

## **“SED HAEC HACTENUS: ALIA VIDEAMUS”, *DE FATO* 20<sup>1</sup>**

In the middle of section 20 Cicero says “Enough of these matters: let us consider others.” (This is the start of chapter 10 according to the larger division). The appearance of a change of topic is however deceptive. The Epicurean argument that has been challenged in 19-20a, and the Stoic argument outlined in 20b-21a, are presented by Cicero as in effect mirror images of each other, as becomes clear in 21b, and they need to be considered together. (I will throughout use expressions like “20a” for “the first part of section 20”, and so on)<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, this is not simply an issue of the structure of Cicero’s treatise, of purely internal interest; the relation between the Epicurean and Stoic arguments has in recent years played a central role in debates about the whole history of the problem of free-will and determinism in antiquity.

In section 1 of this paper I will consider recent discussions of the original significance of the Epicurean argument and the way in which Cicero may have modified it, and the wider implications this may have for the history of the free-will problem. Section 2 will be concerned with the relation between the Epicurean and the Stoic arguments as presented by Cicero, and section 3 will consider why, since Cicero presents the two arguments as in effect mirror images of each other, he nevertheless marks a transition with the words quoted at the start of this paper. In the case of section 1 and section 2 in particular discussion of Cicero’s treatment may in fact be discussion of how the material was treated by his more or less immediate source or sources, but consideration here must inevitably remain to some extent speculative.

### ***1. What was the original form of the Epicurean argument?***

Susanne Bobzien has argued that in two respects, of which the second will concern us more, Epicurus’ argument has been re-cast by Cicero, and probably already by Carneades, to make it the mirror image of the Stoic argument. First, she claims (1998a, 76-78) that the Stoics argued from the Principle of Bivalence, “every

<sup>1</sup> This is a version of the paper given in Venice on 11 July 2006, revised in the light of discussion there. I am particularly grateful to Carlos Levy, Aldo Magris, Francesca Masi, Carlo Natali, David Sedley and Hermann Weidemann for their comments, and to Carlo Natali and Stefano Maso for inviting me to speak at the conference.

<sup>2</sup> Specifically, 20b begins with *Sed haec hactenus* (the start of ch. X), 21b with *Itaque contendit omnis nervos Chrysippus*, and 23a ends with *naturalis motus avellere* (the end of ch. X).

proposition is either true or false”, while what the Epicureans denied was Excluded Middle (“either s or not-s must be true”)<sup>3</sup>. Cicero in her view has here re-cast the Epicurean argument in terms of the Principle of Bivalence in order to make the issues more similar. Her argument for this is twofold; she cites other passages in which what Cicero attributes to Epicurus is Excluded Middle<sup>4</sup>, and she notes the reference in Cicero, *fat.* 21b to “one or the other” (*alterum utrum*) of, by implication, two opposed propositions<sup>5</sup>. This first claim is persuasive; but it does not seem that it has any major *philosophical* implications<sup>6</sup>, except that the original formulation in terms of Excluded Middle provides the context for the position attributed to “the Epicureans” and ridiculed by Cicero in *fat.* 37-38, namely that “s or not-s” is true even though neither disjunct is. The importance of the first claim is rather that it alerts us to the possibility that Cicero may have changed the presentation of the argument in other respects too in order to accommodate it to his own discussion.

Bobzien’s second claim (1998a, 78-86) is that Epicurus’ argument, unlike the Stoic one, was not itself concerned with physical causation or with fate at all<sup>7</sup>, and that the reference to fate in 21b may have been added by Cicero. Again, the argument rests on the absence of reference to fate in the parallel texts in Cicero<sup>8</sup>,

<sup>3</sup> I leave aside the issues concerning whether “must be true” should be included as part of the formulation or not.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, *fat.* 37, *Acad.* 2.97, *ND* 1.70. Bobzien 1998a, 76-77.

<sup>5</sup> Bobzien 1998a, 77.

<sup>6</sup> As opposed to historical ones; cf. Sedley 2005, 244 n.1, on the relation between Epicurus’ discussion and that of Aristotle in *De int.* 9.

<sup>7</sup> She suggests that it may have been parallel to the Reaper argument – i.e., that it was concerned only with logical determinism. As she observes (1998a, 81 n.53), Long and Sedley take a different view; see the next note. In her 2000, 327 n.54, Bobzien argues that Epicurus’ example “either Hermarchus will be alive tomorrow, or he will not” (Cicero, *Acad.* 2 [*Lucullus*] 97; similarly, but with Epicurus himself as the example, *ND* 1.70) should probably not be taken as depending on any choice on Hermarchus’ part. The same might be said of “Epicurus will die at the age of 72” (Cicero, *fat.* 19) but not of “Carneades is going down into the Academy” (ibid.), or of some of Cicero’s Roman examples (“Cato will come into the Senate” and “Hortensius will come to his villa at Tusculum” in 28. Scipio’s being killed, in 18, depends on the choice of others; Scipio’s capturing Numantia, in 27, is more complex. The example of Philoctetes in 37 is presumably taken over from the preceding discussion).

