

THE *PARADOXA STOICORUM* IN VARRO'S *MENIPPEANS*

An examination of the fragments of Varro's *Menippean Satires* suggests fairly frequent use of the so-called Stoic paradoxes. This is both interesting and important, since it provides another clear link between Varro's satiric writing and that of the Roman verse satirists, who also treat or allude to the paradoxes when it suits their purposes. Since little has been done with the paradoxes in Varro's *Menippeans*, it is perhaps worth examining them closely, not only to see which ones he uses and what purposes they serve, but also to note the similarities and differences between them as they appear in Varro and the verse satirists.

As an organizing device for the study of Varro, it will be most convenient first to examine the fragments of his *Menippeans* for any of the six paradoxes Cicero uses in his *Paradoxa Stoicorum* and then to consider any passages from Varro which contain paradoxes not included in Cicero's work.¹ Cicero's first three paradoxes—(1) what is morally right is the only good; (2) virtue by itself is sufficient for happiness; and (3) all sins are equal in gravity and all virtuous actions equally meritorious—all reflect general moral principles.² There are no occurrences of the first or third of these paradoxes in Varro. This may be the result of chance, since it is always possible that they were referred to in passages not preserved. But the Roman satirists as a group do not seem to have been particularly interested in the abstract principles of these three paradoxes.³

An ironic question in the *Virgula divina* (571) deserves consideration:⁴ "non quaerenda est homini, qui habet virtutem, paenula in imbrī?" This appears to be an antagonistic response to the Latin form of Cicero's second paradox, "in quo virtus sit, ei nihil deesse ad beate vivendum." In this test of virtue against the realities of everyday life, the sage, that is, "the man who has true virtue," and his vaunted self-sufficiency can only seem foolish as they attempt to withstand the elements without more substantial raingear.

Closely related to this fragment is one from Lucilius, where a raincoat is also mentioned (515–16M): "paenula, si quaeris, cantherius servus segestre / utilior mihi quam sapiens." Here again the sage is associated with mundane things, although Lucilius seems to be interested in utility rather than self-sufficiency and need.⁵ Still, the similarity between the two fragments remains, for in both cases the sage is judged in practical terms and apparently is found to be lacking.

1. Cicero's work serves as a guide primarily because it is the only extant organized treatment of the paradoxes. The text of A. Lee, *M. Tulli Ciceronis Paradoxa Stoicorum* (London, 1953), is followed here. Lee's commentary and that of S. Stella, ed., *Paradoxa Stoicorum* (Milan, 1937) are best used in conjunction. It is generally agreed that Varro's *Saturae Menippeae* were completed by 67 B.C. at the latest and that Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum* was written around 46. For a discussion of the dating of Varro's *Menippeans*, see U. Knoche, *Die römische Satire*³ (Göttingen, 1971), p. 35, and J.-P. Cèbe, ed., *Varron: "Satires Menippées,"* vol. 1, Collection de l'École française de Rome, 9 (Rome, 1972), p. xv.

2. The Latin form of the paradoxes and the translations are from the text of Lee. See Lee, p. 31, on the question of their authenticity in the manuscripts.

3. Horace explicitly treats the third paradox twice (*Sat.* 1. 3. 76–124 and *Epist.* 1. 16. 53–56). By way of contrast, Lucian, while he never deals with the third paradox, shows a great deal of interest in the first (*Bis acc.* 20–21, *Hermot.* 36, *Symp.* 23–24, and *Pisc.* 34) and the second (*Pisc.* 35 and *Fug.* 29).

4. The fragments from Varro are from the text of Buecheler–Heraeus, *Varronis "Menippearum" reliquiae*, published as part of F. Buecheler, ed., *Petronii Saturae*⁸ (Berlin, 1922; reprinted, Berlin, 1958).

5. Lucilius seems to give attention to the paradoxes only twice, in the passage discussed here and

Since the whole or a part of the *Eumenides* is probably devoted to a Stoic paradox, as will be seen below, it is not unreasonable to look for Stoic ideas and sentiments in any fragment from that satire. In fragment 157, "'quia plus' inquit 'merere debet, in quo est virtus,'" the clause *in quo est virtus* is an obvious parallel to *in quo virtus sit*, the first clause of Cicero's second paradox. It is almost impossible, however, to go very far in interpreting the fragment. The two most obvious possibilities are: (1) the man in whom there is virtue ought to merit more than he ordinarily receives; or (2) the man in whom there is virtue should be more deserving, i.e., he gets more than he merits. Thus, it could be argued that the speaker in the passage is either well disposed or hostile toward the sage. Finally, however, the most that can be said without hesitation is that this fragment in part reflects the wording of the second paradox as found in Cicero's Latin version.

