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CICERO ON FATE: DIVINATION AND THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL

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Fatum, or fate, is a central theme in Marcus Tullius Cicero's philosophical oeuvre, even lending its name to one of his works, De Fato or On Fate, which suggests its importance in his thought. Beyond this, the notion of fate also appears in De Natura Deorum or On the Nature of the Gods and De Divinatione or On Divination, making it a recurring theme across Cicero's religious or theological trilogy. A key challenge in understanding fate in Cicero's works lies in its varied treatment across these texts. In DND and DD, fate is discussed as a notion in physics and a vital principle of divination, whereas in DF, it is framed as an ethical notion tied to the problem of free will. This contrast reveals a tension in the treatment of fate across the trilogy. In this article, I argue that this tension can be understood as two levels of understanding fate, where the physical notion logically precedes the ethical one. In this way, Cicero's trilogy ultimately safeguards free will, even within the framework of fate as discussed in the realm of physics.

Keywords: Cicero, Fate, Divination, Free Will, Ancient Philosophy, Roman Philosophy

INTRODUCTION

Fatum, or fate, is one of the key themes in Marcus Tullius Cicero's (hereafter Cicero) philosophical oeuvre. It is even the title of one of his works, *De Fato* or *On Fate* (hereafter *DF*), underscoring the importance of this theme in his thought. Written in 44 BC, the text has survived only in fragments (Rackham 1942, 189). It forms part of his religious or theological trilogy, alongside *De Natura Deorum* or *On the Nature of the Gods* (hereafter *DND*) and *De Divinatione* or *On Divination* (hereafter *DD*).[1] Despite belonging to this trilogy, *DF* differs in style from the other two works. While *DND* and *DD* follow a dialogue or question-and-answer format, *DF* is primarily oratorical. However, its opening section is an exception, featuring an exchange between Cicero and his friend Hirtius in which they discuss philosophy and oratory. This stylistic distinction sets *DF* apart from the rest of the trilogy (Begemann 2014, 226).

Cicero considered it his self-imposed mission to introduce and expound on Greek philosophy for his countrymen, driven by the political issues of his time and his aspiration to cultivate philosophical discourse in Latin. Beyond this, he also found

consolation in philosophy—it served as an effective means of easing the pain and grief he experienced after the death of his daughter, Tullia.[2] Fate was a significant concept in Greek philosophy, especially among the Stoics.[3] As someone committed to presenting philosophy to the Romans and the Latin-speaking world, Cicero could not escape engaging with this concept.[4]

One challenge in understanding fate in Cicero's works is the way it is presented in his trilogy. The discussion of fate in *DND* and *DD* differs from how it is treated in *DF*. In other words, Cicero's trilogy reveals a tension in its treatment of fate—on the one hand, as a notion rooted in physics and an element of divination, and on the other, as an ethical notion related to the problem of free will. In this article, I argue that this tension can be understood as two levels of understanding fate, where the physical notion logically precedes the ethical one. In this way, Cicero's trilogy ultimately safeguards free will, even within the framework of fate as discussed in the realm of physics. By logical precedence, I mean the structural order of inquiry governing the trilogy: Cicero begins with the gods, a topic belonging to physics, which—as I explain below—grounds the regulation of religion and provides the conditions for ethical discourse. This ordering also reflects a widely shared understanding in Hellenistic philosophy of physics as foundational to ethics. My interpretation, moreover, is consistent with earlier scholarship on the political implications of Cicero's discussion of fate, which likewise treats inquiry in physics as prior to practical analysis in ethics and politics.

PHYSICS AND ETHICS: EXPLORING THEIR RELATIONSHIP

In the Hellenistic world, most prominently among the Stoics, philosophy was traditionally divided into three branches—a tripartite division attributed to the Academic philosopher Xenocrates, who identified them as physics, logic, and ethics (Inwood and Gerson 1997, xv). Pertinent to the purpose of this article, I will focus on physics and ethics, as well as their relationship. In the following discussion, I adopt the definitions provided by Diogenes Laertius, a major source on the history of ancient philosophy, for these two branches.

