

## CRITOLAUS' SCALE AND PHILO

Critolaus' parable of the two scales is reported by Cicero in two passages of his philosophical writings: *Tusc.* 5.51 and *Fin.* 5.91–2. Despite the extremely close verbal parallels, Wehrli has edited these passages as two separate fragments of Critolaus.<sup>1</sup> I cite the passages as in the Teubner editions of Pohlenz (*Tusc.*) and Schiche (*Fin.*).

Quo loco quaero, quam vim habeat libra illa Critolai, qui cum in alteram lancem animi bona imponat, in alteram corporis et externa, tantum propendere illam bonorum animi lancem putet, ut terram et maria deprimat.

(*Tusc.* 5.51)

Audebo igitur cetera, quae secundum naturam sint, bona appellare nec fraudare suo vetere nomine neque iam aliquod potius novum exquirere, virtutis autem amplitudinem quasi in altera librae lance ponere. terram, mihi crede, ea lanx et maria deprimet.

(*Fin.* 5.91–2)

So far, the diligence of editors and commentators has not succeeded in unearthing a Greek version of Critolaus' scale. Short of a new papyrus, or a hitherto unnoticed late Byzantine citation or echo, one can probably rely on the law of diminishing returns. There are, however, two passages of Philo of Alexandria which may echo this Peripatetic metaphor. I cite both as in Cohn and Wendland's *editio maior*, with parts of the critical apparatus to the first passage which will concern us later.

ζωῆς δὲ τριττὸν γένος, τὸ μὲν πρὸς θεόν, τὸ δὲ πρὸς γένεσιν, τὸ δὲ μεθόριον, μικτὸν ἀμφοῖν. τὸ μὲν οὖν πρὸς θεὸν οὐ κατέβη πρὸς ἡμᾶς οὐδὲ ἦλθεν εἰς τὰς σῶματος ἀνάγκας. τὸ δὲ πρὸς γένεσιν οὐδ' ὅλως ἀνέβη οὐδ' ἐζήτησεν ἀναβῆναι, φωλεῦον δὲ ἐν μυχοῖς "Αἰδου τῷ ἀβιώτῳ βίῳ χαίρει. τὸ δὲ μικτὸν ἐστίν, ὃ πολλάκις μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς ἀμείνονος ἀγόμενον τάξεως θειάζει καὶ θεοφορεῖται, πολλάκις δ' ὑπὸ τῆς χείρονος ἀντισπώμενον ἐπιστρέφει. τοῦθ', ὅταν ὥσπερ ἐπὶ (25) πλάστιγγος ἢ τῆς κρείττονος ζωῆς μοῖρα τοῖς ὅλοις βρίσῃ, συνεπισπασθὲν (26) τὸ τῆς ἐναντίας ζωῆς βάρος κουφότατον ἄχθος ἀπέφηνε.

(25) τὰς ὁλκαῖς conī. Mang. post ὅλοις Pap add. περιττα, G ἀρίσση. utrumque dittographia vocis βρίση videtur esse; περιττεύση pro βρίση conī. Cohn

(26) post ζωῆς add. ἀντην Pap, quod fort. ex voce ἐναντίας natum est; ἀντίπαλον conī. Cohn (*Heres* 45–6)

τίς οὖν ἡ βάσανος; καθεῖναι τι δέλεαρ ὁλκῷ κεκρημένον δυνάμει, δόξαν ἢ πλοῦτον ἢ ὑγίαν σῶματος ἢ τι τῶν ὁμοιοτρόπων, καὶ γινῶναι πρὸς πότερα καθάπερ ἐπὶ πλάστιγγος ταλαντεύσει· ῥοπή γὰρ εἰ γένοιτο πρὸς τι τούτων, ὃ ἄρραβὼν οὐ βέβαιος.

(*Fuga* 151)

In both pasages, we have the metaphor ὥσπερ/καθάπερ ἐπὶ πλάστιγγος, reminiscent of *quasi in altera librae lance* of *Fin.* 5.91 and of *in alteram lancem* of *Tusc.* 5.51. The contexts, too, look similar at first sight. Is Philo echoing Critolaus? Not so fast: we still have Philo's style and idiosyncrasies to reckon with.

