

# Cicero as Translator and Cicero in Translation

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One of Cicero's earliest literary accomplishments – if not his earliest – was a translation which he made in 89 BCE (at the age of seventeen) into Latin hexameters of the astronomical poem *Phaenomena*, published in 270 BCE by the Greek didactic poet Aratus of Soli. We have about five hundred verses of this translation in a direct manuscript transmission, as well as fragments of a few hundred lines surviving as quotations in Cicero's own later works and in late Latin grammarians. An American scholar has recently made a strong case for assuming that Cicero did not simply translate Aratus' work, but changed and reshaped some aspects of it.<sup>1</sup> At some unknown date, Cicero translated Plato's *Protagoras* into Latin. The opening lines of his translation are quoted by Priscian the grammarian, and we have a few other short quotations in some works of Jerome and Donatus. They are cited in various editions of Cicero's *Opera Omnia*. The translation itself has not survived. What we do have is a large section of Cicero's translation of Plato's *Timaeus* (27d–47b), again of an uncertain date, and some passages in Cicero's works identified by Cicero himself as translated from Greek sources, mainly from Plato. These extant translations have been treated in some detail by Professor J. G. F. Powell in a long article,<sup>2</sup> in which he also argues convincingly against the thesis of Roland Poncelet, in his *Cicéron traducteur de Platon* of 1957, which maintains through a detailed analysis of passages from Cicero's translation of *Timaeus* compared with the Greek original that Latin, even Cicero's Latin, was inadequate for rendering some of the main ideas of Greek philosophy.

These are worthy issues, and I doubt if Powell's discussion, however much I find it utterly convincing, will be the last word said on this subject. Powell's discussion deals with large questions such as the possible effects of syntactic differences on the adequacy of a philosophical translation,

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This article is based on many years' work on Cicero's philosophical works, culminating in my article 'Cicero's Remarks on Translating Philosophical Terms – Some General Problems', in the volume *Greek into Latin from Antiquity until the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Charles Burnett and myself and published by the Warburg Institute, London, in 2012. This article, of around sixty pages (37–96), includes the texts of Cicero's remarks, as well as two detailed indices of Cicero's renderings of Greek philosophical terms into Latin.

The present article also contains, here and there, some innovations, based on my extensive work on the translation of philosophical terms mentioned above, and I believe that my discussion on pp. 49–52 puts some things in a new perspective. But in general, this article is meant mostly as an overview of this wide subject, directed mainly to Classical readers.

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Siebengartner, 'Stoically Seeing and Being Seen in Cicero's *Aratea*', in John Glucker and Charles Burnett (edd.), *Greek into Latin from Antiquity until the Nineteenth Century* (Warburg Institute Colloquia 18), The Warburg Institute, London and Nino Aragno Editore, Turin, 2012, pp. 97–115. The article includes copious references to editions of Aratus and of Cicero's translation and to modern studies.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. F. Powell, 'Cicero's Translations from the Greek', in J. G. F. Powell (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher*, Oxford 1995, pp. 273–300.

and the more general problem of the existence or otherwise of languages which are inherently more suitable for philosophical expression. These are issues which are likely to be debated among philologists and philosophers for years to come, but they are not the issues which I have chosen to discuss in my lecture. My lecture will attempt to consider some aspects of the influence of Cicero as translator from Greek on future generations, in Latin and beyond Latin. The influence of Cicero's translations of works like *Aratea* and *Timaeus* was restricted to the period in which there were Latin readers who preferred, even if they knew some Greek, to read works of philosophy in Latin, and when the classics of Greek philosophy were still regarded as essential reading for philosophers and philosophically-minded people. It is no accident, therefore, that of Cicero's translations of Greek works none has survived in a complete form. Indeed, most of Cicero's own philosophical works were also hardly read in the Middle Ages, when the Greek classics no longer stood at the centre of philosophical studies in Latin Western Europe, and they were rediscovered in manuscripts, mostly in isolated monastic libraries, by Italian Renaissance scholars, as part of the Revival of Learning.

Cicero's abiding influence, in Western civilization, as a translator from Greek consists in the Greek terms – philosophical and rhetorical – for which he was one of the first to create Latin equivalents. Some of these equivalents, such as *qualitas*, *comprehensio*, and *individuum*, have survived into modern English, French, German and Italian, and have been borrowed from them into other modern languages. Some of these terms have kept their original Latin meaning, or a meaning very close to it, in modern languages, while some have acquired a new – usually more restricted – meaning. *Quality* still has the same meaning as Latin *qualitas* (and Greek *ποιότης*), while *honest* and *honnête* have a rather limited meaning in modern English and French, as against the more general Latin *honestum* – on which later.

Powell dedicates a few pages of his article to some acute observations concerning Cicero's innovations in Latin philosophical terminology,<sup>3</sup> but his discussion is restricted to a few specimens of Cicero's terminology as examples for general points he emphasizes. Not much comprehensive work has been done on this issue of Cicero's Latin renderings of Greek words. The most comprehensive work on this issue is a rare book, published in Paris in 1868 and available today only in a few major libraries: Victor Clavel's *De M. T. Cicerone Graecorum Interprete*.<sup>4</sup> The other useful aid is H. J. Rose's article 'The Greek of Cicero', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 41, 1921, pp. 91–116: a repertoire of Greek words in Cicero's theoretical writings and letters. Neither of these works has been used by the few scholars who have since written on Cicero's translations from the Greek. *Habent sua fata libelli*.

One aid to understanding Cicero's manner/s of translating Greek terms into Latin is provided by Cicero himself. In his philosophical and rhetorical writings we have over two hundred remarks made by Cicero himself as to the Greek word which he has translated by this or that Latin term. Some of these remarks are basic: "I call X what the Greeks call Y"; but some are long and occasionally argumentative, attempting to justify his Latin renderings of difficult Greek terms, such as the notoriously untranslatable *σωφροσύνη* (temperance, moderation, knowing one's limits and behaving accordingly), or the Stoic technical term *ἀξίωμα* ('statement' in both the linguistic and

<sup>3</sup> Powell (note 2 above), pp. 288–300.

<sup>4</sup> I discuss this work in some detail in my article 'Cicero's Remarks...' (see next note), pp. 37–38.

the philosophical sense). I have dedicated a whole study to some aspects of these remarks made by Cicero himself,<sup>5</sup> including in two appendices<sup>6</sup> the full texts of all these remarks, as well as an index of Greek/Latin words appearing in these remarks. I hope that this would make it somewhat easier for future students working on this and related issues. In what follows, I shall, of course, make use of materials and arguments contained in this article, but for a somewhat different purpose.

Let us begin with some background facts. Cicero regarded himself mainly as a public figure: an orator and a statesman. As an orator, he was the greatest in the whole history of Latin rhetoric, leaving even his great predecessors Antonius and Hortensius far behind. He was also the author of some great works of rhetorical theory which had a lasting influence on future generations of Roman orators and Latin prose writers. His activities as a statesman constituted a moderate and temporary success. He was consul – the highest office of state in Republican Rome – at the age of 43 (*'suo anno'*: the earliest age in which one could normally become a consul), and continued to be active in politics, with a few breaks, until 48–47 BCE, when he was ‘instructed’ on Caesar’s orders to abstain from political activity. Apart from *De Re Publica*, written during a period of forced abstention from politics in 51 BCE, he wrote most of his philosophical (and rhetorical) works during two of the last years of his life, 45–44 BCE. He intended to produce a corpus of works which would cover every field of philosophy (see *De Divinatione* 2.4), but died before he could complete this project. Yet even the works which he did publish cover a wide area of philosophical issues which we would classify today as epistemological, ethical, theological and physical.