With regard to physics, Diogenes Laertius (Book 7) states:

> They divide the account of physics into topics on bodies and on principles and elements and gods and limits and place and void. And this is the detailed division; the general division is into three topics, concerning the cosmos, concerning the elements and the third on causal explanation…They say that the topic concerning the cosmos [includes] the one in which the substance [of the cosmos] is investigated and whether it is generated or ungenerated and whether it is alive or lifeless and whether it is destructible or indestructible and whether it is administered by providence; and so forth. (Inwood and Gerson 1997, 132)

In general, physics pertains to the study of the cosmos, the world, or the universe—its origin, composition, or parts, and functioning. Notably, this ancient

branch of philosophy includes gods, a notion that may not have a place in modern or contemporary physics. Their role can be explained through the concept of providence, mentioned in the above passage. The Greek term for this concept is *pronoia* (πρόνοια), meaning forethought or foresight, while the Latin equivalent is *providentia*, meaning foreseeing (Bernhardt 2022, 485). Cicero, for instance, defines *providentia* as "the faculty by which it is seen that something is going to occur before it occurs" (*De Inventione II*, par. 160). This concept implies a connection to the future, suggesting that the gods play an active role in the operations of the cosmos. It is through the care of the gods that humans are given a glimpse of the future, ensuring that they are prepared for what is to come.

With regard to ethics, Diogenes Laertius (Book 7) states: "they divide the ethical part of philosophy into these topics: on impulse, on good and bad things, on passions, on virtue, on the goal, on primary value, on actions, on appropriate actions, on encouragements and discouragements to actions" (Inwood and Gerson 1997, 190). This branch of philosophy is known as the practical part of philosophy. It raises the question of what is good and how one should live, as it directly concerns how humans live, act, and relate to other humans and beings in the world.

These two branches may have different focuses, but they are deeply connected. More broadly, the fundamental relationship between physics and ethics can be explained as follows. Physics seeks to understand the cosmos—its origin, the forces governing its operation, and the entities that constitute or inhabit it, including humanity. This is why theological issues, such as the existence of gods and their providence, fall under its scope. In simple terms, physics determines the conditions and mechanisms of the very place in which humans exist. Ethics, in turn, examines human life in relation to the conditions or realities uncovered by physics.[5] It considers how humans should live, how they should adapt to the order of the cosmos, and the distinctions between good and evil—including the possibility that anything may fall outside these categories. This relationship suggests that physics is more fundamental than ethics. The cosmos, as the subject of physics, is far larger in scope than humanity, which is the primary concern of ethics.

Diogenes Laertius (Book 7) alludes to the idea of Chrysippus, a Greek Stoic philosopher, that humans are part of nature to explain the relationship between physics and ethics. He states:

> Again, "to live according to virtue" is equivalent to living according to the experience of events which occur by nature, as Chrysippus says in book one of his *On Goals.* For our natures are parts of the nature of the universe. Therefore, the goal becomes "to live consistently with Nature", i.e., according to one's own nature and that of the universe, doing nothing which is forbidden by the common law, which is right reason, penetrating all things, being the same as Zeus, who is the leader of the administration of things. And this itself is the virtue of the happy man and a smooth flow of life, whenever all things are done according to the harmony of the daimon in each of us with the will of the administrator of the universe (Inwood and Gerson 1997, 191-192).

In this passage, humans are understood as part of a greater whole—the cosmos or the universe. This perspective suggests that living entails learning to live in or coexist with nature. It is humans who must adapt. What is presupposed here is a holistic way of life, in which one lives smoothly or harmoniously within the cosmos.

It is noteworthy that the relationship between physics and ethics is also present in Chinese philosophy. Chung-ying Cheng (1998, 216) calls this relationship cosmo-ethics, which "means that, as humans, we must think, act, plan, and decide with this vision of present and future harmony of nature always in mind."[6] This idea is closely tied to his concept of inclusive humanism as the defining characteristic of Chinese philosophy—"a view of the human as a creative process of self-fulfilment of reality, in reality, for reality, and from reality" (Cheng 1998, 215). This perspective suggests the embeddedness of humans within reality, or the cosmos, emphasizing that one must take this condition when determining how to live. That is, one must consider the cosmos, the other beings within it, and strive to live harmoniously. Moreover, Cheng contrasts this inclusive humanism of Chinese philosophy with the exclusive humanism of modern Western philosophy, which implies human superiority. He further attributes this perspective to the influence of René Descartes (Cheng 1998, 213). While this observation holds true to modern Western philosophy, it seems that inclusive humanism was also present in ancient Western philosophy. The relationship between physics and ethics seems to reflect a form of inclusive humanism, of which Cicero provides an example. By situating humans and ethical concerns within the broader questions of the gods and the cosmos, he shows how humans ought to understand themselves and how their ethical life should be oriented.

