

ON FRIENDSHIP – CICERO VS. JOHN OF SALISBURY

OANA-CORINA FILIP*

ABSTRACT. *On Friendship – Cicero vs. John of Salisbury.* On the topic of friendship, a clear filiation can be traced between Cicero and John of Salisbury. However, it is not a mere quotation, but an organic evolution of thought. For both philosophers friendship appears as supporting social and political relations, thus making the existence of the commonwealth possible. Their views on the different characteristics of friendship are at the same time both shared and different, thus tracing a development of the concept.

Keywords: *John of Salisbury, Cicero, Friendship, Philosophy of Language, Political Philosophy*

Cicero and John of Salisbury

When considering the link between John of Salisbury's writings and those of Marcus Tullius Cicero, a filiation can be easily noticed. John expressly acknowledges his position as a follower of Cicero's philosophy, which he also embeds in his work in less obvious ways. In the "Prologue" to his *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury calls himself a follower of the New Academy and invokes Cicero as its figure of authority:

in philosophy I am a devotee of Academic dispute, which measures by reason that which presents itself as more probable. I am not ashamed of the declarations of the Academics, so that I do not recede from their footprints in those matters about which wise men have doubts. Although this school may seem to introduce obscurity into all matters, none is more faithful to the examination of truth and, on the authority of Cicero who in old age took refuge in it, none is on better terms with progress.¹

* *PhD candidate, Doctoral School in Philosophy, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. E-mail: oana_corina13@yahoo.com*

¹ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book I: "in philosophic is Academic disputans pro rationis modulo quae occurrebant probabilia sectatus sim. Nec Academicorum erubesco professionem, qui in his quae sunt dubitabilia sapienti ab eorum vestigi is non recedo. Licet enim secta haec tenebras rebus omnibus videatur in ducere, nulla veritati ex aminandae fidelior, auctore Cicerone qui ad eam in senectute divertit, nulla profectui familiarior", transl. Carry J. Nederman.

His appreciation for Cicero's texts can be seen throughout the entire work of *Policraticus*, either through direct quotation of the latter's texts, or by adopting and developing some of his concepts. Such is the case of friendship, a topic of significant importance in John's political and linguistic philosophy.

Friendship in itself appears mentioned few times in the *Policraticus*, however its opposite according to John, flattery, occupies the entire third book of the treatise. Here flatterers are defined, classified, their strategies of deceiving are described and the reader is warned on how to proceed against them. It is by contrast to flattery that friendship is mentioned and presented. John of Salisbury's theory of friendship is largely indebted to Cicero's treatise *Laelius or On Friendship*. It is by no means a mere imitation of Cicero's ideas, but an evolution starting from them and going a step further.

Definition and Origins of Friendship

While Cicero proposes a definition of friendship through Laelius's mouth "I used to share with him my concerns on matters both public and private, I associated with him at home and abroad on military service, and we had what constitutes the very essence of friendship, namely complete community of wishes, interests and opinion",² John does not venture to do so on his part. He gives no clear definition of friendship, neither in itself, not in opposition to flattery. On the other hand, John provides a list of traits in which friendship originates:

The good will of all is indeed to be cultivated, for it is the source of friendship and the first step to affection, but cultivated without staining honour, by zealous service, by the path of virtue, by the fruit of service, and by sincerity of speech. Add too steadfast consistency in word and deed, and truth, which is the foundation of all duty and good. Virtue seeks the esteem of the good and even of all men, if that be possible, but scorns to attain it by degrading means.³

² Cicero, 15, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 153.

³ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 5. "Este quidem omnium captanda benevolentia, quae fons amicitiae et primus caritatis progressus est; sed honestate in columi, officiorum studiis, uirtuti sua, obsequiorum fructu, integritate sermonis. Ad sit et fides, dictorum scilicet factorum que constantia, et ueritas quae officiorum et bonorum omnium est fundamentum. Gratiam bonorum sed et omnium si fieri posset uirtus appetit, sed adeam de dignatur per sordes accedere", transl. Joseph B. Pike.