Cicero himself was brought up on Greek from his childhood, and had a number of opportunities of extending his Greek education both in his youth in Rome and later in Greece (see Plutarch, *Cicero* 3–4). One notes especially the words of his teacher of rhetoric Apollonius Molon, testifying to Cicero’s mastery of Greek as an orator.<sup>7</sup> He might have made a career in Greece as a teacher of rhetoric had he chosen to do so.

But Cicero was a patriotic and an ambitious Roman. He returned to Rome and launched on a glorious public career. Yet, as he reminds us in the opening section of *De Natura Deorum* (1.6), even while he was fully engaged in rhetoric and politics, he never gave up his study of philosophy and his reading of philosophical texts. When he was forcibly made to retire from politics, he decided that the one service he could still offer his countrymen was to enrich Latin literature with works of philosophy. This he regarded as a civic duty.<sup>8</sup> He was well aware of the fact that

<sup>5</sup> John Glucker, ‘Cicero’s Remarks on Translating Philosophical Terms’, in *Greek into Latin* (note 1 above), pp. 37–96.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. pp. 58–96.

<sup>7</sup> Plutarch, *Cicero* 4, 863a: Σὲ μὲν, ὦ Κικέρων, ἐπαινῶ καὶ θαυμάζω, τῆς δὲ Ἑλλάδος οἰκτεῖρω τὴν τύχην, ὁρῶν ἃ μόνᾳ τῶν καλῶν ἡμῶν ὑπελείπετο καὶ ταῦτα Ῥωμαίοις διὰ σοῦ προσγεγόμενα, παιδείαν καὶ λόγον.

<sup>8</sup> *De Natura Deorum* 1.7–8: nam cum otio langueremus et is esset rei publicae status ut eam unius consilio atque cura gubernari necesse esset, primum ipsius rei publicae causa philosophiam nostris hominibus explicandam putavi, magni existimans interesse ad decus et ad laudem civitatis res tam gravis tamque praeclaras Latinis etiam litteris contineri. eoque me minus instituti mei paenitet, quod facile sentio quam multorum non modo discendi sed etiam scribendi studia commoverim. complures enim Graecis institutionibus eruditi ea quae didicerant cum civibus suis communicare non poterant, quod illa quae a Graecis acceperant Latine dici posse diffiderent; quo in genere tantum proficisse videamur, ut a Graecis ne verborum quidem copia vinceremur. *De Divinatione* 2.4: adhuc haec erant. ad reliqua alacri tendebamus animo sic parati, ut, nisi quae causa gravior obstitisset, nullum philosophiae locum

many educated Romans, who had been taught Greek as a natural part of their education, would prefer to read philosophy in the original Greek. He grapples with this and related issues in the opening sections of some of his works (especially *Academicus Primus*, *De Finibus* and *De Natura Deorum*). But he intended his philosophical works – apart from enriching Latin literature with a literary form which had hardly existed before<sup>9</sup> – mainly for readers who had no Greek education but had heard of some Greek philosophical ideas and wanted to know more,<sup>10</sup> and as a means of educating the youth and improving their morals (see again *De Divinatione* 2.4).

Cicero's philosophical works are not straight translations of Greek originals; but his constant use of sources is well attested in his letters to Atticus of these years, in which he keeps asking him to find and send him some Greek works relevant to the book he is working on at the moment.<sup>11</sup> That he kept thinking in Greek and consulting his Greek originals while composing his philosophical works should be obvious in a bilingual author who had to think hard about translating Greek terms and expressions into Latin. In the case of some Stoic definitions, for example, one can show from the surviving fragments of the early Stoics that Cicero is closely following a Stoic source (see last pages of this article).

Cicero was aware of the limitations of Latin – at the time virtually a provincial language – as against Greek with its centuries-old literary tradition. Yet he was not unaware of the potential of Latin as a language of philosophy.<sup>12</sup> By the time he wrote *De Divinatione*, in March 44, and with 6–7 of his philosophical works already in circulation, he could even claim that he and some other Romans who wrote philosophical works with his encouragement 'were not lagging behind the Greeks even in the abundance of their words'.<sup>13</sup> Throughout the short period of intense philosophical writing Cicero was constantly aware of the need to find adequate Latin terms for the Greek philosophical terms which his sources used, to invent new terms, or to paraphrase where there was no adequate Latin equivalent for a Greek term (see *Academicus Primus* 2.4; *De Finibus* 3.15). In a crucial passage, *De Finibus* 3.15, he provides us with a basic classification of Latin renderings of Greek terms. First, there is a literal (and usually etymological) translation:

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esse pateremur, qui non Latinis litteris inlustratus pateret. quod enim munus rei publicae adferre maius meliusve possumus, quam si docemus atque erudimus iuventutem...?

<sup>9</sup> Cicero mentions C. Amafinius the Epicurean, and 'many imitators of Amafinius', who wrote works of Epicurean philosophy which were popular for a while (*Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.7; *Academicus Primus* 5–6). It is – and will probably remain – an open question why Cicero does not mention Lucretius. Jerome's report that Cicero prepared for publication Lucretius' poem, left by him on his death, has been confirmed by A. E. Housman, 'The First Editor of Lucretius', *Classical Review* 42, 1928, pp. 122–123, repr. in J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear (edd.), *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman*, Cambridge 1972, vol. III, pp. 1153–1155.

<sup>10</sup> Such as Caerellia, "burning with a desire for philosophy" (*studio... philosophiae flagrans*): *Att.* 13.20.5.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., his request of Atticus to send him from Rome to his house in Tusculum some books by Dicaearchus: *Att.* 13.31.2; 32.2; 33.2.

<sup>12</sup> *Pro Archia* 23 (62 BCE): Nam si quis minorem gloriae fructum putat ex Graecis versibus percipi quam ex Latinis, vehementer errat, propterea quod Graeca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus, Latina suis finibus, exiguis sane, continentur. *Tusculanae Disputationes* 1.1 (45 BCE): ... cum omnium artium, quae ad rectam vivendi viam pertinerent, ratio et disciplina studio sapientiae, quae philosophia dicitur, contineretur, hoc mihi Latinis litteris inlustrandum putavi, non quia philosophia Graecis et litteris et doctoribus percipi non posset, sed meum semper iudicium fuit omnia nostros aut invenisse per se sapientius quam Graecos aut accepta ab illis fecisse meliora, quae quidem digna statuissent, in quibus elaborarent.

<sup>13</sup> *De Natura Deorum* 1.8: Quo in genere tantum profecisse videamur, ut a Graecis ne verborum quidem copia vinceremur.

*verbum e verbo*; then there is the case of a Latin word which is not a literal translation of the Greek word, but is preferable since it has the same meaning or range of meanings: *verbum quod idem declarat*; then there are Greek words which have no adequate Latin counterparts and have to be paraphrased in Latin: *quod uno Graeci... id pluribus verbis exponere*.<sup>14</sup> In what follows, I shall discuss some passages which illustrate each of these categories of translation.

