

VS26 - Source in Vat.gr.1950 with some commentary

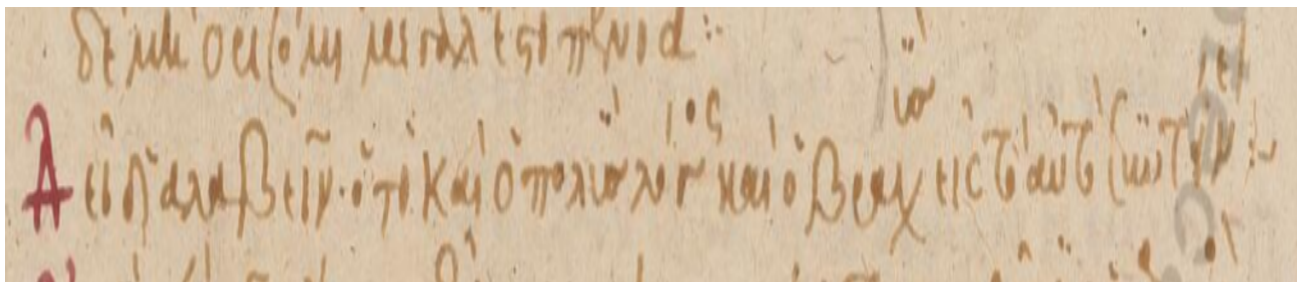
Post by "Don" of October 24, 2023 at 11:28 PM

Saint-Andre:

26. Understand that a long discourse and a short one both achieve the same result.

δεῖ διαλαβεῖν ὅτι καὶ ὁ πολὺς λόγος καὶ ὁ βραχὺς εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συντείνει.

Manuscript:



[DigiVatLib](#)

Bailey:

***XXVI. Δεῖ διαλαβεῖν ὅτι καὶ ὁ πολὺς λόγος καὶ ὁ βραχὺς εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συντείνει τέλος.**

XXVI. You must understand that whether the discourse be long or short it tends to the same end.

XXVI. This is probably an extract from a private letter and refers to the philosopher's own works.

While I don't necessarily disagree with Bailey's conclusion, I think it's important to read that commentary as "This is *probably* an extract from a private letter and *probably* refers to the philosopher's own works." NOTE that there is no τέλος in the manuscript!! Bailey includes it,

but it's not in Vat.gr.1950! The manuscript reads:

Δεῖ διαλαβεῖν ὅτι καὶ ὁ πολὺς λόγος καὶ ὁ βραχὺς εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συντείνει.

just as Saint-Andre has the transcription! Bailey adds τέλος (telos), possibly Usener added it. It doesn't seem to need it:

εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συντείνει. > εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ "to the same (place, point, thing)" and συντείνει conveys the sense of striving or putting one's energy toward something. direct earnestly toward the same place.

<https://logeion.uchicago.edu/%CF%83%CF%85%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BD%CF%89>

Post by “Cassius” of October 25, 2023 at 12:26 AM

I agree there is probably more going on here too. Isn't there a parallel reference somewhere (Lucretius?) to different birds using different types of calls? I could see potentially some context of discussion of language or even the "frank speech" issue being involved here too. I would generally expect a deeper philosophic point than Bailey seems to be accepting in order for a passage to make the cut into a collection.

Post by “Don” of October 25, 2023 at 5:16 AM

Seems to me this would be talking about epitomes and summaries vs full lectures and books, e.g., letter to Herodotus vs the books of *On Nature*.

Post by “Cassius” of October 25, 2023 at 7:11 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

Seems to me this would be talking about epitomes and summaries vs full lectures and books, e.g., letter to Herodotus vs the books of *On Nature*.

Yes I'd say it "could," but if I were collecting maxims of the golden words of Epicurus I suspect I would have found one a little more useful about pleasure or death or the gods to include, and left that one out 😊

Post by “Don” of October 25, 2023 at 7:34 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

Seems to me this would be talking about epitomes and summaries vs full lectures and books, e.g., letter to Herodotus vs the books of On Nature.

Yes I'd say it "could," but if I were collecting maxims of the golden words of Epicurus I suspect I would have found one a little more useful about pleasure or death or the gods to include, and left that one out 😊

Maybe, but I'd be interested to see how prevalent the practice of epitomes and summaries were in other contemporary philosophical schools. If other schools only advocated long discourses or long dialectical sessions, Epicurus would have to have defended the proposition that both long and short forms strive toward the same place.