<sup>1</sup> Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, i (Basel and Stuttgart, 1969), p. 23 (Critolaus frs. 22–3). In his commentary, pp. 68–9, Wehrli treats these passages as one and the same. He is generally not unaware of the possibility of assigning different versions of the same Greek passage to the same fragment: see, e.g., Critolaus fr. 37a–b, pp. 57–8 and Hieronymus fr. 52a–b, pp. 21–2. Examples could be multiplied. Of the two earlier editions of Critolaus' fragments and testimonia, that of I. B. Carpovius, *Disputatio de vita et placitis Critolai Phaselitae, philosophi peripatetici* (Leipzig, 1743) – most probably his doctoral dissertation – has not been available to me. Nor has it been available to the second editor, Frank Olivier, *De Critolao Peripatetico* (diss., Berlin, 1895 (see his p. 5, n. 1)), who cites and discusses our passages on pp. 25–6 and 55.

In our first passage, Philo's context is that of three kinds of life – at first sight, parallel to the Peripatetics' *tria genera bonorum*: the goods of the soul, those of the body, and external goods. But this is not quite Philo's immediate context. His first kind of life is τὸ πρὸς θεόν, which, in his own words, οὐ κατέβη πρὸς ἡμᾶς.<sup>2</sup> Even assuming that there is some similarity (and we shall clear that up later), Philo makes his μικτὸν γένος join with τὸ πρὸς θεόν on the same scale (συνεπισπασθέν) in order to tip it down. Critolaus' whole point is that, even if we call the goods of the body and external goods plainly 'goods' (rather than the Stoic προηγμένα), virtue would still tip the scale against them *on its own*. (But is Philo's first kind of life *virtue*? Anon.)

On further examination, Philo's passage also appears to contain other reminiscences, closer to Philo's heart. His τριττὸν γένος echoes Plato, *Rep.* 4, 434b9, τριῶν... ἄρα ὄντων γενῶν, 435b5, τριττὰ γένη φύσεως, 440e10–441a1, τρία ὄντα γένη, and quite possibly *Phdr.* 253c7–8, τριχῇ διειλομέν ψυχὴν ἐκάστην (referring back to 246b1–3). Philo's ἡ ἀμείνων, ἡ χείρων, and ἡ τῆς κρείττονος ζωῆς μοῖρα echo the same *Phaedrus* myth, 248e3–5, ὃς μὲν ἂν δικαίως διαγάγῃ ἀμείνωνος μοῖρας μεταλαμβάνει, ὃς δ' ἂν ἀδίκως, χείρωνος. His τῆς ἐναντίας ζωῆς is also an echo of *Phdr.* 246b2–3, τῶν ἵππων ὁ μὲν... καλὸς τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἐναντίων τε καὶ ἐναντίος and d8–e4, τὸ δὲ θεῖον καλόν, σοφόν, ἀγαθὸν καὶ πᾶν ὅτι τοιούτων· τούτοις δὴ τρέφεται τε καὶ αὔξεται μάλιστα γὰρ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πτέρωμα, αἰσχυρῶ δὲ καὶ κακῶ καὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις φθίνει τε καὶ διόλλυται. Even his expressions of heaviness, βρίθει, βάρος, ἄχθος, are found in *Phdr.* 247b3–5, βρίθει γὰρ ὁ τῆς κάκης ἵππος μετέχων, ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν [Philo's πρὸς γένεσιν and ἐν μυχοῖς] ῥέπων τε καὶ βαρύνων, and 252c3–4, ἐμβριθέστερον... ἄχθος.