Cicero too attributes the origin of friendship to virtue “For there is nothing that inspires affection more than virtue, nothing that attracts us more powerfully to love the one who possesses it, since it is their virtue and integrity that makes us in a certain way feel love even for those whom we have never seen.”⁴ Furthermore, he gives virtue not only the benefit of being at the source of friendship, but also of guaranteeing it further on “There are, of course, those who place the highest good in virtue, and this is indeed a noble sentiment, but this very virtue is the creator and protector of friendship, and without virtue there are no means by which friendship is able to exist.”⁵ He also discusses the source of friendship starting from a linguistic point, by analysing the origin of the Latin word for friendship, *amicitia*:

For the first thing that promotes the establishing of goodwill is love (*amor*), from which is derived the word ‘friendship’ (*amicitia*). For it is true that many times practical advantages are obtained even by those who are cultivated under the pretence of friendship and honoured to gain a temporary benefit; but in friendship there is nothing false, nothing pretended, and whatever there is within it, is genuine and proceeds willingly. It is therefore my view that friendship has its origin in nature rather than in need, and that it derives more from an attachment of the mind together with a sense of affection than from a calculation of how much advantage the relationship will bring.⁶

Despite the fact that both authors agree on virtue as a main source of friendship, together with affection, it can be observed that John stresses the role of truthfulness in a manner that Cicero does not. His emphasis on truthfulness provides in fact his personal definition of virtue as “steadfast consistency in word and deed, and truth”. This may originate in Cicero’s description of the qualities to be looked for in a potential friend:

Now the basis of that stability and steadfastness that we seek in friendship is trustworthiness; nothing is stable which is without trustworthiness. Besides, it is reasonable to select someone who is frank in nature, sociable and sympathetic, that is, one who is affected by the same things as oneself; and all these things tend towards trustworthiness.⁷

⁴ Cicero, 28, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 158.

⁵ Cicero, 20, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 155.

⁶ Cicero, 27-28, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 157–158.

⁷ Cicero, 65, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 169.

However, there is a significant difference between Cicero's recommendation of traits in a friend and John of Salisbury's strong focus on truthfulness as a definition of virtue. It is this definition that John uses in the *Policraticus* to split society into frivolous individuals (flatterers, Epicureans, lay and clerical tyrants) and virtuous individuals (friends, philosophers, priests and princes). Human interaction is also classified by John in two categories: friendship and flattery. These divisions all share the same criterion, that of whether a person's acts are in accordance with their words, that is whether they are truthful. Such a criterion is legitimate in the context of language being regarded as strictly truthful in nature. Because if "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"⁸ and Christ as God said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"⁹, then the Word is truth by definition and, consequently, language in its original state is truth by definition. As a result, language becomes an ethical instrument and its accordance to deeds marks virtue.

A progression in the sources of friendship can be seen, starting from the ancient Greek conception that friendship is solely possible amongst kin, evolving through Cicero's conception that family ties and belonging to the same people favour it, but virtue makes it possible

It seems clear to me that we were born into this world with a certain natural tie of association between us all, but one that gains in strength the nearer we are placed to one another. And so there is a greater closeness with our fellow countrymen than with foreigners, and relatives are closer than strangers; with these, Nature itself has created a tie of friendship, but it is one that lacks stability; for friendship surpasses family connections in this respect, that goodwill can be eliminated from family connections but not from friendship; once goodwill is removed the name of family connections remains but that of friendship vanishes. The clearest way, however, to appreciate the power of friendship is this, that out of the infinite number of ties that bind the human race together and have been fashioned by nature itself, friendship is something so compressed and so narrowed that every example of true affection is found either between two persons, or among just a few. For friendship is nothing other than a shared set of views on all matters human and divine, together with goodwill and affection, and I am inclined to think that, with the exception of wisdom, it is the greatest gift bestowed on man by the immortal gods.¹⁰

⁸ John 1:1.

⁹ John 14:6.