Post by “Don” of October 25, 2023 at 7:55 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

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There's also VS36:

Thread

[VS36 - Source in Vat.gr.1950 and commentary](#)

Manuscript epicureanfriends.com/wcf/attachment/4199/

This "Vatican Saying" doesn't get referenced a lot. In fact, before working through the list, I don't know if I ever came across it!

Saint-Andre doesn't include it in his list as it's obviously NOT a saying of Epicurus. Here is Bailey's transcription, translation, and commentary:

Bailey

epicureanfriends.com/wcf/attachment/4200/

epicureanfriends.com/wcf/attachment/4201/

epicureanfriends.com/wcf/attachment/4202/

We're familiar with...



Don

October 23, 2023 at 10:26 PM

That's not exactly a deep philosophical insight.

Post by “Don” of October 25, 2023 at 9:15 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

collecting maxims of the golden words of Epicurus

Oh, and the Greek title of the Vatican collection of sayings is the prosaic "Epicurus's mode of speaking" as in, as I see it, "This is the kind of things Epicurus and Metrodorus would say and how they said it." Golden? You're thinking of Plato 😊

Post by “Cassius” of October 25, 2023 at 9:26 AM

HA! Not ONLY of Plato:

Lucretius Book Three¶

O Epicurus, who could first strike so clear a light from so great darkness, and direct us in the proper advantages of life, Thee, the glory of the Grecian name, I follow. Thy steps I closely trace with mine, not so much from a desire to rival thee, as from the love I bear, and the ardent passion I profess to imitate thee. For how can the swallow contend in singing with the swan? Or what can kids, with feeble limbs, perform in running with the noble horse's speed?

Thou great Father, founder of philosophy! Thou with paternal precepts dost inspire thy sons, and from thy writings, most illustrious chief, as bees such honey from the flowery fields, we feed upon thy golden sentences - golden, and fit eternally to live. For when thy reason first began to prove that Nature was not formed by powers divine, the terrors of the mind all fled, the walls of this great world lie open, and I see how things are managed through the mighty void. The deity of the gods, their calm abodes appear, which neither winds disturb, nor clouds overflow with showers, nor the white-falling snow, congealed by sharpest frost, does spoil; but the unclouded air surrounds them always, and smiles on them fully with diffused light. Nature in every thing supplies their wants; nothing at any time destroys their peace. But the wide tracts of Hell are nowhere seen, nor does the interposing Earth prevent our sight, but we discover what beneath our feet is doing in the space below. In these pursuits a certain divine pleasure spreads round me, and I stand amazed, that by thy strength of mind, all nature every way lies naked to our view.

Post by “Don” of October 25, 2023 at 9:40 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

HA! Not ONLY of Plato:



Touché, mon ami! Well played!

Post by “Cassius” of October 25, 2023 at 9:53 AM

😊 Unfortunately there was a second "golden" reference that I wanted but could not find quickly enough - the one in which Cicero describes the canon - if I recall correctly - as if let down from heaven on a golden rope. But I may be wrong about that one, and its context may have been sarcastic. 😏

EDIT: OOPS SORRY = it fell from heaven, not let down on a golden rope! 😏

[63] It was indeed excellently said by Epicurus that fortune only in a small degree crosses the wise man's path, and that his greatest and most important undertakings are executed in accordance with his own design and his own principles, and that no greater pleasure can be reaped from a life which is without end in time, than is reaped from this which we know to have its allotted end. He judged that the logic of your school possesses no efficacy either for the amelioration of life or for the facilitation of debate. He laid the greatest stress on natural science. That branch of knowledge enables us to realize clearly the force of words and the natural conditions of speech and the theory of consistent and contradictory expressions; and when we have learned the constitution of the universe we are relieved of superstition, are emancipated from the dread of death, are not agitated through ignorance of phenomena, from which ignorance, more than any thing else, terrible panics often arise ; finally, our characters will also be improved when we have learned what it is that nature craves. Then again if we grasp a firm knowledge of phenomena, and uphold that canon, which almost fell from heaven into human ken, that test to which we are to bring all our judgments concerning things, we shall never succumb to any man's eloquence and abandon our opinions.

Post by "Joshua" of October 25, 2023 at 11:22 AM

It just occurred to me that that might be a reference to the Palladium;

Quote

The Trojan Palladium was said to be a wooden image of Pallas (whom the Greeks identified with Athena and the Romans with Minerva) and to have fallen from heaven in answer to the prayer of Ilus, the founder of Troy.