Cicero's last three paradoxes—(4) all fools are mad; (5) only the wise man is free and all fools are slaves; and (6) only the wise man is rich—describe the character of the wise man and his opposite, the fool. Of these the fourth paradox is well represented in Varro, for at least one satire is entirely devoted to this theme and there is the possibility that it played an important part in another.⁶

The *Eumenides*, which is represented by forty-seven fragments, deals in large part, if not entirely, with the Stoic idea of universal madness. Because of the abundance of fragments and the general agreement on its theme, the satire should be quite amenable to reconstruction. This is not the case, however, and a great variety of reconstructions have been offered. These range from viewing the piece as a description of the punishment of the *stulti*, who are observed by several people in a tower, to interpreting it as a table conversation among philosophers. One of the more reasonable reconstructions is that of Buecheler, who believes that the satire deals with a man who comes to think that he is *insanus* and who then goes through a process of purification involving contact with various religions and philosophies. In the end he is restored to the ranks of the *sani*.⁷

As is the case with Petronius' *Satyricon* and Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*, and probably with Menippean satire as a whole, this satire appears to have a great deal more action and movement than is commonly found in verse satire. But there seems to be a clear parallel with verse satire in the structuring of the subject matter. The most interesting possibility is that many of the fragments describe passions of the soul (*ambitio*, *avaritia*, *luxuria*, and *superstitio*), qualities which are used by both Horace and Persius in satires which are devoted completely to

in frag. 1178M. For more comment see E. Leon, "The Psychiatric Cases in Horace, *Satire* 2.3," *CJ* 47 (1952): 211, 214. However, for another view, see G. Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace* (Madison, 1920), pp. 51, 56, 88, 387–98, and M. Puelma Piwonka, *Lucilius und Kallimachos* (Bamberg, 1949), p. 100, n. 1.

6. There is a textual problem in Cicero's treatment of the fourth paradox. Although the paradox listed is the one on moral madness, Cicero's discussion of it breaks off early (§ 27) and the remainder of the Latin text appears to be a discussion of the paradox "all fools are exiles" (§§ 27–32). See Stella, *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, pp. 43–44.

7. F. Buecheler, *Kleine Schriften*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1915–30), 1: 562–63. For other reconstructions, see K. Mras, "Varros Menippeische Satiren und die Philosophie," *NJB* 33 (1914): 413–14; P. Lejay, *Oeuvres d'Horace: "Satires"* (Paris, 1911), pp. 381–83; Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*, p. 389; B. McCarthy, "The Form of Varro's Menippean Satire," in *Philological Studies in Honor of W. Miller*, ed. R. P. Robinson (Columbia, Mo., 1936), p. 100.

developing the theme of a single paradox.⁸ However, since only some of the fragments fit readily into this pattern, it is arguable that treatment of these passions occupied only a part of the satire's action.⁹

There are also some individual features common to Varro and Horace. In Varro, boys and girls swarm about the protagonist like furies (146), while in Horace the children gather about the *insanus* (*Sat.* 2. 3. 130) and the *sapiens* (*Sat.* 1. 3. 133–34). Another parallel is to be found in the use of Ajax as an example of a madman (Varro 125; *Hor. Sat.* 2. 3. 187–207).

A more important issue arises from a consideration of the *Eumenides*. What sort of treatment did the tenet on moral madness receive in Varro's hands? There is no ready answer to this obvious question, although it is tempting to presume that the whole satire is a "piece of preposterousness."¹⁰ But, like Horace, Varro probably accepts from the Stoics what he finds reasonable and rejects the rest, overlaying everything with a good-natured humor.

There is one fragment remaining from the satire *Ajax stramenticius* (18): "hac re aeger medicos exquisitum convocabat, ut convalesceret." This is considered by Buecheler to be part of a treatment of the fourth paradox.¹¹ Dahlmann and Heisterhagen agree and go on to suggest that the Ajax in this satire is another example of the type of *insanus* which appears in the *Eumenides* (125).¹² Unfortunately, it is impossible to go any further than to suggest that Ajax is here the subject of an inquiry into moral madness.

