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REFERENCE
tum, formalistically understood. It consists in an approximation to the general will of God which, if achieved, would establish a harmonious system of all the individuals making up the moral universe. Like his contemporary, Malebranche, but independently of him, Cumberland is thus coming close to a notion of universalizability (see Malebranche, N. §§5–6).

Cumberland’s idea of the harmonious moral system of mutually interdependent individuals was a conscious attempt to transfer Descartes’ theory of the full physical world, or plenum, to morals. It contributed to the subsequent age’s development of an empirical science of morals and thus to the breach with Locke’s idea of morals as a demonstrative science (see Descartes, R. §11; Locke, J. §9). The science of morals he regarded as a system of cohering individuals, but the mechanisms that made them cohere were a matter of empirical investigation. Cumberland thus joined Locke in rejecting innate ideas. But one of the empirical factors in accounting for the mind was teleological, namely the mind’s possible understanding of, and associated striving for, the common good. By accounting for the universal moral system as a possibility, moral science acquired a normative function. This role of moral science as self-fulfilling prediction, while rudimentary in Cumberland, became a lasting feature of British moral thought for more than a century.

As with so many natural lawyers, Cumberland has no strong theory of contract. The duties undertaken in contractual relations are, in so far as they are just, nothing but duties imposed by natural law, and rights are simply derivative from the duties. Contracts thus function only to make explicit what is implied by natural law. What is more, Cumberland is keen to acknowledge historically-given moral institutions. In language that often is strikingly Burkean, he maintains that such given institutions provide the best contribution to the common good simply because of the losses to be expected from major reform. Hand in hand with this, he points out that natural benevolence tends to establish social relations, including economic ones, that are independent of political society. When Dugald Stewart, early in the nineteenth century, maintained that Cumberland was an inspiration for the Scottish school of moral thought in the intervening century, he thus had a strong point.

See also: Natural Law

List of works


J. Barbeyrac as Traité philosophique des loix naturelles, Amsterdam, 1744. (Barbeyrac’s translation has important editorial notes. Another English version is John Tower’s 1750 translation, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Laws of Nature. James Tyrrell based his A Brief Disquisition of the Law of Nature, (London, 1692; rev. 1701; repr. Littleton, CO: Rothman, 1987) on Cumberland, but it does not give a clear idea of the latter’s work.)

References and further reading


KNUD HAAKONSSSEN

CUSANUS see Nicholas of Cusa

CUSTOM see Common Law

CYNICS

Cynicism (originating in the mid-fourth century BC) was arguably the most original and influential branch of the Socratic tradition in antiquity, whether we consider its impact on the formation of Stoicism or its role in the Roman Empire as a popular philosophy and literary tradition. The self-imposed nickname ‘Cynic’, literally ‘doglike’, was originally applied to Antisthenes and to Diogenes of Sinope, considered the founders of Cynicism, and later to their followers, including Crates of Thebes and Menippus. It emphasizes one of the most fundamental and controversial features of Cynic
thought and practice – its radical re-examination of the animal nature of the human being. Their decision to 'play the dog' revolutionized moral discourse, since humans had traditionally been defined by their place in both a natural (animal → human → god) and a civic hierarchy. By calling such hierarchies into question, Cynicism re-evaluated the place of humankind in nature and the role of civilization in human life.

Cynicism includes an innovative and influential literary tradition of satire, parody and aphorism devoted to 'defacing the currency' (that is, the dominant ideologies of the time). It proposes a new morality based on maximizing creaturely needs in pursuit of self-sufficiency (autarkia), achieved in part by physical training (askesis), and on maximizing both freedom of speech (parrhesia) and freedom of action (eleutheria) in open defiance of the most entrenched social taboos; and an anti-politics which sees existing governments as a betrayal of human nature, and traditional culture as an obstacle to happiness. In their place, Cynics advocated an immediate relationship to nature and coined the oxymoron kosmopolites or 'citizen of the cosmos'. However the literary, ethical and political elements of Cynicism are interrelated, all are most easily defined by what they oppose – the inherited beliefs and practices of classical Greek civilization.