At *Academicus Primus* 24,<sup>15</sup> we have the example of a new Latin word which we have briefly mentioned before: *qualitas*. In a passage of what remains of the philosophical dialogue<sup>16</sup> *Academicus Primus*, the speaker Marcus Varro suggests that the Greek word *ποιότης* should be translated as *qualitas*.<sup>17</sup> What we have here is a fairly clear case of a translation *verbum e verbo* in the strictest sense: an etymological translation. The Greek adjective *ποιός* is the literal equal of the Latin *qualis*,<sup>18</sup> and thus the noun *ποιότης* derived from *ποιός* can be rendered etymologically in Latin

<sup>14</sup> *De Finibus* 3.15: {Cato:} ... nam cum in Graeco sermone haec ipsa quondam rerum nomina novarum inveniebantur\* quae nunc consuetudo diuturna trivit: quid censes in Latino fore? {Cicero:} Facillimum id quidem est ... Si enim Zenoni licuit, cum rem aliquam invenisset inusitatam, inauditum quoque ei rei nomen imponere, cur non Catoni? nec tamen exprimi verbum e verbo necesse erit, ut interpretes indiserti solent, cum sit verbum quod idem declarat magis usitatum; equidem soleo etiam quod uno Graeci, si aliter non possum, id pluribus verbis exponere...

{Cato:} For, if in Greek there was a time when these new words themselves were invented for new ideas, and now they have become trite with constant use, what do you think will happen in Latin? {Cicero:} This is quite easy... For if it was permitted to Zeno, whenever he had found out some unconventional idea, to apply an unheard-of name to it, why should it not be permitted to Cato? Nor is there a need to translate word for word, as some uncouth interpreters are accustomed to do, when there is {in Latin} a more common word which expresses the same idea.\*\* I am also accustomed, whenever there is a Greek word which cannot be translated into one Latin word, to translate it into a number of words.\*\*\*

\* My emendation for the manuscripts' reading *non videbantur*: see my article 'Cicero, De Finibus III, 15', *Elenchos, Rivista di studi sul pensiero antico*, XXXIII, 2012, pp. 109–114.

\*\* E.g., Greek *μαντική* – literally 'prophecy' – is translated by the common Latin word *divinatio*, something like 'sacred guessing', which refers, in everyday Latin, to the same practice.

\*\*\* E.g., Greek *ἠθική* – 'ethics' in our modern languages – had not yet, at the time of Cicero, a one-word Latin equivalent. Cicero paraphrases it as *ratio de vita et moribus*. On this and related issues see my article 'Cicero's Remarks...' (note 5 above), esp. pp. 52–56.

<sup>15</sup> *Academicus Primus* 24: {Varro:} ... sed quod ex utroque, id iam corpus et quasi qualitatem quandam nominabant – dabitis enim profecto ut in rebus inusitatis, quod Graeci ipsi faciunt a quibus haec iam diu tractantur, utamur verbis interdum inauditis? 'nos vero', inquit Atticus, 'quin etiam Graecis licebit utare cum voles, si te Latina forte deficient.' {Varro:} Bene sane facis, sed enitar ut Latine loquar, nisi in huiusce modi verbis ut philosophiam aut rhetoricam aut physicam aut dialecticam appellem, quibus ut aliis multis consuetudo iam utitur pro Latinis. qualitates igitur appellavi quas *ποιότητες* Graeci vocant, quod ipsum apud Graecos non est vulgi verbum sed philosophorum...

{Varro:} ... But what consists of both {the active power and matter}, this they called body and, so to speak, *qualitas*: surely you will allow me to act like the Greeks, who have been dealing with these issues for a long time, and use unheard-of words to designate uncommon things. {Atticus:} Of course we allow you; but you may also use Greek words whenever you feel like it, when Latin words are not at hand. {Varro:} This is good of you; but I shall do my best to speak Latin, except in the case of such words as *philosophia*, *rhetorica*, *physica*, *dialectica*, where, as in many other cases, habit has made us use them as Latin words. Thus I have called *qualitates* what the Greeks call *ποιότητες*, a noun which also among the Greeks is not an everyday word but a philosophical term.

<sup>16</sup> All of Cicero's philosophical works, apart from *De Officiis*, are written in dialogue form.

<sup>17</sup> Powell (note 2 above, p. 295), suggests that one could conclude from the context and the history of the composition of this work that it was indeed the historical Varro who coined this Latin word. I am not entirely convinced: see his note 48 on that page. But see also Cicero, *Ad Familiares* 9.8.1.

<sup>18</sup> Here, English has no *verbum e verbo* equivalent, and our Greek and Latin dictionaries paraphrase *ποιός* and *qualis*

as *qualitas*. Varro of the dialogue adds that, just as *qualitas* in Latin is new and technical, so also in Greek ποιότης “is not an everyday word but a philosophical term”. Here – and this is one reason why I have chosen this particular example – our Greek sources confirm what Varro of Cicero’s dialogue says. In Plato’s *Theaetetus* 182a7–b2, Socrates of the dialogue, explaining a point to Theodorus, virtually apologizes for using the abstract and general concept ποιότης, which “may appear . . . to be an outlandish name”. This implies that this word was new to ‘Theodorus’ – that is, to readers of Plato’s dialogue. One suspects that this is Plato’s way of telling the reader that this word is his own innovation. This suspicion is supported by a later Greek reader of the dialogue, the so-called *Anonymous Prolegomena to Plato*, dated by the experts to the late fifth or early sixth century CE. In his chapter 5 (as in modern printed editions), our anonymous Platonist ascribes the invention of the term ποιότης to Plato, quoting (with small variations, obviously from memory) our passage of *Theaetetus*.<sup>19</sup> What matters to us, however, is that here one could create a Latin word by using the same word-formation as in Greek, and basing it on a Latin equivalent of the Greek basic term.

Now a slightly more technical note for those who have done some work on Stoic texts. It is true that *Academicus Primus* 24 is part of ‘Varro’s’ exposition of what he regards as the philosophy held in common by the early Academics and the Peripatetics (as he has explained in §§ 16–18); yet “what consists of the ‘active power’ (*efficiens*) and of the passive element, the body or matter (*corpus*)” is in no way ποιότης or *qualitas* either in the Platonic dialogues or in the works of Aristotle. As J. S. Reid explains in his commentary on this sentence,<sup>20</sup> ‘Varro’ is really referring to the Stoic ποιός, which is precisely the Stoic term for this or that individual ‘substance’ (in the Aristotelian sense of substance, οὐσία πρώτη). This would imply that, although *qualitas* is indeed a *verbum e verbo* translation of ποιότης, in our context it is made to translate a different Greek term. Why, then, does Cicero make this ‘mistake’? Or is it a mistake? One can give no certain answer to such a question, but I may, perhaps, offer a conjecture. In Greek, one can use a term like ποιός in the neuter as a noun, τὸ ποιόν. This is where Greek has the advantage of turning an adjective into a noun by adding the definite article.<sup>21</sup> Latin does not have this means, and one cannot simply use *quale* as if it were a noun. One is therefore reduced to using the noun – in this case the newly-coined *qualitas* – also in place of the nominal adjective.

We now proceed to two examples where a literal and etymological translation (*verbum e verbo*), although it is possible to have one, will not render the proper meaning of the Greek concept. In both cases, Cicero opts for a Latin word which has the same meaning, although it is not etymologically similar to the Greek concept.

