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CICERO'S TWO LOVES[1]

In a recent paper, I identified what seemed to me to be a subconscious tension in Cicero's dialogue, *Laelius De amicitia*. As the dialogue proper begins, Fannius insists that his father-in-law Laelius may more justly be called "wise" than any other living human being, and indeed, even wiser that Cato, of the previous generation[2]. Cato may have been a great political leader, but Laelius excels also in learning, to such an extent that all agree that no one was his equal, even in Greece, unless perhaps it was Socrates. Laelius believes that the only important thing in life is virtue, which is under his own control; he is thus immune to external accidents – the view that was associated, of course, with the classical Stoa. This is why Laelius is able to bear up so well under the recent loss of his dear friend, Scipio. To be sure, Laelius is not wholly unmoved, but such an immediate response to the death of a dear one was entirely consistent with Stoic principles, although Cicero does not mention it here: it would count as a pre-emotion, an instinctive reaction to which one had not assented, comparable to growing pale at the prospect of a storm at sea or blushing at an obscene remark[3]. Nevertheless, Laelius rejects Fannius' compliment and insists that it was precisely Cato, if anyone, who deserved to be called wise, if for no other reason than the way he bore up when his son died. Others too, of course, have lost sons – Laelius names Paulus and Galus – but their sons were just boys. Cato's son, on the contrary, was an adult, and already renowned in his own right. For this behavior, Cato can even be said to have been wiser than Socrates, who was never put to such a test.

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[2] Konstan 2015.

[3] Cf. Sen. *ira* 2, 2. Kraß 2016 asks «Warum muss erst der eine Freund sterben, damit der andere in leidenschaftlicher Weise über die Freundschaft sprechen kann?» His survey of friendship among men seeks to answer this question.

In sidestepping Fannius' tribute and deferring to Cato, Laelius may well be affirming indirectly that his own claim to wisdom is illustrated above all in his ability to retain his serenity despite his recent bereavement. But why, then, does Laelius maintain that Cato's behavior gave him an even greater title to being called wise? In what way did he fall short of Cato in bearing up under grief? Modesty may of course be part of the reason, but I believe that there is something else at stake. In the abovementioned paper, I suggested that there had crept into Cicero's text a sorrow of his own, namely the recent death of his beloved daughter Tullia. Even though he was composing an essay on friendship, deep down inside he regarded the loss of a mature child as a greater trial and hence a greater proof of wisdom than that of a friend[4]. As a result, Cicero inadvertently undercut his own praise of friendship, or at the very least indicated that, in his own view, parental love is more intense than that between friends and that the death of a child is correspondingly harder to bear[5].

I would like to step back here from my earlier psychologizing interpretation of this exchange, and consider it rather as a sign or statement of Cicero's intuition about the nature of love. There would seem to be something in the love of a parent for a child that really does exceed, or at all events differs from, the affection that unites friends, even if a friend is, as it were, another self – or another self *tout court*, as Cicero puts it, with less cautious qualification, in some of his letters[6]. How does paren-

[4] Contrast Seneca's epistle to Lucilius: «I enclose a copy of the letter which I wrote to Marullus at the time when he had lost his little son and was reported to be rather womanish in his grief – a letter in which I have not observed the usual form of condolence: for I did not believe that he should be handled gently, since in my opinion he deserved criticism rather than consolation [...]. "Is it solace that you look for? Let me give you a scolding instead! You are like a woman in the way you take your son's death; what would you do if you had lost an intimate friend? A son, a little child of unknown promise, is dead; a fragment of time has been lost [...]. Had you lost a friend (which is the greatest blow of all), you would have had to endeavour rather to rejoice because you had possessed him than to mourn because you had lost him"» (99, 1-3, trans. Gummere 1925).

[5] On Cicero's response to Tullia's death, including his wish to build a *fanum* in her honor and his failure to complete it, see Englert 2017; Englert argues that Cicero worked through his grief in the months that followed Tullia's death, and concludes: «Once Cicero had freed himself from the thought he needed to continue to grieve and build a *fanum* for Tullia and live out the rest of his life in its shadow, he was able to console himself and work out a way to honor Tullia's memory in a truer and more satisfying way, and one which was applicable not just to himself, but to his fellow Romans» (63). For a psychological interpretation in the Lacanian mode, see Martelli 2016.