The virtual loss of all early Cynic writings means that the history of Cynicism must be reconstructed from much later sources dating from the Roman Empire, the most important of which is Diogenes Laertius (third century AD).

1 The early Cynics
2 Diogenes' conception of the human being
3 Diogenes' successors
4 Cynics in the Roman Empire

1 The early Cynics

While ancient tradition consistently viewed ANTISTHENES (c.445–365 BC) as the first Cynic and Diogenes of Sinope as his pupil, modern scholarship has systematically questioned this view on chronological, numismatic and other grounds. What is at stake is nothing less than the relationship of Cynicism to Socrates, since Antisthenes was a prominent pupil of Socrates (present at his death) as well as of Gorgias the rhetorician.

Antisthenes wrote a great deal and, unlike later Cynics, his interests included theoretical as well as literary and ethical topics. It is probably more accurate to see him as an important forerunner (rather than as a founder) whose teachings provided Diogenes' practice with some basis in theory. Particularly relevant would be his beliefs that virtue (see ARETE) 'is a matter of deeds and does not needs lots of discourses and learning' and that it is sufficient for happiness 'since happiness requires nothing else except the strength of a Socrates'. If Xenophon follows Antisthenes in his representation of Socrates, then Antisthenes must have laid particular stress on Socrates' 'self-mastery' (enkrateia). In his Symposium Xenophon represents Antisthenes as actually praising poverty, which certainly resonates with Cynicism. The biographer Diogenes Laertius says that Antisthenes provided the model for Crates' 'self-mastery' and Diogenes' 'imperturbability' (apateia), which he learned by imitating Socrates, thereby inaugurating the Cynic way of life.

Whatever his relationship to Antisthenes, Diogenes of Sinope (412/403-324/321 BC) was the paradigmatic Cynic of antiquity. While Diogenes probably produced written works that do not survive, including a Republic, for us his life and thought are inseparable, since the latter is conveyed almost entirely by a tradition of biographical anecdotes that was over 500 years old by the time of our primary source, Diogenes Laertius. Diogenes Laertius preserves over 150 sayings or anecdotes that purport to quote Diogenes verbatim, as well as some brief paraphrases of his philosophy (VT 70–3), which may be even less reliable in so far as they reflect Stoic and other influences. Their historicity is always problematic, but their representation of Diogenes is the most valuable evidence we possess. Almost one in six of the anecdotes involves some form of word play or allusion to poetry. The form in which Diogenes is transmitted has two crucial features that a summary of his teachings might fail to convey. First, most of the anecdotes involve Diogenes responding wittily to some challenging question or circumstance: he is shown as a satiric provocateur as well as a heterodox moralist, and both sides of his nature need to be kept in view; if what Diogenes represents is reduced to a simple, practical morality much that made him influential is lost. Second, the biographical form necessarily makes the philosopher the embodiment of his thought; this unity of theory and practice was to become an explicit principle of Cynicism and an important source of Diogenes' authority as a philosopher. It made him (like Socrates) emblematic of the philosophic life in antiquity.

If the anecdotes, and the metaphors and slogans they inspired, are the core of ancient Cynicism, Diogenes' philosophy begins with the fact of his exile from Sinope for (literally) defacing the local currency. When reproached for his exile, he replied: 'But that was how I became a philosopher, you miserable fool!' Asked what good he had got from philosophy, he replied: 'If nothing else, then to be prepared for every
kind of luck.’ Diogenes describes himself by quoting a fragment from an unidentified tragedy:

Without a city, without a house
without a fatherland
A beggar with a single day’s bread.

This is the starting point of Cynicism: it is, among other things, an attempt to show that we are so constituted by nature that, given proper training (askēsis), happiness is possible under the most adverse conditions.