In our first example, the Greek word to be translated is κακία, which in Greek philosophical

as “of a certain nature, kind, or quality”, and the like.

<sup>19</sup> *Anonymous Prolegomena to Plato* ch. 5: καὶ πολλῶν τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἐγένετο εὐρέτης, ὀνομάτων καὶ πραγμάτων καὶ εἶδους συγγραφῆς. ὀνομάτων μὲν τῆς ποιότητος· οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸ τούτου ἐγινώσκετο τοῦνομα· ἀμέλει ἐν Θεαιτήτῳ φησὶ πρὸς Θεόδωρον ποιῶν τὸν Σωκράτην διαλεγόμενον καὶ λέγοντα ὅτι ἴσως μὲν οὖν τὸ τῆς ποιότητος ξένον σοι δόξειεν καὶ οὐκ εἰωθός.

<sup>20</sup> *M. Tulli Ciceronis Academica*, The text revised and explained by James S. Reid, London 1885 (repr. Olms 1984), p. 126, note on *qualitatem*.

<sup>21</sup> Some Renaissance and post-Renaissance Classical scholars used the bilingual device ‘τὸ *quale*’, ‘τὸ *dicere*’ and the like to render this construction in Latin.

terminology is the opposite of ἀρετή, virtue.<sup>22</sup> Without going into possible Latin etymologies, Greek ἀρετή has been rendered in Latin by *virtus* ever since the beginning of Latin literature.<sup>23</sup> In Greek, ἀρετή is the noun corresponding etymologically to the adjective ἀγαθός, ‘good’, and its opposite, κακία, is the etymological counterpart of the adjective κακός, ‘bad, evil’. While *virtus* had been part and parcel of Latin usage for centuries, its Greek opposite, κακία, did not have a very widespread Latin rendering. A literal etymological translation would be *malitia*, from *malus*, ‘bad, evil’, the counterpart of Greek κακός. The dictionaries refer us to one or two places in Plautus where *malitia* is indeed ‘badness’, and to Sallust, *Jugurtha* 22.2, where we have *virtute, non malitia*. Seneca, in his Epistle 106.9, has ... *quidquid facimus aut malitiae aut virtutis gerimus imperio* (... whatever we do, we act on the command of *malitia* or of *virtus*). And earlier in the same Epistle (6–7) he has *malitia et species eius omnes, malignitas, invidia, superbia* – where again *malitia* includes vices other than ‘malice’ in our sense. Cicero himself, at *De Natura Deorum* 3.75, forgetting what he has written in our passages, has *est autem malitia versuta et fallax ratio nocendi* (for *malitia* is a crafty and deceitful way of causing harm). But in our passages, and in a number of others,<sup>24</sup> he uses *vitium*, which is not an etymological counterpart of Greek κακία, in preference to *malitia*, and he explains why. From our two passages, and from one or two other passages of Cicero, widely quoted in the dictionaries, it appears that by the time of Cicero *malitia* had already acquired, at least in everyday usage (but after all, this is exactly *consuetudo nostra*), the more limited sense which it has now in English and French, that of ‘malice’. Malice, however, is only one vice, one κακία, among many, and it cannot stand for all vices. One has to find a more adequate translation in accordance with Latin usage. Here Cicero has alighted on *vitium*, ‘flaw, shortcoming’. This may be somewhat wider than κακία, but here the etymological connection of *vitium* with *vitupero*, ‘to blame, find fault with’, seems to help. At least the proposed Latin term has an etymological connection which shows that it includes much more than one particular ‘vice’. Modern philosophical terminology, at least in English and French, has adopted ‘vice’ as the opposite of ‘virtue’.

In our second example, we have another Greek word which can be translated literally into

<sup>22</sup> a. *De Finibus* 3.39–40: {Cato:} ... turpes actiones, quae oriuntur e vitiis, quas enim κακίας Graeci appellant, vitia malo quam malitias nominare. {Cicero:} ... virtutibus igitur rectissime mihi videris et ad consuetudinem nostrae orationis vitia posuisse contraria. quod enim vituperabile est per se ipsum id eo ipso vitium nominatum puto, vel etiam a vitio dictum vituperari. sin κακίαν malitiam dixisses, ad aliud nos unum certum vitium consuetudo Latina traduceret. nunc omni virtuti vitium contrario nomine opponitur.

{Cato:} ... odious actions which originate in vices (*vitia*), which the Greeks call κακία. I prefer to call them vices (*vitia*) rather than acts of malice (*malitiae*). {Cicero:} ... To [moral] virtues you seem to me to have rightly, and in accordance with our [Latin] usage, opposed vices (*vitia*) as their contraries. For I believe that what is blame-worthy (*vituperabile*) in itself should, for this reason, be called vice (*vitium*), or – the other way round – that being blameworthy (*vituperari*) is derived from vice (*vitium*). If, however, you translated κακία as malitia, Latin usage would make us think of one certain vice. As it is now, vice (*vitium*) is opposed to each and every virtue.

b. *Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.34: huius igitur virtutis contraria est vitiositas – sic enim malo quam malitiam appellare eam quam Graeci κακίαν appeallant; nam malitia certi cuiusdam vitii nomen est, vitiositas omnium.

The contrary of this kind of virtue [= moral virtue] is vice (*vitiositas*, “viceness”) – for I prefer to call by this name, rather than by the name of malice (*malitia*), that which the Greeks call κακία. For malice (*malitia*) is the name of one individual vice, while vice (*vitiositas*, “viceness”) is the name for all of them.

<sup>23</sup> It is also common in early inscriptions, especially in epitaphs: see Alfred Ernout, *Recueil de textes latines archaïques*, Paris 1946 and reprints, 12b3; 14.3; 15.1; 17b1 et al.

<sup>24</sup> E.g. *Academicus Primus* 15; *Lucullus* 39.

Latin, but if this is done, it would give it in Latin a meaning which is restricted to the ethical outlook of one particular school of philosophy.<sup>25</sup> The word to be translated is *πάθη*, the plural of *πάθος*. In Greek, *πάθος* signifies any passive state or conduct. It comes from the verb *πάσχω* which, beside the more specific sense of suffering, refers to any action or situation in which the subject of this verb and its cognates is at the receiving end.<sup>26</sup> But in what we can call Greek psychological vocabulary, this noun and its cognates came to signify what, in later Latin and in English philosophical terminology, used to be called *affectiones* / *affections*:<sup>27</sup> “motions of the mind which do not obey reason”, as in our passage. Here we have a surprise. The literal translation, we are told by Cicero, would be *morbi*, ‘diseases’. But hold, the ancient Greek word for ‘disease’ is *νόσος*, not *πάθος*. Not entirely. In classical Greek, this is usually so; but even there, *πάθος* is beginning to encroach on *νόσος*. In the Hippocratic corpus, the proper word for disease is still *νόσος* or *νόσημα*; but we do have *πάθος* as ‘affection’ in a number of places,<sup>28</sup> as well as a whole work called *Περὶ τῶν ἐντὸς παθῶν*, “On Internal Affections”; and *παθήματα* are ‘symptoms’.<sup>29</sup> In medical works of the second century CE onwards we already find the word *πάθος* used not infrequently in the proper sense of ‘disease’, and the word *παθολογία*, originally ‘the discipline of identifying symptoms’, is now ‘the discipline of classifying diseases [by means of symptoms]’ – ‘pathology’ in our sense. What Cicero inadvertently tells us here is that this sense of *πάθος* as ‘disease’ was already the usual meaning of the word in the spoken Greek of his time. This should not surprise us, since in Stoic terminology *πάθος* is used at least as frequently as *νόσος* to describe diseases both of body and mind. When it comes to the ‘affections’ of the soul, the Stoics almost invariably use *πάθη*. Like almost everything in the Stoic cosmos, these *πάθη* are corporeal, and they reside in the heart, the place of the ‘leading principle’, the *ἡγεμονικόν*. Indeed, they are diseases of the *ἡγεμονικόν*, caused by wrong opinions. A Stoic like Seneca, in the Epistle we have just mentioned, 106.6, describes some constant and irreparable vices such as avarice and cruelty