[6] Cf. *fam.* 7, 5, addressed to Julius Caesar, *vide quam mihi persuaserim te me esse alterum*; with the qualifier, *ad Brut.* 1, 15, 2 (=23, 2), *ad te tamquam ad alterum me*: see S. Ci-

tal love stand up, then, in comparison to Cicero's definition of *amicitia*, which runs: «Friendship, then, is nothing other than the agreement on all matters human and divine, together with goodwill and affection»[7]. We may observe that this account of friendship could seem tactless, given that Cicero dedicates the treatise to Atticus, an avowed Epicurean who cannot have held the same views as Cicero on matters either human or divine[8]. To complicate matters still further, Laelius levels a stern criticism against those who regard pleasure as the highest good, the thesis that was at the very heart of Epicureanism. What is more, Laelius at once attacks the Epicureans for locating the highest good in pleasure, which he says is characteristic of beasts (*beluarum*, 20). His deeper criticism of the Epicureans, however, comes soon afterwards, and is aimed at their view of friendship as originating in need and dependency. He affirms that, on the contrary, the source of friendship is love, and he adduces as evidence for this claim the fact *amor* shares the same root as *amicitia* (*amor enim, ex quo amicitia nominata est*, 26). Not content with an etymological demonstration, Laelius goes on to argue that friendship arises from nature rather than out of weakness or need (*a natura mihi videtur*

troni Marchetti in this volume n. 29 and Vielberg 2017, n. 71. In a letter to Atticus (3, 15, 4 = 60 SB) after his decision to go into exile, Cicero exploits the *topos* of the friend as second self to soften his criticism of Atticus' failure to provide good counsel: *sed tu tantum lacrimas praebuisti dolori meo, quod erat amoris, tam quam ipse ego; quod meritis meis perfectum potuit, ut dies et noctes quid mihi faciendum esset cogitares, id abs te meo non tuo scelere praetermissum est. quod si non modo tu sed quisquam fuisset qui me Pompei minus liberali responso perterritum a turpissimo consilio revocaret, quod unus tu facere maxime potuisti, (aut occubuissem honeste) aut victores hodie viveremus. hic mihi ignosces; me enim ipsum multo magis accuso, deinde te quasi me alterum et simul meae culpae socium quaero* («you had only tears for my distress, the tribute of affection, just as I had myself. Desert on my part might have gained me something beyond, your daily and nightly meditation as to what it was best for me to do; that, through my delinquency not yours, you did not furnish. If you, or anyone else for that matter, at the time when I was thrown into consternation by Pompey's ungenerous response had held me back from a most discreditable resolution, as you were uniquely in a position to do, I should either have met an honourable death or be living triumphant today. You must forgive me here. I am reproaching myself far more than you, and if I do reproach you it is as my alter ego; also I am looking for someone to share the blame», trans. Shackleton Bailey 1999).

[7] *Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio* (20); cf. *Pro Plancio* 5, *vetus est enim lex illa iustae veraeque amicitiae quae mihi cum illo iam diu est, ut idem amici semper velint, neque est ullum amicitiae certius vinculum quam consensus et societas consiliorum et voluntatum.*

[8] For an interpretation of *De amicitia* as a reflection of Cicero's friendship with Atticus, see Vielberg 2017, 266; Vielberg notes that in his letters Cicero assigned the code name "Furius" to Atticus and "Laelius" to himself (*Ad Atticum* 2, 20, 5 and 2, 19, 5). One could wish to know what Atticus might have said to console Cicero over his daughter's death; might he have adopted too Epicurean a tone? But speculation on the matter is idle.

potius quam ab indigentia orta amicitia), and that it involves an inclination of the mind along with a kind of loving feeling, rather than from a calculation of the utility[9]. Given that the basis of love is natural, Laelius reasonably states that even animals feel affection for their offspring and are loved by them in turn, a sentiment that is still more apparent in the case of human beings, in the first instance in the affection (*caritas*) between parents and children (27).