<sup>8</sup> Above, n.4; Bobzien 1998a, 81. At 81 n.53 she notes that Long and Sedley regard the reference to *natura rerum* in *Acad.* 2.97 as referring to causation, and replies, first that this is not evidence that Epicurus himself referred to causation in his reply to the argument from future truth (which may be granted; we are at the mercy of our sources, in Cicero’s *Academica* as much as in the *De fato*) and then that *even if* (italics mine) Epicurus mentioned causation, “this does not prove that *the argument* itself was concerned with causation in any way” (italics hers). This seems to amount to saying that Epicurus mentioned in the course of his argument something that was not relevant to it, or, putting it another way, that Epicurus’ own wording would not be the best guide to what he meant. Fowler 2002, 338, like Bobzien, sees the atomic swerve, which is relevant to physical

together with the argument that for Epicurus himself fate and necessity were distinct<sup>9</sup>. The claim that Epicurus did not himself link the issues of causal determinism and of future truth (I use the latter as shorthand for “the thesis that all propositions referring to the future are either true or false already”) is important for Bobzien as one aspect of her general thesis that something like the problem of freedom and determinism as known to modern philosophy only developed in the second century AD, and that for the early Hellenistic period we should speak rather of a series of problems, not yet connected with one another, of which logical determinism by future truth was one, freedom of agents from determination by *external causes (only)*, or “autonomy”, another<sup>10</sup>.

There is no doubt that the Stoics *themselves* did not conceive of responsibility in terms of an absolute possibility of acting otherwise, free from determination by internal as well as by external causes<sup>11</sup>; the issue is rather whether there were critics who already did so, and whether or not the early Stoics themselves thought it

causation, and the argument from future truth as originally unconnected for Epicurus (cf. O’Keefe 2005, 138 n.31). Fowler does however grant that “it may be that the [atomic swerve] was used to prove the unpredictability of future actions and thus to buttress the argument that statements about them do not possess a truth-value in the present.” The relationship might be the reverse, the position on future truth being prompted by the denial of determinism through the swerve. Fowler continues “It is noteworthy ... that sources outside Cicero do not associate Epicurus’ logical stance with the *clinamen*”; but the force of this is reduced by the fact that Cicero is (I think) the *only* source for Epicurus’ specifically logical stance.

<sup>9</sup> Against which see O’Keefe 2005, 138-39 n.31.

<sup>10</sup> Bobzien 1998b. Brennan 2001, and also 2005, 264-67 and 297-98, argues persuasively that the shift to interest in freedom from determination by internal causes as well as external ones has to do with the development of a narrower concept of the self, detectable already in the connection of desires with the body rather than the soul in the *Phaedo*. The Chrysippean treatment of desires as mistaken judgements could indeed be seen as a reaction against this narrower concept, a reaction which, like compatibilism itself, is appropriate to a holistic view of the universe and of the place of agents within it.

<sup>11</sup> The crucial issue here is that of freedom from determination by internal antecedent causes as well as by external ones. Formulations in terms of the possibility of doing otherwise are in themselves ambiguous between indeterminist and compatibilist interpretations (the possibility in the former case being absolute, in the latter qualified). Bobzien succeeds, indeed, in showing that Chrysippus and other early Stoics did not conceive of responsibility in terms of freedom to do otherwise (cf. her 1998a, 255). But she allows (1998a, 289) that for Chrysippus assent can be given or withheld, this of course to be understood in a compatibilist sense. Cf. Brennan 2005, 297-98. How we should interpret Aristotle’s statement at *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.5 1113b7-8 that, if acting depends on us, not acting does so too, is controversial. Compatibilists (for example Fine 1981, 578; Meyer 1993 and 1998) read this in a way that is compatible with determinism, for they assume that this is the natural assumption for Aristotle to make; so too Bobzien 1998b, 144, in the absence of explicit evidence for an incompatibilist reading being a live option in Aristotle’s time (see below in the text). Similarly, too, with Aristotle’s reference at *Eudemian Ethics* 2.6 1223a2-9 to things that we can cause to come about or not (on which see Natali’s paper in this volume).