<sup>25</sup> a. *De Finibus* 3.35: nec vero perturbationes animorum, quae vitam insipientium miseram acerbamque reddunt (quas Graeci *πάθη* appellant; poteram ego verbum ipsum interpretans morbos appellare, sed non conveniret ad omnia; quis enim misericordiam aut ipsam iracundiam morbum solet dicere? at illi dicunt *πάθος*; sit igitur perturbatio, quae nomine ipso vitiosa declarari videtur)...

Nor do the perturbations of the mind, which make the life of unphilosophical people miserable and bitter (and which the Greeks call *πάθη*: I could have called them ‘diseases’, translating literally the Greek word; but this would not suit all of them. For who would call compassion, or even irritation, a disease? But they call it *πάθος*; let us then make it ‘perturbation’, whose very name signifies something faulty)...

b. *Tusculanae Disputationes* 3.7: num reliquae perturbationes animi, formidines libidines iracundiae? haec enim fere sunt eius modi, quae Graeci *πάθη* appellant; ego poteram ‘morbos’, et id verbum esset e verbo, sed in consuetudinem nostram non caderet. nam misereri, invidere, gestire, laetari, haec omnia morbos Graeci appellant, motus animi rationi non obtemperantis, nos autem eosdem motus concitati animi recte, ut opinor, perturbationes dixerimus, morbos autem non satis usitate, nisi quid aliud tibi videtur.

Now what about the other perturbations of the mind, anxieties, desires, irritations? These are virtually of the kind which the Greeks call *πάθη*: I could have called them ‘diseases’, but this would not fall in with our usage. For compassion, jealousy, joyfulness, rejoicing – all these motions of the mind which do not obey reason – the Greeks call ‘diseases’, while we call all these motions of an excited mind (rightly, I think) perturbations, and we do not usually call them ‘diseases’. Or do you have in mind a better rendering?

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, τὸ πάσχω in Plato, *Theaetetus* 182a7.

<sup>27</sup> In French ‘passions’ was also used: cf. Descartes’ *Les passions de l’âme*.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. *Off.* 14; *Aer.* 22.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. *Epid.* 1.2.

as *morbi animorum*, diseases of the mind. Cicero is not a Stoic. He may be prepared to admit that vices like avarice and cruelty are diseases, or come close to being diseases; but what about compassion or rejoicing? For the Stoic, they also are *morbi animorum*, since they are, just like avarice and cruelty, “motions of the mind which do not obey reason”. Cicero here takes exception to this severe view. He is willing to admit that even compassion or rejoicing are passive states of mind, which do not obey reason, and even to classify them as ‘perturbations’. But calling them ‘diseases’ would not only constitute an acceptance of the severe Stoic view, according to which only the Sage, who lives always according to reason, is healthy, and all others, the ‘fools’ (*stulti*), are ill. It would also be contrary to Latin usage (*non satis usitate*). Here common usage in Latin supports Cicero’s wish to distance himself from the more extreme attitude of the Stoics.

We move on to a different case, of a Greek term, one word in Greek, which Cicero paraphrases rather than attempt to translate.<sup>30</sup> Strangely (for us), this is a basic philosophical term, one of the main parts of philosophy: logic, *λογική*. Rather than find one Latin word for it, Cicero prefers to mention the Greek word, but have it then paraphrased in various ways rather than translated. One may wonder why. After all, *physicus*, *physica* or *physice*, as well as *dialecticus*, *dialectica*, and *dialectice*, are not infrequent in Cicero, as a look at Merguet’s lexica will show. We remember that in *Academicus Primus* 24 we had a list of Greek words which had become ‘naturalized’ in Latin through long and constant use. The examples there are *philosophia*, *retorica*, *physica*, *dialectica*. They include, apart from ‘philosophy’ itself, one of the three main divisions of philosophy, physics, and the two subdivisions of logic, rhetoric and dialectic. Why not have logic itself? Could it be that Cicero was not prepared to use as a Latin word a Greek word which had not been ‘naturalized by usage’ – just as Cato of that passage will ‘do his best to speak Latin’ in such cases – but found it unusually difficult to have a *verbum e verbo* translation? After all, it could not be easy to create an etymological equivalent to ‘the art of λόγος’, where λόγος has the specialized sense of reasoning systematically and speaking with reason. Anyway, is *λογική* the art of inquiry and expression, as in our first passage, or of expression only, as in our second passage – or does it consist “in reasoning and expression”? And does not the art of expression, *ratio disserendi*, belong equally, if not more so, to rhetoric? And since *dialectica* had already been ‘naturalized’ in Latin, and in many contexts it can stand for ‘logic’, it may well be that Cicero did not feel any urgency about translating *λογική* as well.

If we turn to the third major division of philosophy, *ἠθική*, ethics, we find again that Cicero prefers to paraphrase it in Latin rather than attempt to translate it. At *Academicus Primus* 19, it is *ratio de vita et moribus*, ‘the study of life and manners’ (or ‘ways of behaviour’). Later in the same paragraph it is *pars... bene vivendi*, ‘that part [of philosophy] which deals with the good life’. These expressions reappear in various other works. It is only in the first paragraph of *De Fato* that Cicero suggests that *deceat augentem linguam Latinam nominare moralem [philosophiam]* – ‘that one

<sup>30</sup> a. *De Finibus* 1.22: iam in altera philosophiae parte, quae est quaerendi ac disserendi, quae *λογική* dicitur...  
As to the other part of philosophy, which consists in inquiring and expression, and which is called *λογική*...  
b. *De Fato* 1.1: ... totaque est *λογική*, quam rationem disserendi voco.  
... and there is the whole of *λογική*, which I call the method of expression.  
Compare *Academicus Primus* 30: tertia deinde philosophiae pars, quae erat in ratione et in disserendo...  
Then the third part of philosophy, which consists in reasoning and expression...

should, in order to enrich the Latin language, call it ‘moral philosophy’. But, as noted by Reid,<sup>31</sup> Cicero does not make use of this suggestion, and it is only when we reach Seneca and Quintilian that *moralis philosophia* becomes the usual term. It must have been easier, of course, to find an etymological translation for this term, since ἡθικὴ is derived from ἦθος, one of whose main Latin renderings is *mos*.<sup>32</sup> In any case, one should not, perhaps, put too much pressure on Cicero. He has done a great deal to enrich the Latin language. Nobody can do everything, especially in the brief space of under two years. As Powell points out, even a simple Greek word like φυτά, plants, is usually paraphrased by Cicero as *ea res quae gignuntur e terra*, those things which come out of the earth.<sup>33</sup> Having seen Cicero at work in cases where the Latin translation would make a crucial difference to the philosophical meaning, we can forgive him where he paraphrases rather than invent new words. After all, a paraphrase can always be a safer way of conveying your meaning.