Now, that animals feel affection for their young was a common view among ancient writers, affirmed by Aristotle and the Stoics, and for that matter by the Epicureans as well. Thus Aristotle, at the very beginning of his discussion of φιλία in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (8, 1, 3, 1155a, 16-18), remarks that «it seems that love inheres by nature in a parent toward the offspring and in the offspring toward the parent, not only among human beings but also in birds and in most animals, and also in those of the same species toward one another»[10]. Again, when Aristotle appeals to a mother's love for her child, even if the child has been given up for adoption and does not know its true parents, as evidence that φιλία consists more in loving than in being loved (*NE* 8, 8, 3, 1159a, 26-32), he seems to regard such maternal affection as innate, since it is not based on the virtue of the child, nor on any pleasure or advantage it might confer (unless there is pleasure in knowing that it is well, but Aristotle does not indicate any such thing). Seneca affirms that birds and other animals love their offspring with a mad ferocity, although their grief upon losing them is short lived[11]. This is because they do not cherish them in memory. However, the prolonged mourning experienced by human beings is not a measure of their love but a perversion; as Seneca explains, "no animal has a lengthy sorrow for its offspring except man, who adheres to his grief and is stirred not to the extent that he feels it but to the extent that he has decided to be"[12]. Lucretius notes the remarkable ability of animals to recognize their mothers and mothers to recognize their

[9] *Applicatione magis animi cum quodam sensu amandi quam cogitatione, quantum illa res utilitatis esset habitura* (27).

[10] Φύσει τ' ἐνυπάρχειν ἔοικε πρὸς τὸ γεγεννημένον τῷ γεννήσαντι καὶ πρὸς τὸ γεννῆσαν τῷ γεννηθέντι, οὐ μόνον ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ὄρνισι καὶ τοῖς πλείστοις τῶν ζῴων, καὶ τοῖς ὁμοεθνέσι πρὸς ἄλληλα.

[11] *Ep.* 99, 24, *sic aves, sic ferae suos diligunt, quarum concitatus est amor et paene rabidus, sed cum amissis totus extinguitur.*

[12] *Marc.* 7, 2. Cf. Cic. *fin.* 3, 62-68; Chrysippus, *SVF* 3, 179, 43; Blundell 1990.

young, which he illustrates by the longing a cow feels if her calf goes missing (2, 352-366):

> Nam saepe ante deum vitulus delubra decora
> turicremas propter mactatus concidit aras
> sanguinis expirans calidum de pectore flumen;
> at mater viridis saltus orbata peragrans
> novit humi pedibus vestigia pressa bisulcis,
> omnia convisens oculis loca, si queat usquam
> conspicere amissum fetum, completque querellis
> frondiferum nemus adsistens et crebra revisit
> ad stabulum desiderio perfixa iuvenci,
> [...]
> nec vitulorum aliae species per pabula laeta
> derivare queunt animum curaque levare;
> usque adeo quiddam proprium notumque requirit.

For often a calf, slain in front of a temple of the gods, has fallen at the incense-bearing altars, pouring a warm river of blood from its breast; but its bereft mother, wandering through the green fields, recognizes the traces left by its cleft hooves in the ground, scans every place with its eyes, if perhaps she may detect somewhere her lost newborn, and she stops and fills the leafy woods with her cries, and again and again returns to the stable, transfixed with longing for the calf [...] *Nor can other kinds of calf in the flourishing meadows divert her mind and relieve her anxiety: that is how much she seeks what is her own and familiar to her* (my translation).

Like Seneca, Lucretius takes it for granted that the cow's anguish is perfectly natural; unlike human beings, whose grief is prolonged and exaggerated by false beliefs about the afterlife, the pain that animals experience is commensurate with their instinctive affection for their young.