necessary to respond on the critics' terms, even if the state of our sources may make it difficult both to distinguish these questions and to answer either of them. Bobzien is right, in other words, that there is no free-will problem *within* Stoic doctrine (411); what seems more questionable is her claim (279) that Chrysippus *and his opponents* (emphasis mine) argued on the basis that the agent's autonomy is all that is needed, rather than arguing about causal determinism. Second, there is in fact some evidence to suggest that freedom from all causal constraint, internal as well as external, was an issue of which Chrysippus *was* aware<sup>12</sup>. Bobzien's arguments rest to a considerable extent on the principle that in reconstructing ancient debates we should not allow our own philosophical concerns to lead us to attribute to the ancients an interest in any issue where that interest is not explicitly attested for the thinker in question himself or for his predecessors and contemporaries<sup>13</sup>. As a general principle this is a sound one, but given the state of our first-hand evidence for early Hellenistic philosophy in particular it may at times be unduly restrictive.

O'Keefe agrees with Bobzien in regarding the issue of unqualified or absolute freedom to do otherwise as anachronistic for the early Hellenistic period<sup>14</sup>. Against Bobzien, however, O'Keefe has argued that a reference to fate *was* an original part of the Epicurean argument about future truth<sup>15</sup>. Bobzien herself adopts the view of Furley, that the atomic swerve was not to be closely linked with individual

<sup>12</sup> While arguing (1998a, 276) that the *epileustikh; durami* rejected by Chrysippus in *SVF* 2.973 was not intended to introduce freedom to do otherwise, but only freedom from determination by external causes, Bobzien does accept that the issue is one of undetermined, or un-predetermined, motion. And she herself recognises (1998a, 314-29), in a different context, that sources such as Cicero *and Plutarch* misrepresent Chrysippus by presenting fate in terms of determination by external causes alone. May the same misunderstanding not be at work in Plutarch's representation of Chrysippus' position in *SVF* 2.973 as well?

<sup>13</sup> Bobzien claims (1998a, 281) that there is no evidence for an indeterminist concept of responsibility in early Stoics, in other Hellenistic debates (the context implying, up to the time of Chrysippus) or in Aristotle. On the general methodological issue cf. Brennan 2001, 284.

<sup>14</sup> *Lucretius* clearly links the atomic swerve with freedom from constraint by internal causes (2.289-293). It is true that Cicero's words in *fat.* 23, "if the atom were always carried along naturally by its weight in a necessary way, we would have no freedom, since the movement of our mind would be constrained by the movement of the atoms" (*si semper atomus gravitate ferretur naturali ac necessaria, nihil liberum nobis esset, cum ita moveretur animus ut atomorum motu cogeretur*) could be read as referring only to freedom of the mind from external constraint, but that hardly seems likely; Cicero knew perfectly well that for Epicurus the mind was itself made of atoms, and we know that he had read at least part of *Lucretius*' poem, whether or not that included 2.289-293. See further below, at nn.27-28, and Carlo Natali's paper in this volume.

<sup>15</sup> O'Keefe 2005, 138-39 n.31. At 141 n.37 he notes that the Epicurean at Plutarch, *Pyth. Orac.* 10 398F argues that present existents are needed as the truthmakers of future contingents; but there is no explicit reference to present *causes* in that passage. Against Bobzien also Sedley 2005, 245 n.2 ad fin.

occurrences of free choice, but that its role was the negative one of bringing about breaks in causation at some point or other and thus ensuring that internal factors could not ultimately be traced back to external ones beyond our control<sup>16</sup>. O'Keefe however argues that the swerve for Epicurus was not connected with the analysis of free choice at all, since Epicurus was in his view concerned, in the context of human action, only with freedom from determination by external causes. Rather, in O'Keefe's view, Epicurus asserted that there is uncaused movement in order – and *only* in order – to be able to deny that every proposition is true or false and so be able to deny that everything is fated<sup>17</sup>. The connection of the swerve with the analysis of choices themselves, which all interpreters agree in regarding as problematic, was in O'Keefe's view a later development<sup>18</sup>.

The paradox is that, in the course of supporting Bobzien's general view that freedom to choose otherwise was not an issue in the early Hellenistic period, O'Keefe is *required* by his argument to reject her view that fate, in the sense of physical causation, formed no original part of the Epicurean argument reported by Cicero in 21b. For having denied the swerve any home in the analysis of choice, he has to relate the argument about future truth to causation for Epicurus himself in order to give the swerve a new home.