It is tempting to see Diogenes as transforming into an act of conscious defiance the exclusion he suffered involuntarily when forced into exile. This defiant stance became his ‘philosophy’ in a concerted attempt to demonstrate by his own example that happiness does not depend on society or on any contingent circumstance, the domain of Fortune, but wholly on the autonomous self – a self brought into existence, not by years of laborious text-based studies such as those advocated by other philosophers, but by Cynic discipline based on exemplary acts and corporeal training. This is why Cynicism came to be called a ‘shortcut to virtue’.

The Cynic shortcut ‘defaced’ the value philosophers attached to theoretical disciplines as well as the conventional value society attached to such externals as money, status, family and political power. (Yet the most influential Hellenistic schools – STOICISM and EPICUREANISM – would follow the Cynics in arguing that the happiness of the sage should be independent of context.) Thus Diogenes’ life becomes an extended counter-example meant to refute his critics, both popular and philosophical, as he turns the cause of his exile into a metaphor for his activity as a philosopher – ‘defacing the currency’ of conventional wisdom. ‘Defacing’ took the form of literary parody and satire, provocative acts of free speech (parrhēsia) and public exhibitions of the Cynic way of life. The laughter they were meant to provoke is an indispensable element of Diogenes’ practice and served to reinforce his independence by distancing him from the rules that everyone else obeyed.

2 Diogenes’ conception of the human being

If Diogenes differed from his contemporaries on the sufficient conditions for happiness, it is because they differed in their conception of the human being. Some of the most famous anecdotes dramatize Diogenes’ rejection of the prevailing conceptions of the human, such as when he lit a lamp in broad daylight and walked around saying ‘I’m looking for a human being’, or when Plato defined a human being as a ‘featherless biped’ and Diogenes produced a plucked chicken, saying, ‘Here is Plato’s human being’.

Diogenes’ positive conception of human nature is given, as always, by his own example, not by definitions. From it we can infer that for the Cynic human beings are animals who have much to learn about freedom and self-sufficiency from their fellow creatures. As well as offering ethical instruction, the use of animals as examples served to illustrate the intrinsic superiority of nature to culture. Theophrastus reports that Diogenes discovered how to adapt to circumstances by carefully observing a mouse. Such adaptability enabled him to test the limits of his species by living like a dog in an abandoned wine-jar (pithos). A string of anecdotes develop different aspects of the canine metaphor: among Diogenes’ canine characteristics was a shameless indifference to social norms, which enabled him to discard traditional morality based on shame in favour of living naturally and freely – that is, fulfilling his essential creaturely needs for food, sex and shelter without regard for the restraints and prohibitions of culture. Yet unlike sophists such as CALICLES, the Cynics never used nature to sanction dominating others (although theft was another matter). Clearly, the Cynic rejection of shame cannot be reduced to a matter of manners as opposed to morals: Diogenes’ pursuit of life according to nature led him to question the rational basis of such fundamental dietary and sexual taboos as those against cannibalism and incest, citing examples from nature and non-Hellenic cultures.

While advocating a rigorous physical training intended to inure one to inevitable hardship, Diogenes showed no aversion to pleasures compatible with his way of life. Indeed, he used ‘any place for any purpose’, exemplifying the Cynic conception of freedom, which applied to sexual activity – from free love to public masturbation – as well as to eating, sleeping and talking. But the ultimate aim of imitating the freedom and self-sufficiency of animals is neither instinctual satisfaction nor mere ‘imperturbability’ (apatheia), but the Olympian independence of the gods, who, ‘needing nothing’, live easily free of mortal cares. Hence, Heracles, the one mortal to reach Olympus by triumphing over his famous labours, was adopted and re-interpreted by the Cynics as their mythical prototype. Diogenes explicitly claimed that their life had ‘the same character’ because both ‘deemed nothing more important than freedom’.

Of course Diogenes’ Cynicism is full of paradoxes. While teaching life according to nature and denouncing existing social arrangements, Diogenes went on living in cities, which he made no attempt to reform. While advocating freedom and self-sufficiency as
paramount values, he both practised and advocated begging for a living. We must resist the temptation to turn a remarkable experiment, which challenged the most fundamental ideas of Greek civilization, into a mere system.