Having adduced the affection between parents and children as the surest example of the instinctive rather than utilitarian character of love, above all among human beings, Laelius affirms that such affection is inextinguishable, unless some abominable crime is committed (*quae dirimi nisi detestabili scelere non potest*, 27). Clearly, this proviso is not applicable to animals, which do not commit crimes, however aggressive or violent they may be, and which do not love their offspring any less if they turn out to be deficient in virtue. Even among human beings, such a reason for the quenching of affection can only occur if children have

reached adulthood or the age of reason, for, even if Laelius sees no need to mention it explicitly, no one holds infants morally responsible for their behavior. Although Laelius stipulates almost in passing that parental affection can, in the case of human beings, be undermined or overridden because of extreme vice, as though it followed naturally from his claim that parental love is natural or inborn, it clearly serves as a transition to a specifically human form of affection or friendship, predicated, as Laelius goes on to say, on an appreciation of virtue in a way that the instinctive fondness for offspring is not.

Virtue is the key, in Laelius' opinion, to human friendships. We experience a feeling of love (*sensus amoris*), he states, even for strangers and indeed for enemies if we recognize in them probity of character; as he puts it, «nothing is more lovable than virtue» (*nihil est enim virtute amabilius*, 28). So powerful is the attraction of virtue that remember with affection (*caritas*) even people we have never met – a Roman version of the Stoic notion that all virtuous people are friends, whether or not they know each other[13]. Certainly, there is no natural tendency among animals to feel affection for paragons of virtue in their species whose deeds and character they know only by report. Cicero has clearly shifted ground and is now standing firmly on the terrain of *amicitia*, not the innate love for offspring that is common to animals and human beings.

If we return now to the example of Cato, we may surmise that he is held up by Laelius as a model of sagacity because he was able to endure, with appropriate serenity if not with utter impassivity, the loss of someone to whom he was bound by a double tie of affection: on the one hand, the innate love of parents for their children, and, on the other hand, an appreciation of the virtue of the mature young man, who had earned, as Laelius points out, public esteem for his character in his own right. Even had the boy been of mediocre integrity, or if he did not, as an adult, share all the opinions of his father in regard to matters human and divine, Cato would not have ceased to love him as a parent, though not, we may suppose, for the same reasons that one loves a friend.

I must surely seem to have belabored an obvious matter in calling attention to the distinction between natural affection and the love that underlies friendship, but I believe that the relationship between the two conceptions has not received the attention it deserves, in particular in

[13] Cf. Plut. *not. comm.* 1068f = *SVF* 3, 627; Brouwer 2014, 90 n. 128.

connection with Cicero's views. First, we may observe that an appreciation of virtue as the basis for friendship constitutes a fundamental modification of Cicero's definition, since vicious people can presumably agree on things human and divine, and feel affection into the bargain. If friendship is based on virtue rather than on a coincidence of views, then one can exclude such comradeship among scoundrels as a true form of *amicitia*[14]. Second, Cicero, as a political leader in a time of crisis, requires a motive for dissolving friendships when discord between the friends reaches a certain level; inevitably in such circumstances, one casts the blame on the other for having betrayed the principles on which the friendship was founded, and thus manifesting a radical loss of virtue. Cicero offers the example of Gaius Blossius Cumanus' misplaced affection for Tiberius Gracchus as a case in point: in response to Blossius' affirmation that he would have set fire to the Capitol, if Gracchus had bade him do it, Cicero expostulates: «it does not excuse a crime that you committed it for the sake of a friend» (37)[15].

We recall that Blossius first replied to the insidious question that Gracchus would never have wished such a thing, and only then added that, should Gracchus have requested it, he would have complied. For Cicero, this statement represents the height of villainy, a *nefaria vox*[16]. But we might rather say that it indicates both a profound confidence in the judgment of his friend and a wish always to accommodate him – and we might further affirm that this is just what love is like. For just such a definition, we may turn to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

Aristotle discusses φιλία in the *Rhetoric* in the context of his analysis of the πάθη generally, but there is one respect in which his definition of φιλία differs from those of the other emotions. He writes: «Let τὸ φιλεῖν be wishing for someone the things that he deems good, for the sake of that person and not oneself, and the accomplishment of these things to the best of one's ability» (2, 4, 2, 1380b, 36 – 1381a, 1)[17]. For example, Aristotle defines anger as «a desire, accompanied by pain, for a perceived

[14] As Laelius says later on, *talis improborum consensio non modo excusatione amicitiae tegenda non est, sed potius supplicio omni vindicanda est* (43).