<sup>16</sup> Bobzien 2000, 327-36; see also *ibid.* 300, 316-20, and 320-22 on Cicero, *fat.* 23. At 335-36 she offers two versions of this view: the first is that advanced by Furley himself, that the occurrence of a swerve at some point is enough to ensure that an agent's character now is not the inevitable result of his initial natural endowment and previous history, and that there is nothing more to be said about when or how such a swerve may have occurred. The second, and less implausible view is that conscious attempts to change one's character may sometimes escape causal determinism by the occurrence of swerves (see especially Bobzien 2000, 336 and n.99). At 322 Bobzien argues that if voluntary choices themselves involved swerves Carneades could not have argued, as Cicero at *fat.* 23 says he did, that the Epicureans would have done better to defend voluntary movement of the mind directly rather than to introduce the swerve. But Carneades may be read simply as attacking an Epicurean assumption that the swerve is a necessary condition for action to be truly voluntary, and this reading is neutral as to when the swerve is supposed to occur.

<sup>17</sup> O'Keefe 2005, 17. Given the state of our evidence, O'Keefe's arguments for restricting the significance of the swerve for Epicurus himself are necessarily circumstantial. One is the lack of relevance of a specifically indeterminist conception of freedom to Epicurus' ethical goals (24). A second is the claim that what Epicurus objects to in Democritus (LS 20C(13)-(14)) is not so much determinism as eliminative reductionism (93; I use the combined expression, where O'Keefe argues that we should speak of eliminativism *rather than* reductionism). Above all O'Keefe appeals to Epicurus' historical context, one of arguments concerned with various forms of *logical* determinism – the Sea-Battle, the Reaper, the Master Argument and so on. Here O'Keefe 2005, (149-50) compares Aristotle; much will in turn depend, though, on whether one accepts a compatibilist reading of Aristotle (above, n.11).

<sup>18</sup> O'Keefe 2005, 36 follows Bobzien in connecting the end of *Lucretius*' account with control over the development of our character.

## ***2. The relation between the Epicurean and the Stoic arguments as presented by Cicero.***

The original context of Epicurus' argument concerning future truth is not however our main concern; this is fortunate in view of the scantiness of the evidence which – unless more appears from Herculaneum – makes any definitive resolution impossible. What is clear, and rightly emphasised both by Bobzien (1998a, 84) and by O'Keefe, is that, in the discussion as presented by *Cicero*, Chrysippus and Epicurus are two sides of a single coin.

19-20a continue the argument of 17-18. In 17-18 it was argued, in effect, that the question of future truth and that of causation are separate. All future events are unchangeable, in the sense that what will be will be, but that is a quite separate issue from the question whether future events are already determined by physical causes. In 18b Cicero observes that there is no reason here for Epicurus to introduce the atomic swerve. The implication, in context, is that future truth does not imply that the things referred to are already determined by physical causes. 19-20a provide the explanation for 18b; 18b *asserts* that Epicurus did not need to postulate the atomic swerve because of worries about the deterministic implications of future truth, while 19-20a explains why this is so, arguing that future truth and causal determinism are two separate issues. That point will be repeated in sections 27-28.

In 18b-20a, then, Epicurus is portrayed as holding that to deny fate one needs both to deny the universal applicability of future truth and to assert uncaused movement; though Cicero appears to present Epicurus' reaction in a deliberately paradoxical form, suggesting that it was Epicurus' mistaken view about future truth that led him to fear fate and so introduce uncaused motion. Given that Cicero himself holds that the issues of future truth and of causal determinism are distinct, and that this implies that it is the latter issue that is the important one for human freedom, there is rhetorical advantage in representing Epicurus as only concerning himself with what is in fact the more important issue because he was concerned with the less important one and failed to distinguish the two<sup>19</sup>. Then, in 20b-21a,

<sup>19</sup> *nec, cum haec ita sint, est causa cur Epicurus fatum extimescat.* True, to see Cicero as mocking Epicurus here *may* be over-interpretation; Cicero might just be pointing out that the logical determinism of future truth is a different issue from physical, causal determinism. But where Cicero and Epicurus are concerned the cynical reading may be the appropriate one. How Cicero presents Epicurus' position is a different issue from whether he – or his source – has foisted on Epicurus a connection between the issues of future truth and of physical determinism which was not originally part of Epicurus' own position at all.

Chrysippus is introduced as arguing that the truth or falsity of propositions shows that there is no uncaused movement and hence that all is fated<sup>20</sup>.

More formally, for Epicurus,

(1) if every proposition is true or false, everything will be fated, and if there is no uncaused movement, everything will be fated;

for Chrysippus,

(2) that every proposition is true or false implies that there is no uncaused movement, and therefore that everything is fated<sup>21</sup>.

Both Epicurus and Chrysippus share the views

(3) if there is no uncaused movement, everything is fated;

(4) if not everything is fated, not every proposition is true or false;

whereas Cicero himself denies (3) and (4) and asserts

(5) the compossibility of (i) every proposition being true or false, (ii) there being no uncaused motion, and (iii) not everything being fated.