The satirists, verse and Menippean alike, sometimes deal with the sage by grouping together his various characteristics as touted by the Stoics. The satiric technique consists of altering the virtues so that they appear foolish, or simply belittling them by constructing extremely long lists of attributes. The three attributes based on Cicero's last three paradoxes—*sanus*, *liber*, and *dives*—though commonly made part of such enumerations,¹³ do not occur in Varro. There is, however, one listing of attributes which is found in his *Longe fugit qui suos fugit* (245): "solus rex, solus rhetor, solus formosus, fortis, aecus vel ad aedilicium modium, purus putus: si ad hunc *χαρακτήρα Κλεάνθους* conveniet, cave attigeris hominem." *Rex*, *rhetor*, *formosus*, and *fortis* are commonly applied to the sage and are otherwise unremarkable.¹⁴ But the satirist's own additions reshape the meaning of the description. Besides his usual qualities, the sage is unbelievably pure (*purus putus*) and would even be equitable in administering the grain dole, a

8. Horace (*Sat.* 2. 3) is also discussing the fourth paradox, but Persius (*Sat.* 5) uses these same divisions to discuss the fifth paradox. It should be added that Horace made use of this paradox three times (*Sat.* 2. 3; *Epist.* 1. 6. 15–16, 1. 16. 21–24).

9. See Buecheler, *Kleine Schriften*, 1: 562–63, for suggested groupings of some of the fragments according to the passions. For a different arrangement see Mras, "Varros Menippeische Satiren," pp. 413–15.

10. This is the conclusion of Mras, "Varros Menippeische Satiren," p. 415.

11. Buecheler, *Kleine Schriften*, 1: 537. This view has been recently reaffirmed by J.-P. Cèbe, *Varron: "Satires Ménippées,"* 1: 85.

12. H. Dahlmann and R. Heisterhagen, "Varronische Studien, I: Zu den *Logistorici*," *AAWM* 4 (1957): 724, n. 1. These writers also suggest (pp. 722–23) that Varro dealt with Orestes as an expert on universal moral madness in *Orestes vel de insania*, which was part of his *Logistoricon libri*. If this is so, it indicates that Varro paid considerable attention to this doctrine and it also increases the probability that the Menippean fragment dealt with here is related to a treatment of the fourth paradox.

13. E.g., *Hor. Epist.* 1. 1. 106–8 has *dives*, *liber*, and *sanus*.

14. Cf. *Hor. Sat.* 1. 3. 125–26 and *Lucian Vit. auct.* 20.

duty which was much abused for profit. Varro then identifies this upright man specifically with Cleanthes, who was noted for his moral severity and impeccability, though he might well have chosen Zeno or Chrysippus to identify the type he is talking about, if all he wanted was an example of a Stoic in principle. The conclusion is obvious: if you find one of these extraordinary types, simply avoid him. Varro's additions, then, have heightened the hyperbole of the Stoic rhetoric about the sage and may cast doubt on the authenticity of any of the wise man's claims.

If all of the identifications made above are assumed to be correct, there are in the fragments of Varro's *Menippeans* a total of five allusions, references, or thematic uses of the Stoic paradoxes. Given the limited number of fragments left to us, this is a considerable number, and it indicates a level of interest about equal to that of Lucian and Horace, who have respectively seventeen and thirteen instances of the paradoxes in their writings. By way of contrast and as an indication of relative interest, Persius has only two and Juvenal four.¹⁵

Interpretation, however, is more difficult. In every case, except the *Ajax stramenticius*, which is noncommittal, and the *Longe fugit qui suos fugit*, which appears to be hostile, the lack of a context makes it impossible to come to any firm conclusions about Varro's attitude toward these tenets.

Although the evidence in Varro is necessarily limited, there are a few parallels, especially with Horace, in terms of specific illustrations. Ajax as a type of *insanus* and the use of figurative furies stand out. There is the use of the traditional passions of the soul by Varro, Horace, and Persius as divisions of subject matter. There is also the practical test of the sage's self-sufficiency which appears in Varro and Lucilius. Finally, Varro and the verse satirists compile lists of the attributes of the sage. It can be said, then, not only that Varro makes extensive use of these truisms, but also that his interest in them appears to be quite like the interest of the verse satirists, Lucilius, Horace, and Persius.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is at least a logical supposition that, since Horace uses Cicero's fifth and sixth paradoxes, Varro probably dealt with them, although no traces of them have survived.

Since four of the five passages which were considered above can be directly related to Cicero's second and fourth paradoxes, it is clear that their satiric popularity antedates their inclusion in Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum*. Also, the similarities between Varro's treatment of the paradoxes and that of the verse satirists suggest that the satirical writers drew from common, perhaps traditional, sources. It is not necessary or compelling that it be a single source, although a possible such source is Hecaton Rhodius' *Περὶ παραδόξων*. This is the only known composition which was written by a Stoic to examine the paradoxes with serious philosophical intent.¹⁷ But whether Hecaton is ultimately the source or not, there

15. Even when Juvenal makes use of the paradoxes, it appears to be simply as a satiric commonplace, not as a matter of moral interest. See, for example, *Sat.* 7. 189-94, where the attributes of the *sapiens* are applied to a *felix*.