[15] For discussion of Cicero's view of friendship in the context of contemporary politics, see Konstan 1997, 122-137; one may note the lengths to which Cicero goes to renounce his earlier *amicitia* with Marc Antony in the second Philippic oration.

[16] Cf. *Lael.* 83, *itaque in eis perniciosus est error, qui existimant lubidinum peccatorumque omnium patere in amicitia licentiam.*

[17] Ἔστω δὴ τὸ φιλεῖν τὸ βούλεσθαί τινι ἃ οἴεται ἀγαθά, ἐκείνου ἕνεκα ἀλλὰ μὴ αὑτοῦ, καὶ τὸ κατὰ δύναμιν πρακτικὸν εἶναι τούτων.

revenge, on account of a perceived slight on the part of people who are not fit to slight one or one's own» (*Rhetoric* 2, 2, 1378a, 31-33). Again, he writes: «Let fear be a kind of pain or disturbance deriving from an image of a future evil that is destructive or painful» (2, 5, 1382a, 21-22); and of shame he says: «Let αἰσχύνη, then, be a pain or disturbance concerning those ills, either present, past, or future, that are perceived to lead to disgrace» (2, 6, 1383b, 12-14; the definitions of pity, envy, indignation, and gratitude, for example, take a similar form). The difference in the case of φιλία, or more precisely of the verbal form, τὸ φιλεῖν, is that no cause is indicated for the sentiment. Rather, Aristotle simply indicates that a person who loves another is motivated by an entirely selfless concern for the well-being and satisfaction of the loved one, with no reference at all to the triad of pleasure, utility, and virtue that he identifies in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as the things that are lovable in a person. The definition in the *Rhetoric* provides what we might call a bare phenomenology of the sentiment: this is what it is like to love, and the causes, such as they might have been, are not relevant here. As for friendship or φιλία proper, that is simply the reciprocal sentiment of loving: «A φίλος is one who loves [ὁ φιλῶν] and is loved in return [ἀντιφιλούμενος]», and when two people are so disposed toward one another, then they take it that they are φίλοι. Blossius could well have appealed to Aristotle's definition in defense of his attitude toward Tiberius Gracchus.

But there is a further point of tension between Aristotle's definition of love and Cicero's conception of friendship. Cicero is, as we have observed, emphatic in denying that friendship arises out of need or weakness. «Was Africanus in need of me? Not in the least, by Hercules. Nor I of him, to be sure» (*Africanus indigens mei? minime hercule! ac ne ego quidem illius*, 30). The attraction between the two rested entirely on the appreciation of one another's virtue, confirmed over time. Advantages, even great ones, indeed accrued to both as a result of their association, but the expectation of such benefits was not the motive for their friendship. Apart from the question of cause, however, there is the subjective character of their affection, and this, according to Aristotle, consists precisely in a desire to confer benefits, or what the other believes to be good. But what room is there for such a desire between people who are wholly self-sufficient and in no way in need of the services of the other?

Aristotle's definition of φιλία clearly addresses human affection: animals do not concern themselves with what others regard as good. Yet it

readily maps onto the kind of instinctive love that animals, like human beings, feel for their offspring: parents tend their young for their sake, not their own, if we can speak of "sake" or intentional selflessness in the case of animals. The higher mammals, including human beings, are biologically programmed to nurture their young, even at the expense of their own well-being; this is essential to the survival of the species. With Aristotle's definition of love, it is possible to see the connection between what I have been calling instinctive affection, above all but not only parental (it exists too, according to Aristotle, among members of the same species), and the emotion that subtends human friendship, which to be sure has its origin in a variety of causes, as Aristotle makes clear in his ethical treatises, and which Cicero's Laelius reduces to Aristotle's own privileged motive, the recognition of virtue. Love is essentially protective; it is caring in both senses of the term, a feeling of affection ("I care for him") and tending to another ("I take care of him"). Friendship is a special application, we might say, of the innate disposition to support those who depend on us, extending the range of the sentiment to include not just offspring and parents but also people who earn our affection through one or another kind of behavior.