¹⁰ Cicero, 19-20, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 155.

and reaching John’s conception that truthfulness is the basis of friendship:

Perhaps as importantly, at least in the context of John’s immediate concern with courtly flattery, virtue stands in close and irrevocable connection to truth. Since virtue requires knowledge of the good, which is grounded in truth, as John says above, the bond of friendship must rest on the commitment of the friends to seek and respect the truth. As a general precept of his thought, John emphasized that open and free debate and criticism formed a crucial quality of the public spheres of the court and of the school. Individuals should be protected in their liberty to engage in conscientious, constructive reproof of the morals of others and to challenge ideas that do not meet up to rational evaluation. (John’s concept of liberty in this regard will be elucidated more fully below.) Likewise, people should be prepared to listen to and consider seriously such honest criticism when it is rendered. This quality seems particularly necessary in the case of friendship, which is guided by truthfulness.¹¹

For both Cicero and John friendship has a clear social role, being paramount for the existence of society. While John takes it to the point that it defines any health social interaction, Cicero states its importance clearly “But only remove from the world the tie of goodwill and not one house or city will be able to stand, not even the tilling of the land will continue.”¹² In addition, both authors agree that true friendship is extremely scarce, as Cicero states through his character Laelius:

And so I am not so pleased by my reputation for wisdom, mentioned recently by Fannius and certainly undeserved, as I am by my hope that the memory of our friendship will last forever; and I take all the more delight in this thought since in all the course of history scarcely three or four pairs of friends have reached our ears; I believe there is hope that the friendship of Scipio and Laelius will be known in this group for posterity.¹³

John agrees to this view, referring himself to the above mentioned passage:

This results from the fact that if there is no advantage to be gained it is the rare person, non-existent I may say, who cherishes friendship for its own sake. In the cycles of eternity, in such a lapse of time, amid such a multitude of varied persons, as Laelius put it, scarce three or four pairs of friends are found.¹⁴

¹¹ Cary J. Nederman, “John of Salisbury’s Political Theory”, in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, ed. Christophe Grellard and Frederique Lachaud, Leiden: Brill, 2014, 262–263.

¹² Cicero, 23, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 156.

¹³ Cicero, 15, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, pp. 153–154.

¹⁴ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 7, “Quod ex eo constat quod, sic esset utilitas, rarus aut nullus est qui propter se uirtutem amicitiae colat. In tot circulis

In opposition to Cicero, who does not explicitly mention a potential cause for the scarcity of true friendships, John considers the reason to be that most people seek friendships for some sort of gain. By contrast, Cicero argues repeatedly that no material gain can be compared to friendship itself and that friendship does not arise out of need, but is a gift from nature:

Yet the strengthening of love is caused by the receiving of kind acts, by the observation of the other's warm feelings and by the increase of familiarity. When these are added to that initial stirring of the mind and of amorous feeling, goodwill surges up like a flame, truly amazing in its intensity. If any men suppose that this stems from weakness and from the desire of each of us to secure someone who will enable us to gain what we lack, then the origin they leave friendship is a mean one indeed, very far from aristocratic, if I may so express it, as they have us see it as born of Poverty and Insufficiency. If this were the case, the man who had least self-confidence would be the one most fit for friendship; but reality is far different from this. For a man excels in seeking out and maintaining friendships in direct proportion to his capacity for self-reliance and his being so fortified by virtue and wisdom that he has need of no one else, considering all things that concern him as within his own control.¹⁵

According to him, the experience of empathy is the greatest advantage provided by friendship. It is this empathy that gives individuals an impulse to rise from wretched situations and to develop.

For friendship makes good fortune shine with greater brilliance and, by sharing and dividing bad fortune, eases its weight on one's shoulders. Moreover, while it is the case that friendship contains a host of considerable advantages, it surely surpasses all other things in this respect, that it casts a bright light of hope into the future and does not allow a man's spirit to grow weak to stumble. For the man who looks at a true friend is looking, as it were, at a reflection of himself. For this reason friends who are absent become present, those in need become rich, those who are weak become strong, and, a more difficult thing to say, those who are dead become alive: so great is the esteem that follows after them among their friends, so deep-felt the longing, so potent the memory, that it seems through this that the departed ones are happy in death, the living who grieve worthy of men's praise.¹⁶

saeculorum, in tanto aetatum lapsu, in tanta multitudine et differentia personarum, vix, utait Laelius, tria inveniuntur aut quattuorparia in amore" transl. Joseph B. Pike.

¹⁵ Cicero, 29-30, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, pp. 158-159.

¹⁶ Cicero, 22-23, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 156.