The relationship between physics and ethics is also evident in Cicero. In his introduction to the translation of *DND*, J.M. Ross, alluding to Cicero's *On Duties*, states: "although Cicero's primary interest was in ethics, he was convinced that morality could not be maintained without the support of religion" (Ross 1972, 25). Cicero himself emphasized that the inquiry into the gods is "fundamentally important for the regulation of religion" (*DND I*, par. 1). Since religion involves this inquiry, some important aspects of it fall within the domain of physics. This does not mean, however, that religion as a whole belongs to physics. Rather, because the inquiry into the gods is fundamental to religion, religion becomes a corollary issue of physics. Thus, to rephrase Ross, Cicero is convinced that religion, as a corollary of physics, is foundational to the discourse of ethics.

This relationship between physics and ethics also emerges in Cicero's trilogy, particularly in its treatment of fate. In *DND* and *DD*, fate is mainly discussed as a notion of physics—one that helps in understanding the cosmos, its processes, and the mechanisms governing it. In *DF*, however, fate is examined in relation to the problem of human free will. The succeeding sections will explore these two aspects of fate in greater detail.

FATE: A NOTION IN PHYSICS AND AN ELEMENT OF DIVINATION

In *DD*, divination is defined as "the foresight and knowledge of future events" (*DD I*, par. 1). The Greek equivalent is *mantike* (μαντική), derived from *furor*,

meaning frenzy. In the Roman or Ciceronian context, the term divination was coined with an emphasis on *divi*, or gods. In addition to the gods, Cicero considered nature and fate to be the three vital principles of divination. His view was influenced by Posidonius, a Greek Stoic philosopher whose works survive only in fragments—preserved through citations in the writings of his contemporaries or later thinkers who had access to them (*DD I*, par. 125). It is no coincidence, then, that in addition to Posidonius, Cicero (or Quintus Tullius Cicero) also drew upon general Stoic arguments in defense of divination.[7]

The three vital principles of divination play a significant role in shaping the structure and themes of Cicero's religious or theological trilogy—*DND*, *DD*, and *DF*. The first and third books clearly correspond to the discussions of gods and fate, while the concept of nature, particularly in the form of natural divination, is also present in *DD*, though less prominently than the other two.

Gods, as a vital principle of divination, are connected to the concept of providence, which has been the chief concern in *DND* (*DND I*, par. 2). In this context, providence refers both to the divine intelligence that governs and regulates the cosmos and to the care that immortal gods extend to humans (*DND I*, par. 4). The Stoic argument on providence is central to the book, and by the end of *DND III*, Cicero concludes that the Stoics present a stronger case on the issue compared to the Epicureans, who reject the concept (*DND III*, par. 95). Balbus, the Stoic spokesperson in the dialogue, presents three key arguments: the existence and wisdom of gods, the order of the universe and its emergence from first causes, and the sense of wonder that humans feel when contemplating creation (*DND II*, par. 75). Moreover, the Stoic position on providence is closely tied to their affirmation of nearly all sorts of divination (*DD I*, par. 10 and 83). That is, their argument for divine providence serves as the foundation for affirming the truth and efficacy of divination. A crucial passage from *DD I* reinforces this connection, asserting that humans deserve knowledge of the future because they are friends of the gods—one of the benefits bestowed upon them.[8]