These are, as I said, only a few examples which may enable us to obtain a clearer picture of some of the problems with which Cicero had to grapple in creating a philosophical vocabulary in Latin to match, as far as possible, the Greek terminology. We have already asked the question as to the prospective readers of his works. As we see in two passages mentioned above,<sup>34</sup> Cicero intended his works as a contribution to Latin literature and to the education of young Romans. We have also seen one example where Cicero speaks of creating a new expression in order to enlarge, or enrich the Latin language.<sup>35</sup> Can one assume that Cicero had some prospective readership in mind which went beyond his own age and country?

The idea that works of literature are likely to remain for many generations, or for ever, is not all that common among ancient writers. Thucydides (1.22) claims that his work has been composed (ξύγκειται) as “a possession for all time” (κτῆμα ἐς αἰεῖ). Horace, in the majestic final Ode 30 of Book III asserts that his poetry will make him live on as long as the High Pontiff ascends Capitol Hill with a Vestal Virgin following him. Neither of them – however much they knew of the vicissitudes of history – could have imagined that their works would be read and studied in the course of the centuries in countries as remote as England, America or Japan, and that their languages would make a substantial contribution to Italian, French, Russian or modern Hebrew. Nor could Cicero have imagined that the vocabulary he created in order to enable Greek philosophy to speak Latin would pass on, through Latin when it became the international language of Western Europe, into such outlandish languages as English, French or German. Yet one might say that this philosophical vocabulary may well be regarded as Cicero’s abiding contribution to philosophy. His philosophical writings, even after most of them were rediscovered during the Renaissance, have remained part of philosophical and Classical research and education, hardly reaching the general public – with the one outstanding exception of *De Officiis* – “Tully’s Offices”, as the work came to be known with affection among educated Englishmen – which, until the nineteenth century, was regarded as an essential part of the education of a European gentleman. Today even

<sup>31</sup> (Note 20 above), p. 116, on *de vita et moribus*.

<sup>32</sup> The Greek expression τὰ παλαιὰ ἦθη is in Latin *mores antiqui*. As Ennius has it in the first book of his *Annales*, *Moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque* (Fr. 156 Skutsch). And one only has to mention Cicero’s own *O tempora, o mores!*

<sup>33</sup> Powell (note 2 above), p. 293.

<sup>34</sup> See note 8 above.

<sup>35</sup> See note 31 above and context.

most philosophers, unless they specialize in ancient philosophy, hardly read Cicero's works. In most departments of philosophy in the West today, students are expected to know their own language – and English if it is not their own language. Greek and Latin are no longer available in most schools, and in some universities they no longer exist even at beginners' level. Even some departments of Classics teach everything in English translation these days, up to the final year of the BA. *Tam saeva et infesta virtutibus tempora*. As to introductory courses to ancient philosophy, in most universities they cover the period from Thales to Aristotle; and if some post-Aristotelian philosophy is taught, it is usually done out of general compilations of bits and pieces of the various sources, such as A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley's *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, or Brad Inwood and Lloyd P. Gerson's *Hellenistic Philosophy*, where Cicero, Stobaeus, Seneca, Plutarch, Philo of Alexandria and others all appear as authors of passages. As if all these extant authors 'wrote fragments' (as some of my students used to say of the Presocratics). One is full of admiration for the heroic efforts of some teachers in departments of philosophy who read with their students – be it only in translation – a continuous work of Cicero. Few of these students, even if they do read some Latin, have any idea of the difficulties which were facing Cicero as he transferred much of his contemporary Greek philosophy into Latin literature, and his frequent struggles to find or create the right word in Latin. But most students of philosophy – and of literature in general – reading texts in a Western language encounter on every page philosophical concepts created for the first time by Cicero, and in Latin – although most of them do not even suspect it.

In an **appendix**, I have given only a few examples, out of dozens, of such Ciceronian Latin concepts which have survived into modern Western languages. Some of them have kept their original meaning; some have extended or restricted the original sense to include more or less than what was intended by the Greek philosophers and by Cicero; some have changed the original meaning in one way or another. Let us look at some of these examples.

First, the two easier ones, *qualitas* and *quantitas*. With a few small structural changes, they have survived into English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and a few other languages, retaining the original meaning which they had for Cicero, and which corresponded with their Greek originals, *ποιότης* and *ποσότης*. Plato's first readers (see again Plato, *Theaetetus* 182a7–b2) may have found the abstract *ποιότης* somewhat outlandish; but, thanks to the creators of philosophical terms such as Plato himself, Aristotle, and the Stoics; to popularizers of philosophy like Cicero himself, and to generations of institutional philosophical education, most educated readers no longer find such abstract words too difficult to comprehend. Indeed, one may suspect that much of today's general 'discourse', including comments in newspapers, abounds in abstract concepts, very often far beyond what is necessary.

An example of the widening of the original sense of a Greek term is *comprehensio*. In modern languages, 'comprehension' and cognates is used for any kind of understanding: "I cannot comprehend his message", "his English is incomprehensible", and the like. In a more limited and technical sense, 'comprehension' has come to signify understanding the meaning of a written text. Cicero employed the verb *comprehendo* and the noun *comprehensio*, among other Latin alternatives (such as *cognitio* and *perceptio*) to translate the Stoic term *κατάληψις*. For the Stoic, this is the action of our mind when it 'catches', or 'grasps', properly something conveyed to it by the senses. All our other mental processes depend on our proper 'catching' of what is in the outside world. Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, who most probably coined this technical term,

used to illustrate this sense by clenching his fist, as if the thing ‘caught’ from our sense-perception was now safe and certain. (See *Lucullus* 145). Cicero’s ‘Varro’ explains to us at *Academicus Primus* 41 that *comprehendibile* is his rendering of καταληπτόν. He then derives another new word from the same root, *comprehensio*, and uses the simile of the clenched hand. I shall not go into the technicalities of Stoic epistemology, but it should be clear by now, I hope, that Cicero’s *comprehensio* is not our modern ‘comprehension’, but something far more technical and limited.

Another term is an example of an extension of the original meaning. From Cicero’s adjective *veri simile*, ‘something similar to the truth’, modern English has derived the noun ‘verisimile’, used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and now obsolete, and ‘verisimilitude’, which now means a likeness, a likelihood, a possibility. Cicero, as I have shown in an article many years ago,<sup>36</sup> used *veri simile* to translate the Greek εἰκός in a very technical sense which was probably given it in the Academy under the headship of Carneades, in the second century BCE: a philosophical notion or argument which even a member of the Academy, which at the time maintained a sceptical attitude towards everything, would find more convincing than its philosophical rivals, and would therefore adopt it as his own temporary (*in diem*, ‘unto the day’) philosophical position. A similar extension of meaning has happened to Cicero’s *probabile*. In our modern languages it means ‘probable’, something which has a good chance of being true. Cicero uses it to translate Greek πιθανόν, literally ‘convincing’: another Academic term, this time for something which, having been perceived by the senses more than once and checked in its context, seems to the Academic – again, for the time being – to be a proper representation of something real existing in the outside world. It is nothing like the safe and certain Stoic ‘comprehension’, but it is at least something to go by in relating to the world outside us. In modern languages, the more limited sense of *probabile* has been broadened to include anything, in the world of the senses or of the intellect, which is likely to be true or real.