Even though he introduces Chrysippus' argument as a fresh topic, Cicero in 21a (*hic primum*) immediately responds to it by saying he would prefer to adopt *from*

<sup>20</sup> 20b does not specify future-tense propositions for Chrysippus, but they are presumably the ones at issue.

<sup>21</sup> The actual statement of Chrysippus' argument in 20b-21a is more complex: schematically, if a = is true or false (of a proposition), b = is uncaused (of a movement or its consequences – see below), c = is fated,  $ryx = y$  is the proposition stating the occurrence of event x, Cicero gives us

(i)  $(x)(y)(ryx \rightarrow (bx \rightarrow \neg ay))$

(ii)  $\exists x(bx) \rightarrow \exists y(\neg ay)$ : (from (i))

(iii)  $(y)(ay)$

(iv)  $\neg \exists x(bx)$  (from (iii) and (i) by *modus tollendo tollens*)

(v)  $(x)(\neg bx)$  (from (iv))

(vi)  $(x)(\neg bx \rightarrow cx)$  (assumed)

(vii)  $(x)(cx)$  (from (v) and (vi))

Characteristically, Chrysippus bases the general assertion in (i) on a generalisation over individuals in (ii) ((ii) is actually stated before (i), (i) being introduced by *enim*). In the argument from (i) to (ii) it is probably assumed that an event is uncaused either if it is itself an uncaused movement or if it is caused by one, but this is not in fact essential to the argument – it will be enough if the prediction of the uncaused movement itself is neither true nor false.

*Epicurus* the view that not every proposition is true or false rather than to accept that everything is fated. And in 21b<sup>22</sup> he links by a “just so” (*ut ... sic*) Epicurus’ fear that

(6) if every proposition is true or false, everything will be fated

and Chrysippus’ fear that

(7) if not every proposition is true or false, not everything will be fated and there will be uncaused movement.

It is true that, as Sedley points out<sup>23</sup>, the statement of Epicurus’ position *in this section* makes no explicit reference to causation; but, as he also notes, “fate” here must have a causal force for Cicero, and the connection, in Cicero’s view at least, between the issue of future truth and that of causal necessity for Epicurus has been sufficiently indicated in what has preceded. Cicero thus presents both Epicurus and Chrysippus as alike concerned with future truth, causation and fate, and as alike drawing their different conclusions, or sharing similar anxieties, because they are both committed to both (3) and (4). Cicero himself denies both (3), the claim that uncaused motion is required if everything is not to be fated, and (4), the claim that to deny fate involves denying that all propositions are either true or false; in effect, he finds a solution by saying that the disputing parties share mistaken premisses. The denial of (3) will in 23b ff. be attributed to Carneades; and it has been generally accepted that the credit for asserting (5) and arriving at a satisfactory solution of the paradox of future truth should be given to Carneades as well<sup>24</sup>.

That Cicero treats the Epicurean and the Stoic positions as symmetrical in this way is significant. For the wider context in Cicero shows that for Cicero at least the question of future truth was itself connected not only with that of causation

<sup>22</sup> At the start of 21b, indeed (*itaque contendit ... aut verum esse aut falsum*), Cicero presents Chrysippus as arguing *to* the claim that (p) every proposition is either true or false, rather than from it as in 20b. I suggested in my commentary (Sharples 1991, 174-75) that Cicero has been influenced by the rhetorical contrast with Epicurus’ denial of p in 21a. Bobzien 1998a, 84-85 argues that Cicero’s point is that Chrysippus was concerned to establish p as the starting-point of his argument. Johanson and Londey 1988 argue that while Greek sources for Stoic doctrines present being either true or false as a *property* of all propositions, Latin sources tend to present this as a *defining characteristic* of propositions as such.

<sup>23</sup> Sedley 2005, 252-53.

<sup>24</sup> This has been generally assumed, though it is not as far as I can see absolutely explicit in Cicero’s text; cf. for example Long 1974, 102, where the point depends on treating 23b-28 as a sequence of arguments from a single source.



generally but specifically with that of the freedom of our actions from determination by internal antecedent causes. In 23b ff. Cicero presents Carneades' rejection of

(3) if there is no uncaused movement, everything is fated

or assertion of

(8) the compossibility of "there is no uncaused movement" and "not everything is fated"<sup>25</sup>

as an intended improvement on Epicurus' position. It follows that, at least as *Cicero* saw the matter, (1), (2) and (8) are all positions in the same debate. Consequently, if "not everything is fated" in (8) is concerned with, or at least *includes*, freedom from determination by internal antecedent causes, then it seems likely that *Cicero* at least thought that "not everything is fated" in Epicurus' view ((1)) did so as well<sup>26</sup>.