I would like to suggest that something like this double sense of caring is what makes Cato's fortitude at the death of his son so poignant, in Laelius' view, and also why Cicero, in real life, was so devastated by the loss of his daughter Tullia. It is not demeaning to human love to imagine that there was, in Cicero's response, something akin to the despair of the mother cow over the loss of her calf, which Lucretius describes so touchingly. I may add that the frame of Cicero's dialogue on friendship itself illustrates the double nature of affective bonds, for Laelius' interlocutors, Gaius Fannius Strabo and Quintus Mucius Scaevola, are none other than his sons-in-law, and while affection for relations by marriage may strike us as less instinctive than that for natural offspring, for the Romans both were family. We may compare the remarkable poem of Catullus, in which he exclaims to the faithless Lesbia (72, 3-4):

> dilexi tum te non tantum ut vulgus amicam,
> sed pater ut gnatos diligit et generos.
>
> *I loved you then not as the common herd love a girlfriend,*
> *but as a father loves his sons and sons-in-law.*

What is more, Cicero explains in his introduction to the essay that he had heard of Laelius' discourse from Scaevola, who recited it to the young Cicero and a few other friends; for Cicero's father entrusted his son to the care of Scaevola, so that he might absorb some of his wisdom (when this Scaevola, who was an augur, died, Cicero passed to the tutelage of his cousin, Scaevola the pontifex). The context for the entire work is thus the instruction of a young man by a father figure or surrogate, a situation that is reproduced in the dialogue proper.

Between Laelius and Scipio, those paragons of friendship, there was no such hierarchical relation, of course – or was there? In his *De re publica* (1, 18), Cicero informs us that «there was in their friendship a kind of rule between them, that on the battlefield Laelius revered Africanus as a god because of his outstanding glory in war, but at home, in turn, Scipio regarded Laelius as a surrogate father because he was more advanced in age»[18]. Although Laelius does not describe their relationship in these terms in *De amicitia*, he does say that it would have been more just for him to have died first, since he was born the earlier (*quem fuerat aequius, ut prius introieram, sic prius exire de vita*, 15), a sentiment more common on the lips of parents whose children have predeceased them.

I fear that I may seem to be applying the kind of oversubtle style of literary criticism that is sometimes associated especially with American scholars, who are thought to turn away from the tough labor of establishing texts and determining sources to engage in airy speculation on the hypothetical deeper meaning of a work. But the analogy or connection, however partial, between parental love and friendship is Cicero's own, and it invites us to examine from another angle Cicero's radical dismissal of dependency in his understanding of *amicitia*. In part, of course, Cicero is taking his usual line against Epicurean materialism and the exaltation of pleasure as the goal of life. A papyrus fragment, apparently from a dialogue by Epicurus himself, seems to support Cicero's account of the Epicurean position[19]. I cite the text and translation according to the forthcoming edition by David Sedley, who was kind enough to grant me permission to quote it here. The relevant lines read: «It is thus necessary to establish and ascribe the cause of the joy

[18] *Fuit enim hoc in amicitia quasi quoddam ius inter illos, ut militiae propter eximiam belli gloriam Africanum ut deum coleret Laelius, domi vicissim Laelium, quod aetate antecedebat, observaret in parentis loco Scipio.*

[19] P. Berol. inv. 10536; for the text, see Capasso 2012; Vassallo 2016.

we take in friends in accord with utility in regard to oneself, and not in accord with character»:

ἢ χρ]ὴ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἐπὶ
τοῖ]ς φίλοις αὐτοῦ χαρᾶς κα-
τὰ] τ̣ὸ χρήσιμον τὸ πρὸς αὐ- 15
τὸ]ν̣ στήσαντα ἀποδιδόν[αι,
καὶ] μὴ κατὰ τὴν ˋτῶν΄ ἠθῶν...