While Diogenes probably had no pupils as such, his example (whether conveyed orally or by written works) effectively established a philosophical model that invited imitation and interpretation. In the absence of a systematic body of doctrine, the nature of Cynicism was always up for debate; all the Cynics of antiquity as well as those who represent them (for example, Lucian, Dio Chrysostom) were of necessity actively engaged in interpreting the tradition, whether by word or deed.

3 Diogenes' successors

The most influential Cynic in antiquity after Diogenes was Crates of Thebes (c.368–c.283 BC), a wealthy landowner and therefore at the opposite end of the social spectrum from a poor exile like Diogenes. He was a hunchback and several anecdotes refer to his comic appearance. He married Hipparchia of Maronea, who, along with her brother Metrocles, became a practising Cynic and, as such, the most famous female philosopher of antiquity. Their Cynic marriage (kynogamia), based only on mutual consent, was consistent with Diogenes' views but radically at odds with Greek custom. The tradition holds that Hipparchia adopted the simple Cynic garb of Diogenes – a rough cloak, knapsack and staff – and lived on equal terms with her husband, attending events usually reserved for men and successfully defending her decision to pursue philosophy instead of weaving. Crates and Hipparchia were also notorious for living and sleeping together in public places, Cynically indifferent to shame and public opinion. It was Crates who described the fruits of philosophy as 'a quart of beans and to care for naught'.

However Crates came to know Diogenes, his life was a remarkable application of the Cynic's principles. He clearly regarded himself as a follower, calling himself a 'fellow citizen of Diogenes'. There are several (probably fictitious) accounts of how Crates became a Cynic, which revolve around the fact that he evidently sold all his possessions and gave the proceeds to his fellow citizens, thereby embracing poverty, as had Diogenes. In contrast to Diogenes with his combative style and acerbic tongue, Crates was remembered as a benevolent figure and, thanks to his role as arbiter of family quarrels, actually revered as a household deity in Athens. But his fragments are clearly informed by a satiric (or seriocomic) perspective, the hallmark of Cynic discourse: 'He used to say that we should study philosophy until we see in generals nothing but donkey-drivers.'

Crates was one of the most influential literary figures of the fourth century and his writings did much to disseminate Cynic ideology and establish parody as a distinctly Cynic mode of 'defacing' tradition. His oeuvre is notable both for its originality and its variety. He composed 'tragedies', elegies and epistles, and parodies such as his poem in hexameters entitled Pera (Knapsack), a hymn to frugality, a Praise of the Lentil, and an Ephemerides (Diary).

After Crates came Menippus (first half of the third century BC). The unreliable biographical tradition depicts him as a Phoenician slave who acquired his freedom by begging or usury and hanged himself when his business failed. Be that as it may, Menippus is among the most influential Hellenistic authors. He is the only Cynic expressly called spoudogeliotas ('seriocomic') in antiquity, and is credited with the invention of Menippean satire, a form of narrative satire that parodies both myth and philosophy. The imitations and adaptations of his work by Varro (116–26 BC) and Lucian gave Menippian forms a long and influential afterlife in antiquity and the Renaissance, making Cynicism one of the primary sources of satiric literature in Europe.

Bion of Borysthenes (c.335–c.245 BC) also played an important role in early Cynicism, especially in the domain of literature. Tradition holds that he was sold into slavery as a boy but was bought by a rhetorician and received a rhetorical education. Later, he evidently received an eclectic education in philosophy at Athens: he studied with the Academics (under Xenocrates and Crates), with the Cynics, Cyrenaics and, finally, the Peripatetics. Bion probably originated the literary form of the diatribe – an argumentative monologue with imagined interlocutors, which was an important model for satirists and essayists of the Empire. Because Bion's Cynicism seems less radical and more opportunistic than that of Diogenes, it has sometimes been characterized as a 'hedonizing Cynicism'. References in Horace and other writers suggest an eclectic thinker with remarkable literary talents, as do his witty fragments.