Nature, or *natura*, is a philosophically loaded term. While it may generally refer to the essence of a thing or the fundamental and necessary quality of an entity, the Stoics assigned it a particular meaning, making it a vital principle of divination. For them, "nature [is] the sustaining and governing principle of the world" (*DND II*, par. 82; *DND II*, par. 57). The Stoics identified nature with the gods, further reinforcing their affirmation of providence and their version of pantheism. Moreover, gods as nature are also referred to as *pneuma* or the fiery force that maintains and directs the complex universe (Grosz 2018, 22-23). As a vital principle of divination, nature serves as a source or origin of divinatory insight. What I intend to highlight here is that nature is complex and cannot be easily comprehended by the human mind. This complexity can be illustrated through the distinction between two types of divination: artificial *(ars)* and natural *(natura)*.[9] Notably, natural divination—manifesting in forms of frenzy and dreams—was considered the highest form, as it is directly derived from nature (*DD I*, par. 113). Artificial divination, by contrast, relies on sustained observation, making it easier to explain through reasoning or by developing causal connections between signs and their meanings, even when these meanings are unclear or non-self-evident. Because it is based on observable and concrete evidence, artificial divination tends to be more convincing to many. Natural divination, on the other hand, occurs *sine ratione et*

scientia—without reason and consciousness (*DD I*, par. 4). However, this does not mean that nature, as the chief source of this kind of divination, is irrational. Rather, it suggests that the way in which knowledge of the future and the meaning of events are revealed cannot be easily explained or understood through ordinary human reasoning.

These first two vital principles of divination (i.e., gods and nature) are primarily discussed within the realm of physics. Gods and nature are not only foundational in explaining why and how messages about the future—or divination—are possible, but they also serve to explain the workings of the cosmos—specifically, whether there is an order or governing force behind it. Moreover, it may be argued that these concepts have corresponding ethical implications, a view with which I agree. For instance, if gods exist, how should humans live? If nature is elusive, how can humans achieve harmony with it? However, in the first two books of the trilogy, these concepts are primarily examined within the framework of physics. Additionally, providence—closely linked to gods and nature—is explicitly included in Diogenes Laertius' definition of physics in the ancient world.

Fate, as the main topic of this article, is the third vital principle of divination. It is mentioned in all three books of the trilogy, although it is primarily discussed as the main focus of the last one, *DF*. The way fate is addressed across these books appears to differ. In *DND* and *DD*, it is treated as a concept in physics, whereas in *DF*, it is explored in relation to the problem of human free will, thus making it a concept in ethics. The remainder of this section will discuss fate as a notion in physics, while the next section will address it as a notion in ethics.

Contrary to the common assumption that fate is defined in *DF*, a more fully articulated definition of fate is actually found in the first book of *DD*. Quintus defines it as follows (*DD I*, par. 125-126):

> Reason compels us to admit that all things happen by Fate. Now by Fate I mean the same that the Greeks call *εἱμαρμένη* [heimarmene], that is, an orderly succession of causes wherein cause is linked to cause, and each cause of itself produces an effect. That is an immortal truth having its source in all eternity. Therefore, nothing has happened which was not bound to happen, and, likewise, nothing is going to happen which will not find in nature every efficient cause of its happening. Consequently, we know that Fate is that which is called, not ignorantly, but scientifically, 'the eternal cause of things, the wherefore of things past, of things present, and of things to come.'

The ignorance mentioned in the passage refers to how fate was misunderstood by old women. In *DND I* (par. 55), fate is described as "a belief for old women, and ignorant old women at that." Similarly, in *DD II* (par. 19), it is said that: "fate is full of superstition and old women's credulity." This attitude of old women has been a common criticism against the Stoics in their defense of the notion of fate and divination. However, the Stoics are keen to emphasize that fate, as a concept, simply describes the events and workings of the cosmos—one that should not give rise to the superstitious attitudes of old women or others. Superstition, in this context, denotes a lack of understanding or blind obedience (Cabural 2023a, 7).

As a concept describing the cosmos, or as a notion in physics, fate is deterministic and entails a certain degree of necessity. In its deterministic nature, it suggests that all things and events are interconnected. Quintus, in this regard, likens fate to a seed, where the fruits it bears are determined even before the seed is planted. It is merely a matter of time before the fruits appear, and their emergence is likewise determined by various factors beyond time, such as locality (quality of soil and air, abundance of water, exposure to sunlight), season, and climate. Moreover, Quintus describes fate within this very framework of determinism and in connection to the practice of divination, stating (*DD I*, par. 128):

> …it is not strange that diviners have a presentiment of things that exist nowhere in the material world: for all things 'are,' though, from the standpoint of 'time,' they are not present. As in seeds there inheres the germ of those things which the seeds produce, so in causes are stored the future events.