As if to complicate matters, even the metaphor of the scale is already found in Plato, *Rep.* 7, 550e4–8: τοῦντεῦθεν τοίνυν... προϊόντες εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν τοῦ χρηματίζεσθαι, ὅσῳ ἂν τοῦτο τιμιώτερον ἡγῶνται, τοσοῦτ' ἀρετὴν ἀτιμότεραν. ἢ οὐχ οὕτω πλούτου ἀρετὴ διέστηκεν, ὥσπερ, ἐν πλάστιγγι ζυγοῦ κειμένου ἑκατέρου, αἶι τοῦναντίον ῥέποντε; Neither in Plato nor in Philo do we find an echo of *terram et maria deprimat*, which is in both passages of Cicero, and is therefore most likely to be Critolaus, echoing *Iliad* 8.24.<sup>3</sup> After all this, do we still require the services of Critolaus, or is Plato a sufficient source for Philo?

Let us pass on to our second passage of Philo, *Fuga* 151. There, the βάσανος is that of ἡ ἀνίκητος ἀρετὴ (149), which is, indeed, equated with τὸ κάλλιστον κτήμα, ἡ θεοσέβεια (150) – but we know from numerous passages of Philo that θεοσέβεια, εὐσέβεια, and ὁσιότης are different names for one and the same thing, the greatest of *human* ἀρεταί.<sup>4</sup> What is more, the test consists in putting on one scale δόξαν ἢ πλούτον ἢ ὑγεία σώματος ἢ τι τῶν ὁμοιοτρόπων, and seeing whether they, rather than ἀρετὴ, would tip the scale. Of these, δόξα and πλούτος are among the Peripatetics' 'external goods', while ὑγεία is one of the 'goods of the body'. Plato

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Heres* 121, πάλιν ἐπιστήμης ἀρχὴ μὲν ἡ φύσις... πέρας δ' οὐδ' ἦλθεν εἰς ἀνθρώπους. Cf. Plato, *Phdr.* 248a1–b1.

<sup>3</sup> As indicated long ago by Carl Beier (ed.), *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Officiis* (Leipzig, 1821), p. 241, on *Off.* 3.35. Beier's attempt to relate that passage of Cicero to Critolaus has not been followed by more recent editors, rightly. Cicero refers expressly to Aristotle, and is echoing (probably through his source – Panaetius, some doxography, or whatever) passages such as *EN* 1100b11–1101a21 (with the metaphor of ῥοπή at 1100b25, and βρίθος καὶ ῥοπή at 1101a29).

<sup>4</sup> *Op.* 154, ...τὴν μεγίστην τῶν ἀρετῶν, θεοσέβειαν. *Abr.* 60, ...εὐσεβείας, ἀρετῆς τῆς ἀνωτάτης καὶ μεγίστης. *Sp. Legg.* 4.135...τῆς ἡγεμονίδος τῶν ἀρετῶν, εὐσεβείας καὶ ὁσιότητος. *ibid.* 147, ...τῇ βασιλίδι τῶν ἀρετῶν εὐσεβεία... *Decal.* 119, εὐσεβείαν δὲ καὶ ὁσιότητα, τῶν ἀρετῶν ἡγεμονίδας...

often lists things which people commonly consider as goods, and these are usually *υγεία, κάλλος, πλοῦτος*. Nor does Plato use the expression *τὰ ἐκτὸς ἀγαθὰ*, which we find first in Aristotle. In the few places where the late Plato does have ‘three kinds of goods’, the third one is invariably *πλοῦτος* or *χρήματα*. Philo, on the other hand, is perfectly familiar with *τὰ τρία γένη τῶν ἀγαθῶν, τὰ τε ἐκτὸς καὶ περὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν* (*Jos.* 7); and from numerous passages in his works, it is clear that *δόξα* for him is one of *τὰ ἐκτὸς ἀγαθὰ*.<sup>5</sup>

Nor is *ἀρετή* absent from the context of our first Philonian passage. At *Heres* 37, Abraham beseeches God *ἵνα σπερμάτων καὶ ἐμπυρευμάτων ὑποτυφομένων τὸ ἀρετῆς ἀνακαίηται καὶ ἀναφλέγηται σωτήριον φέγγος* – and we know from 35 that he means *human ἀρετή*. The paragraphs following our passage make it clear that the ‘mixed’ life is the life of *ἀρετή*,<sup>6</sup> while the ‘lower’ life is that of the body and the senses.<sup>7</sup> But, since the ‘mixed’ life can join sometimes with the higher and sometimes with the lower (46), it cannot be pure *ἀρετή*. It is rather the sort of life – or the part of the soul – which in Plato’s words, *ἐπικούρον δὲ τῷ λογισμῷ φύσει, ἐὰν μὴ ὑπὸ κακῆς τροφῆς διαφθαρῇ* (*Rep.* 4, 441a2–3) – that is, Plato’s *θυμοειδές* (439e2ff.). It is because of its wavering allegiances that this *θυμοειδές* is a separate part of the soul – and that the soul can have its ups and downs in its journey (*Phdr.* 248a5–6).