The use of the word χαρά or joy, rather than ἡδονή or pleasure, may be significant, since we know that, for Epicurus, χαρά is a kinetic pleasure, and perhaps in the present context refers to the delight we take in the reflecting on our friendships[20]. But the source of that joy is our awareness of their usefulness to us, which doubtless consists, at least in part, in the security that friends provide amid the uncertainties of life[21]. The object of Epicurus' critique (it is plausible that he is the speaker here, as Sedley observes) may well have been Aristotle (assuming that ἠθῶν is correct), who affirmed that what is φιλητόν or lovable is the good (ἀγαθόν), the pleasing, or the useful, a triad that Aristotle then reduced to just two, since a thing is useful only to the extent that it leads to what is good or pleasing (*NE* 8, 2, 1155b, 18-19). "Good" in regard to friendship will mean "good character," or ἦθος. If this is right, then Epicurus is asserting that the pleasure associated with friendship derives precisely from our appreciation that friends are χρήσιμοι, just the category that Aristotle excluded from his short list of those things that are likable in themselves.

Although Epicurus maintained that friendship has its source in utility, however, he also affirmed that it is a virtue (or choiceworthy) in itself, *SV* 23 (cited n. 21). Presumably there is some pleasure in the affection we feel for others, taken in itself and irrespective of its origin and of the sense of comfort that it may provide. This may explain what otherwise seems to be a paradoxical feature of the Epicurean doctrine, namely that a wise person will never betray a friend and may even elect to die for a

[20] On χαρά, see Ramelli-Konstan 2010.

[21] Sedley *forthcoming* writes ad vv. 13-16: «L'eziologia chiaramente strumentale di amicizia qui espressa richiama fortemente la posizione originaria epicurea che i seguaci più tardi cercarono di attenuare, secondo Cic. *Fin.* I 66-70, II 82: vd. Epicuro *SV* 23, πᾶσα φιλία δι' ἑαυτὴν ἀρετή [spesso corretta in αἱρετή, forse giustamente], ἀρχὴν δὲ εἴληφεν ἀπὸ τῆς ὠφελείας; *ibid.* 34, 39, Hermarchus fr. 45 Longo Auricchio»; Sedley refers also to Tsouna 2007, 27-31.

friend's sake (D. L. 10, 120-21). If these reports are not distorted and reflect a genuine principle of Epicureanism (or conceivably of one strand of the school), then they perhaps testify to Epicurus' reflections on what I have called the phenomenology of friendship, that is, how we are disposed toward those we love.

Aristotle observes in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that people feel greater affection for those they have benefitted than the beneficiaries feel for their benefactors. As he explains: «those who have done a service for others feel friendship and love [φιλοῦσι καὶ ἀγαπῶσι] for those they have served even if these are not of any use to them and never will be. This is what happens with craftsmen too; every man loves [ἀγαπᾷ] his own handiwork better than he would be loved [ἀγαπηθείη] by it if it came alive; and this happens perhaps most of all with poets; for they have an excessive love [ὑπεραγαπῶσι] for their own poems, doting [στέργοντες] on them as if they were their children» (9, 7, 1167b, 31 – 1168a, 2, trans. Ross 1925). Aristotle does not state here that love is the motive for bestowing benefactions, and there is, I believe, good reason for thinking that this is not his point: he is positing liberality as one of the ways in which love arises, not investigating why we might act generously. But if we read this passage in connection with Aristotle's definition of φιλία in the *Rhetoric*, we may conclude that love is a self-reinforcing activity, in that we perform services for those we love and such benefactions in turn augment affection. Here again, moreover, φιλία is related to need, since we bestow benefactions precisely upon those who are less well off than we are, at least in the relevant domain.

Laelius himself waxes indignant at the idea that we should limit our friendships so as to avoid the trouble or perturbations that they may cause us. As he puts it, «that anxiety that one must often accept for the sake of a friend is not so great as to eliminate friendship from our lives» (*angor iste, qui pro amico saepe capiendus est, non tantum valet ut tollat e vita amicitiam*, 48). Indeed, Laelius goes so far as to dissent from the proposition that we should treat our friends as we would ourselves; rather, he affirms, we ought to do much more for friends, and more particularly things that we would be ashamed to do on our own behalf, such as begging assistance from others or going on the attack more violently than we would for our own cause. Actions that are less than noble or virtuous (*non satis honeste*) in relation to our own affairs, he concludes, are