Of the other examples, ‘temperance’ is still used in literary texts as one of the many translations of the untranslatable Greek σωφροσύνη, a virtue which consists of self-knowledge combined with self-limitation and self-control. Cicero himself found it difficult to decide on the proper translation of this Greek word, and he tells us about his waverings in *Tusculans* 3.16–18. He had translated it variably as *temperantia*, *moderatio*, and *modestia*, but now, he says, he would prefer *frugalitas*. In fact, he continues to use mostly *temperantia*, essentially ‘self-control’ or ‘nothing in excess’. This has been one of the more usual renderings of Greek σωφροσύνη in Western languages. In English, however, ‘temperance’ has come to designate moderation in consuming alcoholic drinks, and a hospital which existed in London until ten years or so ago for the treatment of alcoholics was called The London Temperance Hospital.

Time is short, and I shall only analyse one more example of a surviving concept which has changed its meaning. *Individuum* is one of Cicero’s renderings of the Epicurean (and Democritean) ἄτομον.<sup>37</sup> It is a good example of a literal etymological translation, *verbum e verbo*: In Greek the negative α preceded an ending taken from τέμνω / τομή, ‘to cut or divide / cutting or division’. In Cicero’s Latin the negative ‘in’ precedes a derivative of *divido*, to divide. But in modern languages we have reverted to the Greek word to signify ‘atom’ in nature, while ‘individuum’

<sup>36</sup> John Glucker, ‘Probabile, veri simile and Related Terms’, in *Cicero the Philosopher* (note 2 above), pp. 115–143.

<sup>37</sup> *De Finibus* 2.75. Cf. *ibid.* 1.17–18 and *Academicus Primus* 6.

or ‘individual’ have come to signify one single human being. (Today’s Greek is here at some disadvantage. It does not have the choice between the original Greek term and its Ciceronian Latin counterpart, and *ἄτομο* is used both for an atom and for an individual.)

Having seen how much work Cicero had to invest in creating his philosophical vocabulary, and how difficult it was to render always the precise meaning of a Greek term, one should now be prepared to comprehend (in our sense) how difficult it is to do justice to Cicero’s philosophical works when one can read them only in translation. Unfortunately, I cannot read – not to mention judge – translations into Japanese, and I shall have to make do with English. Let me give one example of a rather technical passage from Cato’s exposition of Stoic ethics in Book 3 of *De Finibus*:

concluduntur igitur eorum argumenta sic: quod est bonum, omne laudabile est; quod autem laudabile est, omne est honestum; bonum igitur quod est, honestum est... illud autem perabsurdum, bonorum esse aliquid quod non expetendum sit, aut expetendum quod non placens... (3.27)

Here is Harris Rackham’s not very fortunate Loeb translation:

They {the Stoics} put their arguments in the following syllogistic form: Whatever is good is praiseworthy; but whatever is praiseworthy is morally honourable; therefore that which is good is morally honourable... But it would be paradoxical to say that there is something good which is not desirable; or something desirable which is not pleasing...

A passage of Plutarch, quoting Chrysippus, would show us that what Cicero’s Cato says in the passage of *De Finibus* is a somewhat disorganized version of the classical Stoic argument demonstrating that only that which is *καλόν* is *ἀγαθόν*:

*De stoicorum Repugnantibus* 13, 1039c (*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* III, 29, p. 9): καὶ μὴν ἐν τῷ Περὶ Καλοῦ πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν τοῦ μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι τοιούτοις λόγοις κέχρηται {ὁ Χρύσιππος}. Τὸ ἀγαθὸν αἰρετόν· τὸ δ’ αἰρετόν ἀρεστόν· τὸ δ’ ἀρεστόν ἐπαινετόν· τὸ δ’ ἐπαινετόν καλόν.

I have left these terms as they are in the original Greek, since Cicero’s rendering of both of them can hardly do justice to the range of meanings of the Greek words and to the historical significance of what the Stoics did here. A passage of Plato, to which I add references to the usage of other sources, and three passages of Stobaeus, should help us understand some of the background:

Plato, *Gorgias* 474c9–d2: ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ. Μανθάνω· οὐ ταῦτόν ἡγῆσθαι σὺ, ὡς ἔοικας, καλόν τε καὶ ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν καὶ αἰσχρόν· ΠΩΛΟΣ. Οὐ δῆτα.

Cf. *Dissoi Logoi* 1–2, and Menander, *Epilepentes* 263–269; *Samia* 98–101; Fragment 264 Sandbach (= 319 Kock) 1–8.

Stobaeus, *Ecloga* p. 75, 1 W (= *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* III, 131, p. 32): αἰρετόν μὲν γὰρ εἶναι τὸ ὁρμητὴς αὐτοτελοῦς κινητικόν.

Stobaeus, *Ecloga* II, p. 86, 17 ff. (= *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* III, 169, p. 40): τὸ δὲ κινεῖν τὴν ὀρμὴν οὐδὲν ἕτερον εἶναι λέγουσιν {οἱ Στωικοί} ἢ φαντασίαν ὀρμητικὴν τοῦ καθήκοντος αὐτόθεν.

Stobaeus, *Ecloga* II, p. 72, 16 ff. (= *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* III, 109, p. 26): ὅποσα μὲν οὖν οὐδενὸς ἄλλου ἔνεκεν εἰς εὐλογον αἵρεσιν ἔρχεται, δι' αὐτὰ αἰρετά· ὅποσα δὲ τῷ ἑτέρων τινῶν παρασκευαστικά, κατὰ τὸ ποιητικὸν λέγεσθαι.

It is difficult to explain in translation exactly what happens here: after all, this is an example of the *inadequacy* of a translation. But I shall try.

Rackham's English translation has here "that which is good is morally honourable". This is a 'plain' translation of Cicero's *bonum... quod est, honestum est*, which forgets (in this particular context, not elsewhere) that in Greek, as the Stoics had it, *μόνον* τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθόν ἐστι: *only* the morally honourable is good. In any case, if we understand Rackham's translation in the light of today's philosophical English, this would seem to be a truism: what we call 'good' is usually good and right in the moral sense. Thus, in Rackham's translation, this may appear like signifying that "only the morally right is morally honourable". But why should anyone question such a statement, or why does it require a proof?

Even Cicero's original Latin (itself a translation, of course) can hardly do justice to the Stoic terminology and its background. What Cicero renders as *bonum*, good, is in Greek ἀγαθόν. When we first learn Greek we are told, of course, that ἀγαθόν means 'good'. But 'good' has notoriously more than one sense. Even in today's English we sometimes use 'good' not in a moral sense: 'apples are good for your health'; 'the dinner was very good'; 'he is good for nothing', and the like. In fourth-century Greek, ἀγαθόν was very often used in the sense of something which is 'good for me' – and can be bad for you or even for everyone else. We happen to have some chapters of a treatise written by an anonymous sophist or pupil of sophists around the year 400 BCE. It is included in most collections of the remains of the Presocratics.<sup>38</sup> We do not even have the name of this torso, so one usually calls it by the first two words in the surviving text, *Δισσοὶ λόγοι* – something like 'Claims and counter-claims'. The first chapter is titled (in the treatise's Doric) *Περὶ ἀγαθῶ καὶ κακῶ* – 'On good and evil'. If we look at the examples used there by our anonymous author, it is clear that these are in no way moral goods and evils: death is bad for the deceased but good for the grave-digger; illness is bad for the sick but good for the physician; defeat in war was bad for the Athenians but good for the Lacedaemonians (who won). In all these cases, 'good' is what is useful or pleasant to someone, and harmful or unpleasant to someone else – with no moral connotations. What is morally good or bad should be good or bad for everyone, without exception. At the end of our *Gorgias* passage, I refer to a number of passages in the surviving comedies of Menander where ἀγαθόν is clearly used in this utilitarian and morally neutral sense. I have chosen Menander since he was a contemporary of Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, and his texts are evidence that even at that time, the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BCE, ἀγαθόν was still widely used in the non-moral sense. What has tilted the scales in favour of the moral sense of ἀγαθόν is probably some of the things said by the Platonic

<sup>38</sup> The standard collection is still Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz (edd.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, fifth edition, 1934–1937. Our treatise is in Volume 2, pp. 405–416.