Thus, even in our passage of *Heres*, it is *ἀρετή* which tips the scale against other goods. In this context, because of the Platonic reminiscences and the divine type of life, it is not alone on the scale. In *Fuga* 151, it appears, by implication, to be alone, against both bodily and external goods.

The fragility of virtue has become popular recently, thanks to Professor Nussbaum’s great book.<sup>8</sup> It is not absent from the metaphor of the scales. We have already seen Plato referring to that fragility of virtue in the one passage where he uses the metaphor. Philo frequently uses this metaphor to describe the ups and downs of human virtue and vice: *Sacr.* 122 (good against evil); *Post.* 100 (ὁ κατὰ προφορὰν λόγος is φύσει διανοίας ἀδελφός but sometimes inclines to the other side); *Deus* 85 (just and unjust arguments); *Migr.* 148 (ὁ νοῦς in some people inclines to good or evil at different times); *Mos.* 2.228 (Moses’ mind wavers between mercy and the letter of the law); 248 (ἡ μοχθηρῶν ἀνθρώπων διάθεσις inclines πρὸς τὰναντία on the slightest pretext). A passage which applies weighing metaphors to the whole issue of the frailty of virtue in the whole course of a man’s life is *Mut.* 185. In it, the scale is not expressly mentioned. In all the other passages, the expression *ὥσπερ/ὡς/καθάπερ ἐπὶ πλάστιγγος* appears. In two of them (*Post.* 100; *Migr.* 148), the simile of the scale is joined to that of a ship tossed by a storm and inclining from side to side. That other simile, of *ναῦς θαλαττεύουσα*, is also quite frequent in Philo (*Cher.* 13; *Det.* 141;

<sup>5</sup> Plato’s list: *Gorg.* 451e1–5; *Laws* 1, 631c; 661a5–6. Three kinds of goods (but with *πλοῦτος* or *χρήματα* as the third): *Laws* 3, 697b2–6; [*Epistle* 8], 335b. Philo’s *τρία γένη*: see also *Mut.* 221; *Legg. All.* 2.20; *Post.* 112, et al. Philo’s *δόξα* as one of *τὰ ἐκτὸς ἀγαθὰ*: *Cher.* 117; *Det.* 136; *Post.* 112; 117; *Gig.* 27; *Sobr.* 61, et al.

<sup>6</sup> 48, *ὀλιγοδείαν, ἐγκράτειαν, αὐστηρὸν καὶ ἐπιστημονικὸν βίον* – and esp. 49, *τὸν τῆς μισουμένης, φρονήσεως*.

<sup>7</sup> This had already been announced at 42, *ἡ ζωὴ ἡ σὺν αἰσθήσει κτέ.* *Πρὸς γένεσιν* of 45 is another expression of the same idea. At 48, the five senses are spelled out. At 52, *ἡ κατ’ αἰσθησιν ζωὴ* is mentioned again, to return us to our main Biblical lemma. The allegorical interpretation of the two wives, *Deut.* 21.15–17, is a favourite: see *Legg. All.* 2.48; *Sacr.* 19–44, where the beloved wife is *ἡδονή* (20), offering the pleasures of all five senses (23–4), and the hated wife is *ἀρετή* (20), clad in *φρόνησις* (26) and followed by a crowd of virtues (27); *Sobr.* 21–5, *φιλήδονος* as against *φιλάρετος* (24).

<sup>8</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge, 1986). Nussbaum’s book stops with Aristotle.