The contrast in 25 between external causes and the nature of the thing itself might suggest that what is at issue is freedom only from determination by external causes, and not also from that by internal causes. However, Carneades' position, so interpreted, risks collapsing into that of Chrysippus. And Carneades, as reported by Cicero, rules out determination by "external and *antecedent* causes". If the implication is that our will is determined neither by external nor by antecedent causes, this rules out determination by internal causes that form part of a series of causes determining their successors, as in the Stoic view. Or, putting the point another way, in the context of such a view of determinism even internal causes are ultimately determined by external ones. It may be my nature that determines my actions now, but it, like everything else, was predetermined even before I was born, and thus predetermined by causes external to me<sup>27</sup>. It seems natural to suppose that

<sup>25</sup> (8) being implied by (5). I leave aside here the question whether Carneades himself actually held that "every proposition is true or false", "there is no uncaused movement", and "not everything is fated" are all in fact *true*, and whether as an Academic Sceptic he should have been *holding* anything of the sort (see Natali's paper in the present volume). I also leave aside the question whether Carneades' attempt to find a third option between universal causal determinism and uncaused motions like the swerve is as successful as his solution to the problem of future truth; see on this Sharples 1991, 10, and references there.

<sup>26</sup> Duhot 1989, 196-97 argues that *Chrysippus'* argument is not in its original form but is an Academic reformulation for the sake of criticism. Bobzien allows (1998a, 3) that "Carneades brought together Epicurus' and Chrysippus' views on determinism (e.g. *Cic., fat.* 23)".

<sup>27</sup> The choice is thus between causes that are antecedent and (at least ultimately) external on the one hand, and those that are neither – free and non-predetermined volitions – on the other. A Stoic might indeed retort that even causes that existed before my birth are not external to me, because I

Carneades wants to challenge this whole picture, rather than that he is happy to allow determination by a combination of external and internal antecedent causes<sup>28</sup>.

If (8) is read so as to include freedom from determination by antecedent internal constraint, the latter was an issue at least for Cicero in the first century BC. Moreover, either the argumentative structure of sections 19-25 is Cicero's own construction, or he owes it to an earlier source. If the latter is the case, freedom from *internal* necessity was already discussed together with the logical determinism of future truth, and distinguished from it, by that source. If that source was Clitomachus, presenting the arguments of Carneades, O'Keefe is right to argue that the problem of free will and determinism was in existence at least as early as Carneades<sup>29</sup> – and not, as Bobzien has argued, only in the second century AD.

### ***3. Why the apparent fresh start at 20b?***

If the structure of Cicero's argument in 19-21a is as I have argued it to be, we are left with the question why Cicero claims to be moving on to a fresh topic at the start of 20b. Yon suggests that the introduction in 18b of Epicurus' atomic swerve has "led to anticipation of issues that will not be taken up until 28, after the exposition and criticism of the position of Chrysippus"<sup>30</sup>. Now, 28 takes up the point made in 19 against Epicurus' introduction of the atomic swerve in 18b, that future truth and causal determinism are two separate issues. Yon's point would thus at first sight seem to be that the discussion of causation in 18b-20a is a digression, and that in 20b Cicero wants to return to considerations of logical determinism specifically<sup>31</sup>.

am just a part of a greater whole; but it is not clear that Carneades would find this persuasive. It is true that the question of determination by a combination of external and internal causes is blurred by Cicero in the penultimate section of the treatise as we have it, at 41-45; cf. Donini 1974-1975. But there is a question whether Cicero is still following the same source at this point, and how the argument was developed in the lacuna after 45. See Donini 1989, 140ff.; Sharples 1991, 20-22, 193-94, and the modern literature referred to there.

<sup>28</sup> This is a restatement of the argument at Sharples 1991, 177.

<sup>29</sup> O'Keefe 2005, 9: "Carneades should be credited (or blamed) for first formulating a libertarian position on the "traditional" problem of free will and determinism, and ... via Cicero's *De fato*, it was transmitted to the western philosophical tradition in St. Augustine's *On free choice of the will*."

<sup>30</sup> "La critique de la solution radicale d'Epicure nous a en effet entraînés à des considérations anticipées, qui ne seront reprises que plus loin (XII, 28), quand aura été exposée et critiquée la thèse de Chrysippe." Yon 1933, 11 n.2.

<sup>31</sup> In his introduction (xxii, n.2) Yon explains the point by saying that Chrysippus, like Diodorus, is concerned with logical determinism. It is true that that is the focus of 20b-21. But it is hardly the concern of 22-25, and it is the theme of logical determinism that is *taken up again* in 28a.