Teles (fl. c.235) was a teacher and moralist who quoted extensively from such philosophers as Diogenes, Crates, Metrocles, Stilpo and Bion, his favourite authority and model. The surviving seven excerpts of his Diatribes are the earliest examples we possess of this influential Cynic tradition.

The works of Cercidas (c.290–220 BC), the last important early Cynic, take a surprising political turn. Cercidas was unusual for a Cynic in being a soldier, politician and lawmaker as well as a poet. He is best-known for his Meliambi (written in the Doric
4 Cynics in the Roman Empire

Whatever the causes of its apparent decline after Cercidas, when Cynicism re-emerges in the Roman Empire, it has changed, as has the world. In a series of confrontations under the emperors Nero, Vespasian and Domitian, Roman aristocrats with republican sympathies were put to death and the philosophers associated with them – both Stoics and Cynics – were banished from Rome. The best known Cynic of the period, Demetrius, a friend and hero of Seneca, is the most conspicuous example of the Cynic involvement in the 'philosophical opposition' to the emperor.

The emergence of Cynicism as a potent political ideology – opposed to hereditary monarchy – in the first century AD is highly significant but potentially misleading; most Cynics did not live in Rome nor in the West but in the Greek-speaking cities of the East from Athens to Alexandria. Most were not politically active but busily engaged in living the Cynic way of life – begging their daily bread and bearing witness to the example of Diogenes. Socially their status had been extremely mixed from the beginning, but as a rule they were not the associates of men of wealth and power such as Seneca. The sight of vagrant Cynics living in groups, travelling from city to city dressed in the Cynic garb, was not uncommon in the Empire. In the centuries since its inception Cynicism (alone among the philosophical sects) had become a popular movement attracting adherents from those strata of society outside the traditional audience for philosophy. It is impossible to quantify the movement, but more than eighty known Cynics have now been identified.

The most prominent Cynics of the Empire – Demetrius, Demonax of Cyprus (second century AD) and Peregrinus Proteus of Parium (c. AD 100–65) – were, unlike the early Cynics, teachers, not writers, and what we know of them is filtered through writers with their own philosophic interests, such as the Stoic Seneca and the satirist and sophist Lucian. Indeed, one of the central paradoxes of Cynicism's reception in the Empire is that the influence of Cynic ideology reached its apogee (in the second century AD) when very little in the way of original Cynic literature was being produced by practising Cynics. Oenomaus of Gadara (second century AD) is the only Cynic of the Empire known to us by his written work, *Charlatan Unmasked*, a lively, if not particularly original, attack on the veracity of oracles that survives because it is quoted by Eusebius, but does not seem to have made a great impression on Oenomaus' contemporaries.

His other works, including 'tragedies' that scandalized the pious emperor Julian, are lost.

The only literature produced by Cynics in the Empire that we can set beside that of Oenomaus are the *Cynic Epistles*, a collection of fictitious letters attributed to the early Cynics and other sages. The authors of the letters are unknown and their dates of composition may vary considerably (from the third century BC to the second century AD). The epistles offer an informative survey of the topics, slogans and anecdotes that must have fuelled many a 'diatribe', the term conventionally used to describe the oral performances of the Cynic street preachers so often remarked on by our sources. These oral performances were probably the primary means by which Cynic teachings were disseminated among the general populace. The *Cynic Epistles* confirm the impression that Cynic literary production in the Empire was no longer marked by the innovative parodies and polemics of the classical period and now served primarily to propagate Cynicism as a popular ideology and collective moral praxis.

We must remember, however, that our most important sources (other than Diogenes Laertius and the *Cynic Epistles*), the sophists Lucian (c. AD 120–80) and Dio (c. AD 40–111), the Stoic Epictetus (c. AD 55–120) and the emperor Julian (c. AD 332–61) probably had access to classic works by the early Cynics as well as a secondary literature that grew up around them. Both Dio and Lucian draw on these lost traditions to create a contemporary Cynic literature in which Diogenes and other legendary Cynics (Antisthenes, Crates, Menippus) appear as characters. Their works give us the liveliest images we have of what the lost Cynic classics might have been like and (along with Diogenes Laertius) are among the primary means whereby Cynicism became part of the philosophical and literary culture of Europe.