virtuous in the extreme (*honestissime*) when done for friends[22]. All very well, but this affirmation and the counsels concerning the proper behavior of friends that follow are cast uniformly as injunctions or advice. Aristotle, by contrast, defines what love is like. He is not instructing his readers in how to act as a friend; where there is love, no further reason or exhortation is needed. Affection itself is the motive for generous behavior, and an altruistic concern for the other is simply how love works. As the German sociologist Georg Simmel observed in connection with loyalty, which he understood as the commitment to treat another person in a loving way even after the sentiment itself has waned, «If love continues to exist in a relationship between persons, why does it need faithfulness?»[23]. Love does not require rules or obligation: it manifests itself naturally as an irrepressible concern for the other.

When Laelius returns, later in the essay, to the comparison between human and animal love, he treats the instinctive affection of animals as something surpassed by human friendship: «but if this is evident in beasts that fly, swim, or live on land, tame and wild, that first of all they love themselves (this arises from birth alike with every animate creature), and then that they seek and desire creatures of the same species toward which they may attach themselves, and they do this with desire and with a certain resemblance to human love, how much more does this occur by nature in a human being, who both loves himself and seeks another whose mind he may so mix with his own that he all but creates one mind out of two»[24]. Laelius is plainly alluding to the Stoic idea of οἰκείωσις, yet he seems even here to doubt whether humans really live up to the example of other creatures, and there remains a hortatory tone to his words. And well he might entertain reservations on the matter. For at least one ancient writer explicitly questioned whether human attachment to offspring is in fact natural. Demetrius Lacon, an Epicurean who

[22] *Quam multa enim, quae nostra causa numquam faceremus, facimus causa amicorum! precari ab indigno, supplicare, tum acerbius in aliquem invehi insectarique vehementius, quae in nostris rebus non satis honeste, in amicorum fiunt honestissime* (57).

[23] Simmel 1950, 379-80; the German reads: «Wenn in einem Verhältnis zwischen Menschen die Liebe fortbesteht - wozu bedarf es dann der Treue?». On generosity and gratitude, see Konstan 2016.

[24] *Quodsi hoc apparet in bestiis, volucribus, nantibus, agrestibus, cicuribus, feris, primum ut se ipsae diligant (id enim pariter cum omni animante nascitur), deinde ut requirant atque appetant, ad quas se applicent eiusdem generis animantis, idque faciunt cum desiderio et cum quadam similitudine amoris humani, quanto id magis in homine fit natura, qui et se ipse diligit et alterum anquirit, cuius animum ita cum suo misceat, ut efficiat paene unum ex duobus* (81).

was more or less a contemporary of Laelius and who delighted in paradoxes, affirmed: «love [στοργή] toward children is not by nature, since people do not necessarily love their offspring; for involuntariness is a characteristic of things that happen by necessity, and a consequence of involuntariness is resistance, which is obviously absent from the love of children»[25]. What Demetrius thought of animals' affection for their offspring is not recorded, but it seems reasonable to suppose that he considered animal behavior involuntary and hence natural or instinctive.

The problem with treating love as a response to virtue is that it sets a constraint on the emotion. Love is no longer enough of a motive for selfless service to another, or if it is, it is a dangerous one, because it is undiscriminating. Animals may be guided by such a passion, but they do not live in a moral universe. Cicero was intensely aware of the need to regulate amicable relations in accord with a community of beliefs. If there peeks through his treatise a sense that human love is not simply subject to moral constraints but is as instinctive and unconstrained as that of a tigress for its cub, it may be because he was, in addition to being a thoroughly political figure, also a deeply sensitive man who loved his friends, and above all Atticus, without reservation. Perhaps too, as I am inclined to think, the recent loss of his beloved daughter attuned him all the more to the unconditional nature of love. If his essay on friendship betrays some incoherencies in the argument, and in particular seems to leave unresolved the tension between love as an instinctive urge to care for another and love as a response to virtue, it may be a symptom of a contradiction in the Roman ideology of his time – and of our own.

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