*Post.* 22; 100; *Abr.* 47; *Sp. Legg.* 1.301; 4.154).<sup>9</sup> It is often accompanied by verbs more appropriate to scales, especially *ταλαντεύω* and *ἀντιρρέπω*. In general, Philo is fond of using the verbs *ταλαντεύω* and *ἀντιρρέπω* – even without the express similes – in descriptions of the vicissitudes of human life and human goodness (e.g. *Legg. All.* 2.83; *Gig.* 28; *Plant.* 111; *Mut.* 124; *Sp. Legg.* 4.167).

The methodical study of Philo's imagery has only recently begun to develop properly. Erwin R. Goodenough's *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (11 volumes, New York 1953–64) is still a monument of multifarious scholarship, but it often lets you down when you search for an explanation of a Philonian image.<sup>10</sup> Anita Méasson's work – within the limits she has set herself – is a step in the right direction. Like most things in Philo's well-stored mind, his images are often complex and derived from multiple sources. Some of them, or some of their combinations, may even be Philo's own invention, or part of his Alexandrian Jewish heritage no longer known to us. Where one can trace back some of his verbal expressions to extant sources, as we have done here, one feels for a brief moment on solid ground. Soon enough, the network of metaphors and images begins to spread and to become more complex and kaleidoscopic. Are Philo's scales and scale imagery merely his own elaboration of one Platonic metaphor, or does he owe something also to Critolaus? I think our cumulative evidence points towards some knowledge, and use, of Critolaus' scales as well as those of Plato. Is the combination between the wavering scales and the tottering ship Philo's own, or could he have found it also in some source – perhaps Critolaus as well? The frailty of virtue throughout one's life is a topic well-known to the Peripatetics: it would be idle to quote even those passages of Aristotle which deal with it. Critolaus may have used the simile of the ship in a context close enough to that of the scale. Or he may not. My guess is as good as yours.

Where Cicero's two passages agree, one can assume that he is using the same expressions as Critolaus. Thus, *quasi in altera librae lance* and *in alteram lancem* is roughly – as we have restored it from Philo – *ᾧσπερ/καθάπερ ἐπὶ πλάστιγγος*. *Terram et maria* are the Homeric *αὐτῇ...γαίῃ, αὐτῇ τε θαλάσσει*, probably used by Critolaus in the accusative, as in both passages of Cicero. What about *deprimat*, which is also in both passages of Cicero, and which has caused commentators much suffering ever since John Davies remarked in 1805: 'In balance leviora non *deprimantur*, sed attolluntur. Est igitur ἄκυρον'?'<sup>11</sup> Davies himself noted in his 1809 edition of *De Finibus*<sup>12</sup> that a similar confusion exists in a passage of Grattius. But it was only A. E. Housman, in his 'Notes on Grattius' of 1934,<sup>13</sup> taking his cue from

<sup>9</sup> On this simile of the ship, see Anita Méasson, *Du chair ailé de Zeus à l'Arche d'Alliance* (Paris, 1986), pp. 176–92 ('L'âme submergée par les flots'). The Platonic antecedents of this simile adduced by her on pp. 176–9 are meagre, and not very convincing.

<sup>10</sup> His chapter 'The Boat', vol. 8, 1958, pp. 157–65, is a good example: it treats select passages of Philo, where boats can be interpreted as 'psychopomps' as depicted in Jewish and early Christian art, and neglects our simile of 'the boat of life'.

<sup>11</sup> *M. Tullii Ciceronis Tusculanarum Disputationum Libri V, cum commentario Ioannis Davisii* (Oxford, 1805), p. 243. See Davies' edition of *De Finibus* (Oxford, 1809), p. 336; R. Klotz' edition of *Tusc.* (Leipzig, 1835), p. 533; Gustav Tischer's edition of *Tusc.* (Leipzig, 1850), p. 233. Raphael Kühner, in his edition of *Tusc.* (Jena, 1853), p. 428, tries in vain to show that *deprimat* simply has the required sense. J. N. Madvig's edition of *De Finibus* (Copenhagen<sup>2</sup>, 1876), p. 773, and Charles Anthon's edition of *Tusculans* (New York, 1852), p. 367 – probably independently of each other – assume that Cicero 'confounded these two distinct metaphors' (Anthon). But these are not two distinct metaphors: rather, two sides of the same metaphor.