Since fate involves a certain degree of necessity, what is fated is true for all eternity. This presupposes that all things and events have already been planned and established before they appear, leaving no room for alteration or the need for creativity. In this regard, Quintus presents an analogy between fate and a cable, stating "[t]hings which are to be do not suddenly spring into existence, but the evolution of time is like the unwinding of a cable: it creates nothing new and only unfolds each event in its order" (*DD I*, par. 127).

The concept of fate can also be explained in relation to the other two vital principles of divination: gods and nature. Fate, or the fated future, is the object of natural divination—manifested in frenzy and dreams (*DD I*, par. 128). These forms of divination are based on the idea that nature is divine or inherently linked to the gods. In other words, nature, as an extension of the gods, serves as the source of natural divination, which seeks to reveal the future that is fated. In this sense, fate, gods, and nature are closely interconnected.

In sum, fate, as a notion in physics, is implied in Diogenes Laertius' definition of physics in the ancient world, where he emphasizes causal explanation. Fate has been employed as a concept to understand how events are generated, unfold, or come to pass. Moreover, as a vital principle of divination, fate implies the possibility of knowing the future, since that knowledge is already complete—i.e., it already exists. Otherwise, if the knowledge of the future were incomplete, there would be nothing to foreknow. Yet, while the future exists, it is not always readily visible and is, in some cases, unclear or vague to humans. In the context of divination as supported by fate, humans are merely spectators, awaiting the unfolding of the future, which remains independent of human will.

FATE AND THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL

As a notion in ethics, fate is also discussed by Cicero in relation to the problem of human free will. He presents three contrasting arguments: first, that everything is

ruled by fate, leaving no possibility for humans to exercise free will—an argument attributed to Democritus, Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Aristotle; second, that the mind is not subject to fate, thus ensuring the freedom of the human will; and third, a middle-ground position, often termed as compatibilism, which accepts fate while simultaneously safeguarding human free will—an argument attributed to Chrysippus (*DF*, par. 39).[10]

In Cicero's case, it is evident that he repudiated the view that everything is reducible to fate. He states, "I would rather suffer that nasty knock [in agreement with Epicurus] than agree that all events are caused by fate" (*DF*, par. 21). Epicurus, in this regard, advanced the idea that some propositions regarding future events are neither true nor false—one of the ways he sought to demonstrate that not all future events are fated. This is in addition to his theory of the swerving of atoms, which he used to safeguard human free will, a theory that Cicero also ridiculed (*DF*, par. 22-23 and 46). Moreover, Cicero's rejection of fate in this context reflects his opposition to absolute determinism and necessity—two aspects of fate discussed in the previous section, particularly in relation to fate as a vital principle of divination.

Cicero affirmed the possibility of being influenced or determined by various factors (or simply, the influence of connections) and illustrated this by pointing to the impact of localities or environments on human health (*DF*, par. 7). This idea is also found in the Hippocratic writings, particularly the text *Airs, Waters, Places*. In this medical text, the author advises those studying medicine to consider the effects of climate, air, locality, and water on the human body during the process of diagnosis (Chadwick and Mann 1983, 293). Moreover, while Cicero acknowledged the influence of various factors, he did not absolutize this idea; in other words, he did not elevate it to the sole and primary principle of the universe. Succinctly, he states, "the nature of the locality has some effect on some things but none on others" (*DF*, par. 8).

In another instance, Cicero advanced the same point about not absolutizing influences or absolute determination by referring to the two dimensions of humans—propensities (*propensiores*) and will (*voluntas*) (*DF*, par. 9). Here, he established a compromise by stating that while propensities are susceptible to external factors or are determined, the will of humans remains unaffected by them. In other words, propensities confirm that humans are also part of the causal chain, which is the essence of fate, but the will of humans suggests that they are more than part of this causal chain, meaning that the will of humans is, in fact, free.

