the soul, and is a contradiction of Plato, who sponsored both these doctrines. Editors, however, misled by the *summum bonum* fallacy, feel bound that "the greatest good" shall be pleasure, and consequently emend

the text, producing a sentence genuinely obscure,<sup>11</sup> which need not concern us.

Other confirmatory passages are citable. The "desirability of life" is mentioned as a reason for placing a higher value upon old age as against youth,<sup>12</sup> contrary to a prevailing opinion. The same feeling motivates the scorn expressed for a dictum of Theognis:<sup>13</sup> "A good thing it is never to have been born or, being born, to have passed with all speed through the gates of Hades." The supreme value placed upon life determines also the attitude toward suicide (*Vatican Collection* 38): "Small is the man from every point of view who discovers many plausible reasons for taking leave of life."

This doctrine of Epicurus furnished philosophy with a perennial topic. He thought of life as a voyage<sup>14</sup> or a journey<sup>15</sup> in which the wise man should always find a balance of pleasure over pain.<sup>16</sup> Suicide in his opinion was not a dereliction of duty, but the abandonment of an opportunity to enjoy happiness to the fullest degree. In the second of his books *On Lives* he is reported as saying:<sup>17</sup> "But even if deprived of his sight, [the wise man] will not turn aside from the journey of life." It is from this point that Cicero discusses the topic, and that too with specific mention of Epicurus, in the *Tusculan Disputations*,<sup>18</sup> where he extends it to include loss of hearing.

Once the ball had been started to roll the temptation presented itself to go on through the list of deprivations, as in the sorites syllogism, and this is exactly what happened. Life being the greatest good, the question takes the shape, At what stage of deprivation would it lose all value? The answer came from Maecenas:<sup>19</sup>

debilem facito manu, debilem pede coxo,  
tuber adstrue gibberum, lubricos quate dentes,  
vita dum superest, bene est; hanc mihi vel acuta  
si sedeam cruce, sustine.

The beginning of the poem is lacking; only the lines that horrified Seneca are quoted. It may be assumed that Maecenas ran through the list of deprivations, working his way up to a climax.

The advice of Epicurus to his disciples is well known:<sup>20</sup> "The injuries men inflict arise from hatred, envy, and contempt, over all of which the wise man is able to pre-

<sup>7</sup> Arist. fr. 60 (Rose); *Aen.* viii. 485-88.

<sup>8</sup> Not citable in Greek, but demonstrable: cf. Horace *Carm.* i. 31. 17-19; Juvenal x. 356 *mens sana in corpore sano* (Epicurean context); Petron. 61 *bonam mentem bonamque valetudinem*.

<sup>9</sup> Diog. Laert. x. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Fr. 423 (Usener); Plutarch *Moralia* 1091B.

<sup>11</sup> C. Bailey, *Epicurus* (Oxford, 1926), p. 382, *ad loc.*

<sup>12</sup> Diog. Laert. x. 126.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Vatican Collection* 17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 48.

<sup>16</sup> *Kuriai doxai* 4.

<sup>17</sup> Diog. Laert. x. 119. Text dubious, meaning fairly clear; it is recommended to read *metaxein*.

<sup>18</sup> v. 110-17.

<sup>19</sup> Text of Paul Lunderstedt, *De C. Maecenatis Fragmentis* (Leipzig, 1911; = *Comment. Philol. Ienenses*, Vol. IX, Fasc. 1), pp. 35-36 and notes; *coxo* means *claudio*.

<sup>20</sup> Diog. Laert. x. 117.

vail by calculation," that is, by a calculated course of conduct. It was the deliberate choice of Maecenas, who was perilously placed, to deflect the jealousy of enemies by studiously cultivating effeminacy in his manner of living, his dress, deportment, and even in his style of writing.<sup>21</sup> It was deemed insufficient to refuse all the trappings of political office; it seemed imperative also to baffle hostility by adopting a way of life completely incongruous with the seeking of office. By this means he sought "peace and safety." Of this elaborate camouflage the poem was a part. As philosophy it was sheer whimsy, though incidentally planned for deception. It deceived Seneca.