However, this hardly fits the text. For the issue of physical causation is explicit in Chrysippus' argument in 20b, and the atomic swerve specifically is the theme of 22-23. This might suggest that the important point in Yon's note is rather the reference to Chrysippus; 18b-20a may be a digression not because it is concerned with physical causation, but because it focuses on Epicurus. Indeed, Chrysippus is not named anywhere in 18b-20a. To be sure, to regard discussion of Epicurus as a digression anticipating 28ff. might still seem strange, given the discussion of the Epicurean atomic swerve in 22-25; but the oddity would be lessened if we saw Cicero there as presenting Carneades, not so much as saying that Epicurus and Chrysippus are both wrong, but rather as insisting that there is a better answer to Chrysippus than the one Epicurus can offer. In other words, the emphasis from 20b to 27 would be on the question "how to reply to Chrysippus?"<sup>32</sup>

More probably, though, Yon's reference to section 28 in the note to his translation is misleading. For in his introduction he suggests that the point of the new beginning in 20b is that while 18b-20a give, as it were, Epicurus' reaction to Diodorus<sup>33</sup>, the issue of the relation between future truth and causation cannot properly be discussed until Chrysippus' use of the former to support claims about the latter has been set out, starting in 20b<sup>34</sup>. In that case, however, the return to the issue of future truth in its new context actually occurs at 26<sup>35</sup>.

The answer to our problem, I suggest, is that Cicero's discussion is deliberately informal. 17-18 are still part of the discussion of quasi-Diodorean modalities<sup>36</sup>, but

<sup>32</sup> This, if accepted, would have two implications; first, the case for reading 23b as Carneades arguing on the Epicureans' own terms would be weakened (see Sharples 1993, 180-81); second, the argument at Sedley 2005, 245 and n.2 that the subject of *inquit* in 26a is Epicurus rather than Chrysippus would also be weakened. – I take this opportunity to point out that the translation of the last sentence of 25 at Sharples 1991, 75, "the nature of that thing itself is the cause of that thing", is misleading, inasmuch as it suggests that voluntary movement is its own cause. The Latin has simply *eius enim rei causa ipsa natura est*. A better translation would be "the cause of that thing [sc. that voluntary movement is in our power] is the nature [of voluntary movement]"; that is, the nature of the thing is itself the cause of its *properties*, including that of being in our power. So, in effect, Rackham ("its obedience is not uncaused, for its nature is itself the cause of this"); Yon is more ambiguous ("car sa cause est sa nature meme").

<sup>33</sup> The suggestion is not that this should necessarily be taken in a historical sense; Cicero is concerned with the philosophical issues rather than with chronological reconstruction.

<sup>34</sup> "Les §§18-20 mettaient Epicure en présence de Diodore. Mais depuis l'intervention de Chrysippe §20, le problème est vu sous un angle différent, et on ne discute pas seulement la nécessité mégarique, mais la forme nouvelle sous laquelle il reparaît – quoi qu'en dise Chrysippe – dans la fatalité stoïcienne." Yon 1933, xxiv n.2.

<sup>35</sup> And indeed Yon's note in his introduction, cited in my own immediately preceding note, comes at the *start* of his paraphrase of 26b-28a.

<sup>36</sup> i.e., Diodorean modalities as Cicero misunderstands them. See Hermann Weidemann's paper in this volume.

introduce the “Carneadean” answer to the problem of future truth<sup>37</sup> and distinguish the problem of future truth from that of causation. 19-20a develop both these points in the context of Epicurus’ views. 20b-21a introduce Chrysippus’ view of future truth and causation as a foil to that of Epicurus, and the similarity between the two is stressed in 21b. This paves the way for the discussion of causation (the atomic swerve) in 22, and of the Carneadean solutions to the problem of causation in 23b-25 and of future truth in 26ff. So, although the discussion of the Carneadean position starts in 18b with the first of the two opposed views between which it constitutes a third option<sup>38</sup>, 20b *also* marks a new topic, in the sense that it is only after Chrysippus’ view as well as Epicurus’ has been introduced that it can be pointed out that denying the assumptions (3) and (4) which they share can provide the solution. *Both* perspectives are valid; Cicero’s discussion gives the impression of informality by the way in which topics flow into each other. Similarly, if we regard the main shift as that from discussion of future truth and causation together to discussion of causation alone, 22-23a belong with what follows them; if however the formal introduction of Carneades’ solution, as opposed to the common assumptions of Epicurus and the Stoics, is the new topic, 22-23a belong with what precedes them. The structure of Cicero’s arguments is not always easy to pin down; but that reflects a deliberate attempt at conversational informality.