<sup>12</sup> See reference in last note.

<sup>13</sup> *CQ* 28 (1934), 127–33, esp. 128–9 (now also in *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman*, edd. J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 1225–6). Housman is followed by

a neglected note of the elder Gronovius,<sup>14</sup> who noted the relative frequency of such confusions, in similar verbs, both in Latin and Greek. Grattius' *deducere* is paralleled by Cicero's *deprimere*, by *gravavit* in *Anthol. Lat.* 486.158; by *καθέλκειν* in Demosthenes, *De Pace* 12 and in Callimachus fr. 1.9, and by *καταβρίθω* in Theocritus 17.195. *καταβρίθω* is as old as Hesiod, *Op.* 234, and is used in its 'proper' sense by Theocritus elsewhere (7.146). But at 17.195, it clearly means 'to outweigh', and with the accusative of the outweighed: ὄλβω μὲν πάντας τε καταβρίθωι βασιλῆας.

No one, to my knowledge, has raised the question of Critolaus' Greek word rendered as *deprimat* by Cicero. *βρίθω* is not unusual in Philo: we have it in our passage, *Heres* 46, in *Deus* 25, and in *Spec. Legg.* 4.114, with an object in the accusative. *καταβρίθω* is never found in Philo, and the three places in Hesiod and Theocritus are the only ones supplied by the dictionaries. But Gronovius' and Housman's observations make it as good a candidate as any for the Greek counterpart of Cicero's *deprimat*: it would be virtually a *uerbum e uerbo* rendering – to use Cicero's own expression. The Latin prefix *de-* is often the counterpart of the Greek prefix *κατα-*.<sup>15</sup>

*Βρίση* in *Heres* 46 may well be an echo of this – if *Phdr.* 247b3–5 is not sufficient: but the simile of the horses and charioteer is never used by Philo in this context. One is almost tempted to amend to *καταβρίση* – but then one would require τὰ ὅλα in the accusative. This expression, τοῖς ὅλοις, was emended by Mangey to ταῖς ὁλκαῖς: a tempting emendation, which gives us yet another weighing expression. But a look at Leisegang's *Indices* (s.v. ὅλος) will suffice to show that Philo often uses τὰ ὅλα, the plural, in a sense nearer today's Greek than Attic: what in Attic would be πάντα or τὰ πάντα. This is especially frequent when the sense is that of 'all things in the world'. Now, at 47 – only a few words after *βρίση* – the papyrus adds the incomprehensible *αντηεν*. Could this be a misplaced gloss, originally written on top of *βρίση* to supply the prefix *ἀντί* – that is, that Philo may have written *ἀντιβρίση*? We have *ἀντιβρίθω* once in Philo (*Mos.* 2.228), in an intransitive sense, and, if one can trust the dictionaries, nowhere else in extant literature. But an *ἀντιβρίθω* would go well with τοῖς ὅλοις in the dative – and τὰ ὅλα would then parallel Critolaus' *terra et maria* and Homer's *αὐτῇ...γαίῃ...αὐτῇ τε θαλάσση*.<sup>16</sup>

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A. S. F. Gow (ed.), *Theocritus*, ii (Cambridge, 1952 (= 1950)), p. 341, n. on 17.195, who merely refers to 'CQ 28.128' without author and title. Could it be that at least the Greek evidence had been suggested to Housman by Gow?

<sup>14</sup> *Io. Freder. Gronovii Observationum Libri Quatuor*, ed. Fr. Platner (Leipzig, 1755), pp. 247–8 (Lib. II, Cap. XII, fin.)

<sup>15</sup> See G. Goetz (ed.), *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*, vii (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 551ff.

<sup>16</sup> This would still leave us with the papyrus' *περιττα* and G's *ἀρίσση* after ὅλοις. Cohn's interpretation makes the best sense so far. But G's reading may also have come from a gloss *ἀρίστη* on ἡ τῆς κρείττονος ζωῆς μοῖρα.