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### DE LITTERAE F APVD VETERES PRONVNTIATIONE

Quamquam omnium consensu littera F eandem creditur habuisse potestatem apud Romanos quam nostris diebus inter nostrates, tamen perpauca extant testimonia huius litterae a veteribus pronuntiatae. Attamen ex veteribus scriptoribus qui summam hanc rem tractaverunt unus, nec parvi momenti, doctorum virorum diligentiam elusisse mihi videtur. Apuleium dico, cuius in *Metamorphoseon* fabellis, modo si has non spreveris inspicere, hominem in asinum conversum invenies, qui hanc litteram pronuntiare strenue enititur, frustra vero, sed non sine rationis pronuntiandi admodum certis indiciis. Sed ne longius in hoc haereamus, videamus quid habeat Apuleius noster.

Lucius quidam (hoc enim fictum nomen Apuleius fabularum narratori induerat) ex homine in speciem asinariam reformatus a nequissimis quibusdam latronibus scelesti criminis arguitur, quos redarguere appetit his fere verbis: "Denique ne mala conscientia tam scelesto crimini praesens viderer silentio consentire, hoc tantum impatientia perductus volui dicere 'Non feci.' Et verbum quidem praecedens semel ac saepius immodice clamitavi, sequens vero nullo pacto disserere potui, sed in prima remansi voce, et identidem boavi 'Non, non,' *quamquam nimia rotunditate pendulas vibrassem labias*" (*Metam.* lib. VII, cap. 3).

Ex his verbis quid manifestius elucere potest quam Apuleii tempestate litteram F (verbi "feci" elementum primum) longe ab F hodierna discrepasse, propioreque fuisse litterae graecae phi, aut duobus coniunctis sonis BH, e quibus F latinam saepenumero defluxisse omnibus probatum habetur? Nam nihil omnino adhi-

bitur de superis dentibus, nihil de labro inferiore adpresso aut impresso aut depresso, ut apud inferioris aetatis grammaticos Terentianum Maurum, Marium Victorinum, Martianum Capellam (hi enim testes saepius<sup>1</sup> laudantur) invenimus. Quintilianus certe propius ad sensum accessit, cum obscurius dixisset sextam litteram "paene non humana voce, vel omnino non voce potius, inter discrimina dentium effandam" (Quint. XII. 10. 29).

Obiiciat forsitan quispiam Apuleium, exotici sermonis rudem locutorem, facete aut iocose aut per ludibrium aut hilaritatis causa et ad risum excitandum aut saltem casu tantum huiusmodi asininitates narrationi suae intexuisse. Talia animadvertenti facile responderim, etsi sciam lib. III cap. 24 enascentis asini labiarum pendularum iam factam esse mentionem, tamen longe notabilius esse silentium eiusdem tertii libri cap. 29, ubi eadem eloquendi difficultas tractatur, nulla pronuntiationis mentione facta. Quem casum sic legimus: "Nomen augustum Caesaris invocare temptavi, et 'O' quidem tantum disertum ac validum clamitavi, reliquum autem Caesaris nomen enuntiare non potui." Caesaris nomen re vera littera C incipiebat, quam describere Apuleius aut nolebat aut nequibat.

Quamobrem credibilius mihi denique videtur Apuleium caute et curiose laboravisse ut quemadmodum litterae F sonus proferretur exprimeret, neque puti nobis quaeritantibus de tam difficili sonorum latinorum discrimine haec amoenissimi scriptoris verba silentio praetereunda esse.

IACOBVS V. RICVS

ATHENIS OHIOENSIVM

### ORATORS OF ROME AND BRITAIN

In a review in the *New York Herald Tribune* for February 11, 1950 of the recent reprinting in book form (Whittlesey) of Winston S. Churchill's essay, "Painting as a Pastime" (originally published in 1932 as part of a volume entitled *Amid These Storms*), John K. Hutchens quotes two particularly fine passages. The first of these he pronounces clearly written by "a man working up an oratorical style very handy for some future national crisis," and the second he characterizes as "even more prophetic of the rolling rhythms that would cheer a countryman or flatten a foe." This second passage has a familiar ring for the classicist. It runs as follows: "Painting is a friend who makes no undue demands, excites to no exhausting pursuits, keeps faithful pace even with feeble steps, and holds her canvas as a screen

<sup>21</sup> Seneca *Epist.* 114. 4-11; Lunderstedt, *op. cit.* (note 19, above), pp. 18-32.

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Sturtevant, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin* (2d ed.; Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 160 f.; R. G. Kent, *The Sounds of Latin* (3rd ed.; Baltimore, Md., 1945), p. 56.