16. Some excellent observations on the paradoxes in Cicero and some of the satirists are to be found in K. Reckford, "Studies in Persius," *Hermes* 90 (1962): 492-93.

17. Not much is known about Hecaton's work except that he disagreed with Panaetius over the self-sufficiency of virtue (i.e., paradox 2 as found in Cicero) and that he wrote at least three books on the paradoxes, since Diogenes Laertius (7. 124) quotes from the third book. For more discussion of Hecaton, see M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*³ (Göttingen, 1964), 1: 240-41, 2: 123-24; H. Gomoll, *Der stoische Philosoph Hecaton* (Bonn, 1933), esp. pp. 89-90. Gomoll, without offering evidence, suggests that Hecaton's treatment of the paradoxes became normative for Cicero and the writers of verse satire. He does not, however, take Varro into account.

appears to be some sort of a pre-Ciceronian grouping of the paradoxes which influenced the choices of Varro and the verse satirists.

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NEW EVIDENCE FOR THE KLEISTHENIC *BOULE*

In 1972, J. J. Keaney and A. E. Raubitschek¹ republished an account of ostracism that is found on folio 222 of the Byzantine manuscript, Vaticanus Graecus 1144, a parchment codex of the fifteenth century which contains on folios 215^v–225^v a collection of *apophthegmata*, *gnomai*, and historical material. This manuscript was first published by Leo Sternbach in 1894,² but its description of ostracism went unnoticed until recently. The account reads as follows:

- (1) Κλεισθένης τὸν ἐξοστρακισμοῦ νόμον ἐς Ἀθήνας εἰσήνεγκεν.
- (2) ἦν δὲ τοιοῦτος·
- (3) τὴν βουλὴν τινῶν ἡμερῶν σκεψαμένων (σκεψαμένην Sternbach)
- (4) ἐπιγράφειν ἕθος (ἦν suppl. Sternbach) εἰς δστρακα
- (5) ὅντινα δέοι τῶν πολιτῶν φυγαδευθῆναι
- (6) καὶ ταῦτα ρίπτειν εἰς τὸ τοῦ βουλευτηρίου περίφραγμα.
- (7) ὅτῳ δὲ ἂν ὑπὲρ διακόσια γένηται τὰ δστρακα
- (8) φεύγειν ἔτη δέκα,
- (9) τὰ ἐκείνου καρπούμενον.
- (10) ὅσπερον δὲ τὸν δῆμον (τῷ δήμῳ Sternbach) ἔδοξε νομοθετῆσαι
- (11) ὑπὲρ ἑξακισχίλια γίνεσθαι τὰ δστρακα τοῦ φυγαδευθῆναι μέλλοντος.

Keaney notes (p. 89) that the account occurs as part of a group of items which has no organization and, thus, that its context provides no indication of origin; as to the content, he observes (p. 90) that, whatever the textual difficulties and problems of interpretation, the account has an internal consistency and the appearance of being drawn from a single source. Raubitschek (p. 91) suggests that Theophrastos may be the source, and that the statement here is part of a larger account on ostracism in his *Nomoi*;³ as well, he thinks that this new information about the first law of ostracism would belong at the beginning of a systematic account given by Philochoros fragment 30.⁴ At best, then, this account comes from the researches and scholarship of Theophrastos, and may well be derived from documentary evidence of the highest order, the *nomoi* of Kleisthenes.⁵

This discussion is a revised version of part of a paper that I delivered at the June, 1973 meetings of the Classical Association of Canada in Kingston, Ontario.

1. "A Late Byzantine Account of Ostracism," *AJP* 93 (1972): 87–91. The article is divided into two parts; the first has been written by Keaney (pp. 87–90), the second by Raubitschek (pp. 90–91).

2. "Gnomologium Parisinum ineditum, Appendix Vaticana," *Rozprawy Umiejtnosci Wydział Filologiczny*, 2nd ser., 5 (1894): 135–218.

3. Raubitschek is a leading authority on Theophrastos and his statements on ostracism; see, e.g., his exceptional paper, "Theophrastos on Ostracism," *C & M* 19 (1958): 73–109. Until he prepares a thorough study of this manuscript account, I am prepared to accept his preliminary judgment as to source.

4. The nonsensical τὰ ἐκείνου καρπούμενον ([9] of the manuscript account) appears to be a perversion of καρπούμενον τὰ αὐτοῦ found in Philochoros frag. 30.

5. Kleisthenes' *nomos* on ostracism is singled out in the *AthPol.* at 22. 1, but no details of its substance are provided.