Lucian's use of Cynic traditions is too complex to characterize briefly, but Cynic ideology and the example of the Cynic classics were indispensable to him: they gave him a licence to satirize all things Greek, which now of course included Cynics and Cynicism itself. It is Cynicism as a radical form of cultural criticism – of 'defacing' the idols of the tribe through parody, satire and free speech – that led Lucian to adopt Cynic forms (for example, Menippean satire) and voices in so many works. But his *Life of Demonax* also shows a serious interest in using Cynic (and Socratic) traditions eclectically to construct a contemporary ethical model.

Similarly, Dio – who claims to have lived as a Cynic when in exile – uses the authority of Diogenes' persona in an important series of speeches to advocate Cynic values of particular importance to
him as a courtier, particularly autonomy and freedom of speech. While lacking some of the Cynic seriocomic qualities that Diogenes has in Diogenes Laertius or Lucian, Dio's Diogenes is, on the whole, surprisingly true to his persona in the anecdotal tradition. Epictetus, by contrast, offers a distinctly idealized, quasi-religious account of Cynicism as a philosophical vocation and practical philosophy. His emphasis on praxis invites comparison with that of the Cynic Epistles. Julian echoes some of Epictetus' religious tendencies while arguing that Cynicism is a universal philosophy founded not by Diogenes nor Antisthenes, but by Apollo and based on the dictum 'Know thyself'.

Yet despite the obvious affinities all these authorities have for Cynic traditions, all denounce contemporary Cynics in the harshest terms as ignorant impostors. It is clear that the Cynic movement had split along the lines of class, wealth, and education—the very distinctions Cynicism sought to annul. What we hear in the denunciations of our sources are the traces of a heated argument over the Cynic legacy. What is the ultimate value of Cynicism? As a practical ascetic morality for the have-nots, as a universal ethical model of freedom and autonomy, or as a cultural practice devoted to 'defacing' the false values of the dominant culture? Who has the right to speak out in the name of Diogenes? It is an argument that would resound from the humanists of the Renaissance to the philosophes of the eighteenth century, when Diderot wrote his Encyclopedia article on the Cynics and his Cynic masterpiece, Rameau's Nephew, exploring the relation between Cynicism, cynicism and the nature of enlightenment.

*See also: Ariston of Chios; Socratic schools; Zeno of Citium*

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CYRENAICS

The Cyrenaic school was a Greek philosophical school which flourished in the fourth and early third centuries BC. It took its name from the native city of its founder, Aristippus of Cyrene, a member of Socrates’ entourage. His most important successors were his grandson, Aristippus the Younger, and Theodorus, Anniceras and Hegesias, the heads of three separate Cyrenaic sects.

The basis of Cyrenaic philosophy is physiological and psychological. It focuses on the individual feelings of pleasure and pain which are classed as pathē, experiences produced in a subject by its contact with an object. They are described, respectively, in terms of smooth and rough movements, of the flesh or of the soul. A third category of pathē, described as intermediate between pleasure and pain, is also defined as movements and related to one’s perception of individual properties or qualities. All pathē are short-lived and have no value beyond the actual time of their occurrence.

These physiological characteristics are encountered both in the ethics and in the epistemology of the school. Although the Cyrenaics differed in their ethical doctrines, all of them attributed a central role in their systems to the individual bodily pleasure experienced in the present moment, and some of them considered it the moral end: it is pursued for its own sake, whereas happiness, conceived as the particular collection of pleasures that one experiences during a lifetime, is sought for the sake of its component pleasures. The goodness of individual pathē of pleasure is supported by an elaborate epistemological doctrine whose central claims are that we are infallibly and incorrigibly aware of the occurrence and content of our own pathē, but that we cannot apprehend the properties of external objects. A striking feature of this doctrine is the neologisms designating the perception of qualities, such

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