Socrates, by Aristotle, and by the Stoics, to the effect that the real good must be morally good. But Plato's Socrates is not always all that consistent – why should he be in different dialogues? In *Philebus* he comes near enough to admitting that pleasure is good. Aristotle and his followers, we remember, maintained that there were three kinds of good – the *tria genera bonorum* discussed in Book 5 of Cicero's *De Finibus*, and they include even the 'goods of the body'. The Stoic maxim we are dealing with here opposes any such compromise between moral and intellectual virtue and any other thing regarded as good by other philosophers or philosophical schools.

But what about *καλόν*? In contexts such as 'Cato's' exposition of Stoic ethics, 'morally right' may not be an altogether bad translation. The second chapter of *Δισσοὶ λόγοι* is titled *Περὶ καλοῦ καὶ αἰσχροῦ* (the Attic form as in the manuscripts). In the plain, literal, first-year-Greek sense, this would mean "on the beautiful and the ugly". But the examples given there teach us that what we are dealing with here are things which are *morally*, not aesthetically, beautiful or ugly: sexual relations between husband and wife at home are 'beautiful', while if they are done in public, they are 'ugly'; killing friends and fellow-citizens is 'ugly', but killing enemies is 'beautiful' – and the like. This sense of *καλόν* comes near enough to describing what is morally right. Cicero had a problem translating it into Latin. The Latin word for 'beautiful', *pulchrum*, would constitute a *verbum e verbo* translation of *καλόν*, but it would hardly fit in with Latin usage. Unlike the Greek *καλόν*, which can be used both in an aesthetic and in a moral sense, *pulchrum* has no moral sense in everyday Latin and in prose texts. It is rare in this sense even in poetry: see Horace, Epistle I.2.3–4 as against Satire I.2.84–5. Cicero chose *honestum*, literally 'honoured, honourable', which does have some moral connotations (although no aesthetic ones). In fact, many of the examples of *καλόν* in the second chapter of *Δισσοὶ λόγοι* could be treated as 'honoured' or 'honourable' (or our 'respected, respectable'), especially when we have examples of things which are *καλά* in one country and are not in another: among the Lacedaemonians it is *καλόν* for women to exercise naked in public, while in Athens this is *αἰσχρόν*.

This, by the way, does not imply that Rackham is right in translating *honestum* as 'morally honourable'. By the time of Cicero a Latin speaker would not consciously think of the honour connection of *honestum* unless he were pressed to do so in a conversation about language and etymology. 'Morally right' would do.

Having indicated briefly the different ranges of meaning of *καλόν*, *honestum*, and 'morally right', and of *ἀγαθόν*, *bonum*, and 'good', we can turn to our *Gorgias* passage. Socrates of Plato's *Gorgias* asks his interlocutor Polus whether he does not think that *καλόν* is the same as *ἀγαθόν*, and that *κακόν* is the same as *αἰχρόν*, and Polus admits that he does not think that they are the same. If we use the plain and 'standard' (for us!) translation, this would amount to making Polus say that what is morally right is not the same as what is good, and what is bad is not the same as what is morally wrong. But even Plato's Polus – not the most intelligent of Plato's characters – would hardly say that. In fact, Polus still uses these terms in the sense which they have in *Δισσοὶ λόγοι* and in our Menander passages. His view is that what is 'good for me' is not necessarily morally right, and what is 'bad for me' is not necessarily morally wrong. Plato's readers would understand this without any difficulty, and realize that Socrates of the dialogue, who claims that what is *ἀγαθόν* cannot ever be morally wrong and what is *κακόν* cannot ever be morally right, is the one who 'goes against the grain'. Even the Stoics, who maintained the same attitude, still felt, some decades after the publication of Plato's *Gorgias*, that they had to provide a demonstration, and this is precisely

what Chrysippus does at our Plutarch passage. Chrysippus' demonstration also involves two terms which in our Cicero passage appear in what looks like a 'supporting argument': αἰρετόν (Cicero's *expetendum*), and ἀρεστόν (Cicero's *placens*). Both of them are terms with some history in Greek thought. Cicero's renderings here are at least consistent with his renderings of these Greek terms in other contexts; but for the candid reader of the English translation, 'pleasing', and especially 'desirable' can be misleading, or at least insufficient. Finally, I have provided the experts with three passages from the anthology of the fifth-century compiler John Stobaeus, who is usually a reliable source of Stoic quotations, which would make it clear that αἰρετόν is not mere 'desirable', but something which moves our mind and obliges us to choose it, either for its own sake or for the sake of something else. It is connected with such concepts as φαντασία, ὁρμή and καθήκον, all of them technical terms in Stoic philosophy. The Greekless reader using only a translation like Rackham's may 'get the general drift' of the argument; but he will clearly miss the historical and philosophical subtleties of Chrysippus' argument.

Does this mean that, unless one can read the original one should not read at all? Far from it. As Dean Inge said, "Christ said 'Judge not': but one *must* judge". Most BA students of philosophy in most countries today can no longer be expected to read Plato in Greek, Cicero in Latin, Descartes in French and Kant in German. Even in most European countries education is no longer what it used to be when – to give one example – Hermann Diels intended the first edition (1903) of *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, where the texts are given mostly in the original Greek and Latin alone, as a textbook for first-year students of philosophy. These days, in most places, one can expect only research students to read the ancient texts in their original language and context. What we may learn from our discussion of some of the problems which faced Cicero in his translations is that no translator, be it even an entirely bilingual and exceedingly literate and intelligent translator like Cicero, can give us all the meanings and shades of meaning which we can only sense in the original. The Italian proverb *traduttore traditore*, 'the translator is a traitor', may be somewhat exaggerated; and for the sake of philosophical education and general culture translations should be available. But I hope that I have shown how dangerous it may be even to contemplate doing research on an ancient text while relying only on a translator's attempt at rendering what must always be limited only to some aspects of it.

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## Appendix

<u>Latin</u>	<u>Greek origin</u>	<u>Western</u>
qualitas	ποιότης	quality. qualité. Qualität
quantitas	ποσότης	quantity. quantité. Quantität
temperantia	σωφροσύνη	temperance. (-)
probabile	πιθανόν	probable (-)
veri simile	εἰκός	> verisimilitude
individuum	ἄτομον	individual (-)

inane	κενόν	inane (-)
evidentia	ἐνάργεια	evidence (-)
comprehensio	κατάληψις	comprehension (-)