### ***Appendix: chance as an exception to determinism***

In section 19, arguing that what is not predetermined is not therefore without a cause altogether, Cicero refers to chance causes. This is problematic in two ways.

First, chance in the Aristotelian sense is not incompatible with determinism<sup>39</sup>. If on the other hand the thought is, as actually seems to have been Epicurus’ view<sup>40</sup>,

<sup>37</sup> Not explicitly attributed to him; and see above, n.24.

<sup>38</sup> It may be remarked that in 18b and subsequently, by contrast with what has preceded, the term “necessity” is reserved for causal necessity, though the modal term “possible” is still applied to the impossibility of even a contingent truth becoming a falsehood. I am grateful to Hermann Weidemann for pressing me on this point.

<sup>39</sup> There is no reason, even in a predetermined universe of the sort attributed by the Epicureans to Democritus, why people should not find buried treasure when digging holes in order to plant trees (the example from Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Δ 30). It is indeed true that such an event will not be due to chance if we accept Stoic universal *providence*, but that is another issue. Chance, when applied to examples like Aristotle’s, is the opposite of *purpose*, not of determinism as such.

<sup>40</sup> That the swerve was involved in chance events for Epicurus is argued by Bobzien 2000, 330 n.91 (cf. 334 n.95) on the basis of Philodemus, *Sign.* 36.11-17 and Plutarch, *Soll. An.* 964e (actually 964c), against the view of Long 1977 and Purinton 1999, 261-262. The testimony of Plutarch

that chance events are not fully predetermined by antecedent causes, but result from un-predetermined swerves, a third option distinct both from determinism and from the atomic swerve has not been found. What *Cicero* thought counted as a chance event for Epicurus himself, and whether Cicero thought that for Epicurus a swerve was involved in every chance event, I do not know.

Second, there is the question, what does chance as an exception to determinism have to do with human choice as an exception to determinism? As Donini has pointed out, Carneades going into the Academy is hardly a good example of a chance event – he was head of it. Even his going there at a particular time is hardly likely to be due to chance rather than choice. His meeting someone there, in Aristotelian fashion, might be due to chance, but that is a separate issue from his going there in the first place<sup>41</sup>.

David Sedley, in his paper presented at the conference, suggests that we should understand the reference to “causes preceding by chance” (*causae fortuito antegressae*) in 19 not in relation to chance events in any narrow sense of that term, but simply as indicating that the causes in question do not form part of an antecedent causal chain. If “causes containing within themselves a natural effectiveness” and “causes preceding by ‘chance’” is an exhaustive classification, the antecedents of free choices not determined by antecedent causes will fall into the latter category simply by virtue of not themselves determining the subsequent choice. This reading does indeed resolve our second problem; it does nothing in itself, however, to establish free human choices as an option distinct both from determinism and from the atomic swerve. That is rather the task of 23b-25, whether one does or does not accept that it succeeds in its task<sup>42</sup>.

The alternative, if the reference to “chance” in 19 is taken in a narrower sense, is to suppose either that Cicero has been careless, or else that Carneades was more concerned to criticise the Stoic and Epicurean views than to construct a *systematic* alternative position of his own. We are indeed given an account of voluntary human

(whose mention of chance is a passing reference consisting of the single word “chance”) may not carry much weight, but Philodemus is another matter. His point is that it is not enough to assert the existence of the swerve on the basis of τὸ; τυχρον̄ και; τὸ; παρ̄ ἡμᾶς; one also needs to show that it does not conflict with appearances (cf. Lucretius 2.244-245, 2.249-250). At her 2000, 334 Bobzien gives, as an example of what might count as chance due to a swerve, a change in the character of a plant, as opposed to a voluntary change in the character of a person; this is a different sort of example from the Aristotelian chance meeting with someone who owes you money or being carried off course in a voyage by a storm, though this is not to say that a Peripatetic might not explain a change in the character of a plant by some accidental concurrence if no more regular explanation could be found (cf., perhaps, GA 4.10 778a5-9, with Balme 1939).

<sup>41</sup> Donini 1989, 135.

<sup>42</sup> Above, n.25.

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action specifically at 23-25; what we are not given – any more than we will be by Alexander of Aphrodisias<sup>43</sup> – is an account of the relation between chance and choice as two types of exceptions to determinism.

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<sup>43</sup> See Sharples 2001, 533-42. It is true, as Aldo Magris has emphasised to me, that choice and chance are both regarded in the Aristotelian-Platonic tradition as subdivisions of the contingent; see Bobzien 1998, 397-404; Mansfeld 1999, 144-49; Sharples 2001, 549-51. But the fact that they fall under the same genus does not in itself provide an analysis of each of them in causal terms.

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