In addition to Cicero's rejection of absolute determinism, he also rejected absolute necessity. However, it can also be argued that Cicero accepted the possibility of necessity, but only to a certain extent. This is evident in his reference to the physiognomy of Socrates, as conducted by Zopyrus. After examining Socrates' body, Zopyrus concluded that Socrates was stupid and thick-witted. This instance of physiognomy accepts fate and necessity, as it aims to gain foreknowledge about a person's life and future by examining the body. Yet Cicero does not stop here. He points out that "defects may be due to natural causes; but their eradication and entire removal […] does not rest with natural causes, but with will, effort, training" (*DF*, par. 11). In other words, while some events may necessarily occur and are beyond human control, there remains the freedom of the will, which allows humans to respond to these events. They can either view them as challenges or opportunities for

development, or accept them passively, leading a life defined by misery and mediocrity.

In the discussion above, it is clear that Cicero does not accept that everything is reducible to fate, nor does he accept the view that everything that happens to humans is solely a consequence of the freedom of their will. Does this then imply that he is following Chrysippus's compatibilism? It would be premature to say that Cicero follows Chrysippus, as there is a piece of writing—perhaps the author had access to the full version of *DF*—which suggests that Cicero rejected the views of Chrysippus (*Fragments of De Fato* in *DF* 1942, 247). However, Cicero's emphasis on Chrysippus is indeed notable. Perhaps Cicero might be sharing the same conclusion with him, but grounded in different assumptions. In addition to the lack of access to the full version of *DF*, which makes it difficult to draw a definitive conclusion about Cicero's position, there is also the fact that he was an Academic Skeptic. As a member of this school, his approach was to "put forward no conclusions of its own, but to approve those which seem to approach nearest to the truth" (*DD II*, par. 150).

Meanwhile, it is noteworthy how Elisabeth Begemann and Margaret Y. Henry describe Cicero's work on fate, not only as a work of ethics by virtue of its postulation of the freedom of the will as a condition for moral life, but also for its political significance. In Begemann's view, she emphasized the importance of citizen involvement in the decision-making process. She states that "in [Cicero's] republic's religion, fate has no place, for [hu]man *must* be free in his decisions, to act or to acquiesce, to excel or to fail" (Begemann 2014, 244). Henry, on the other hand, highlighted the link between fatalism and despotism, which led her to describe the political purpose of Cicero's work.[11] According to her, the *DF* was written "to take away excuses for inaction from those who were only too ready to submit to the events of political life as links in the eternal chain of necessity" (Henry 1927, 42). These points are indeed plausible, for it is difficult to dissociate Cicero's political or social motives from his philosophical work. To recall, Cicero's larger goal was to introduce philosophy to the Romans, making it appealing to them so that it would serve as a guide for their thinking. In his religious trilogy, his particular aim was to eradicate superstition, which may have included fate—specifically, fate that appealed to the credulity of old women.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have explored how fate is presented differently across Cicero's religious or theological trilogy. In *DND* and *DD*, fate is discussed as a notion in physics, used to describe the cosmos and its operation. From the Stoic perspective, fate also serves as a means to defend the idea and practice of divination, emphasizing the powerlessness of humans in confronting future things and events as fated. In *DF*, fate is discussed to highlight the freedom of the human will. While there are aspects of life that humans must simply accept, there are others that remain within human control. A clearer understanding of what lies within and beyond human power or control requires a clear understanding of the conditions of human existence, the cosmos, the

environment, and other influencing factors. In this way, physics is presented as more fundamental than ethics.

Moreover, to conclude this article, it is worth noting that the fundamentality of physics over ethics in ancient philosophy offers an important lesson for today, particularly in the context of the environmental crisis. Environmental ethics proceeds by examining how humans ought to relate to nature. Although accounts of the place and role of humans within nature vary, ancient philosophy—as presented in this article—emphasizes the embeddedness of humans in the world. What I suggest is that, in living in this world, we must recognize the importance of what exists beyond us—the environment, for instance—in our decision-making and way of life. Many environmental problems have arisen due to human selfishness in how we interact with the world. By striving to understand the world, we can learn to live in harmony with it.

NOTES

1. In this article, I refer to the Loeb Classical Library translations for Cicero's trilogy. *De Natura Deorum* (*DND*), Books I-III, and *De Fato* (*DF*) were translated by H. Rackham, while *De Divinatione* (*DD*), Books I & II, was translated by William Armistead Falconer. When citing these works, I will indicate the paragraph number/s of the relevant passage/s instead of page numbers.

2. Cicero states, "I was languishing in idle retirement, and the state of public affairs was such that an autocratic form of government had become inevitable. In these circumstances, in the first place I thought that to expound philosophy to my fellow-countrymen was actually my duty in the interests of the commonwealth, since in my judgment it would greatly contribute to the honor and glory of the state to have thoughts so important and so lofty enshrined in Latin literature also; and I am the less inclined to repent of my undertaking because I can clearly perceive what a number of my readers have been stimulated not only to study but to become authors themselves. A great many accomplished students of Greek learning were unable to share their acquisitions with their fellow-citizens, on the ground that they doubted the possibility of conveying in Latin the teachings they had received from the Greeks. In the manner of style, however, I believe that we have made such progress that even in richness in vocabulary, the Greeks do not surpass us. Another thing that urged me to this occupation was the dejection of spirit occasioned by the heavy and crushing blow that had been dealt me by fortune." *DND I*, par. 8-9.

3. For Stoic passages on the concept of fate, see Inwood and Gerson (1997, 179-190). For a study of fate in the context of Greek thought, see Greene (1944). Lisa Raphals has also explored fate and related notions in Greek philosophy while comparing them with concepts in Chinese philosophy (Raphals 2003; 2005).

4. The importance of fate as a topic of dicussion among Roman philosophers is also evident in the writings of Seneca (Lucius Annaeus Seneca). In the introduction of his article, Christoph Schubert offers a brief comparison between Seneca and Cicero, particularly highlighting the intellectual climate of their respective times (Schubert 2016, 125-126).

5. A similar idea is expressed in my previous article (see Cabural 2023b, 232).

6. I have also employed Cheng's analysis in my previous article (see Cabural 2023b).

7. Quintus Tullius Cicero (hereafter Quintus) is the brother of Cicero. He is assigned as the spokesperson for the Stoics in the dialogue. For the Stoic arguments in defense of divination, see *DD I*.

8. *DD I*, par. 83: "If there are gods and they do not make clear to [hu]man in advance what the future will be, then they do not love [hu]man; or, they themselves do not know what the future will be; or, they think that it is of no advantage to [hu]man to know what it will be; or, they think it inconsistent with their dignity to give [hu]man forewarnings of the future; or, finally, they, though gods, cannot give intelligible signs of coming events. But it is not true that the gods do not love us, for they are the friends and benefactors of the human race; nor is it true that they do not know their own decrees and their own plans; nor is it true that it is of no advantage to us to know what is going to happen, since we should be more prudent if we knew; nor is it true that the gods think it inconsistent with their dignity to give forecasts, since there is no more excellent quality than kindness; nor is it true that they have not the power to know the future; therefore it is not true that there are gods and yet that they do not give us signs of the future; but there are gods, therefore they give us such signs; and if they give us such signs, it is not true that they give us no means to understand those signs—otherwise their signs would be useless; and if they give us the means, it is not true that there is no divination; therefore there is divination."

9. This distinction is one of Cicero's appropriations of Greek material in his works, and this particular instance is taken from Plato's *Phaedrus*.

10. The passage reads: "And my own view at all events is that, as between the two opinions held by the old philosophers, on the one hand the opinion of those who deemed that everything takes place by fate in the sense that this fate exercises the force of necessity—the opinion to which Democritus, Heraclitus, Empedocles and Aristotle adhered—and on the other hand the opinion of those who held that the movements of the mind are voluntary and not at all controlled by fate, Chrysippus stood as unofficial umpire and wished to strike a compromise,—though as a matter of fact he inclines to adhere to those who hold that the mind is released from all necessity of motion; but in employing formulae peculiar to himself he slips into such difficulties that against his will he lends support to the necessity of fate" (*DF*, par. 39). Also see Sadler.

11. In her article, Henry referred to C. Thiaucourt on the link between despotism and fatalism. Thiaucourt said that "fatalism is a doctrine favorable to despotism, and every defense of free will is an effort for liberty."

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