Friendship is Possible Only Amongst Virtuous Men

Since virtue is considered to be the basis of friendship, it derives from here that friendship is possible only amongst virtuous men. Cicero goes on to explain what he means by good or virtuous men:

But let me say, as my first point, that in my view friendship can exist only among men who are good. Now I have no wish to prune that definition right back to its roots, as those men do who show more subtlety in discussing these matters – perhaps correctly but not very beneficially for ordinary purposes. They say that no one is a good man if he does not possess wisdom. This may well be true, but their understanding of wisdom is such that no one on earth has to this day attained it. But what we should concentrate on are those things that are available in ordinary life, in our own experience, not those things that are only imagined or wished for. Never would it be asserted by me that Gaius Fabricius, Manius Curius and Tiberius Coruncanius, whom our ancestors judged to be wise, were wise by the standard the philosophers apply. And so let them keep to themselves their name of wisdom, which attracts both envy and misunderstanding, as long as they grant that those men were good. Yet not even this will they do; they will say that only a wise man is entitled to be called good. Let us therefore proceed using our own homespun wisdom, as the saying goes. Men who behave and live in such a way that praise is bestowed on their honesty, integrity, fairness and generosity, and who are entirely free from greed, sensual desire and presumption, and possess great strength of character, like those men I recently named – such men let us regard as good, in accordance with their reputation hitherto, and also worthy of receiving this name, since, as far as is humanly possible, they follow Nature, the best guide for living well.¹⁷

John of Salisbury, on the other hand, starts from the statement that friendship is based on virtue and therefore can occur only between good men, but instead of depicting the traits of good men further, he directs his attention on illustrating that friendship cannot occur between vicious men:

It has indeed been a question whether affection or friendship can exist between vicious men. The decision was finally reached that this bond can exist only between the virtuous. To be sure there is a harmony between rakes and rascals, but this is as far removed from friendship as light is from darkness. Though at times evil as well as good men may have similar desires or dislikes, they do not thereby attain

¹⁷ Cicero, 18-19, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, pp. 154–155.

the rank of friendship. Consequently, Sallust, most outstanding of Roman historians, and even Cicero laid down the rule that what is called real friendship among good men goes by the name gang among evil ones. Although the vicious man cannot be a friend because his vices prevent, and though he may not be an object of respect, yet he will be an object of fear if by his cognizance of secrets he can strike terror into the heart of his confederate. The words of the moralist are to the point:

He never thinks he owes you aught; he never
Makes a gift, who shares with you a secret
That is not vile to know.¹⁸

In this instance, John generally talks about vicious men, without setting apart the tyrant as a special category, despite the fact that further on in his book he extensively addresses the issue of the tyrant. Cicero does the opposite on this matter. He does not talk about the possibility of friendships amongst vicious men in general, but refers only to the tyrant, for which he states that friendship is impossible, since they are both too afraid and too feared to have friends:

This is, indeed, the life lived by tyrants, one in which, of course, there can be no trust, no affection, no confidence in the permanence of goodwill, where every action creates suspicion and anxiety, and friendship has no place. For who would love either the man he fears, or the man by whom he believes he is feared? It is true that tyrants are cultivated by men who affect friendship for a time, to gain their own advantage. But if, as often happens, they should chance to fall from power, then one understands how poor they were in friends.¹⁹

John positions this question in the larger discussion about whether the rich are capable of friendship. He does not totally deny the possibility of the rich having friends, but states that it is very rare, almost not existent “In any case the rich man realizes that he is merely an acquaintance, never or rarely a friend.”²⁰ Cicero does

¹⁸ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 12, “sit amen inter malos caritas aut amicitia esse potest; hoc et enim quae situm est. Sed tandem placuit eam nisi in bonis esse non posse. Magna utique inter molles et malos concordia, sed ea tantum a caritate discedit quantum lux distat a tenebris. Et licet inter dumm ali, sicut et boni, idem uelleuel idem nolle possint, amicitia et amentitulum non assequuntur. Vnde et Crispo historicorum inter Latinos potissimo, sed et ipsi Ciceroni placuit in malisfactionem esse quod in uiris bonis uera amicitia est. Sed quam uis uitiosus praepediente malitia amicus esse non possit, et si non uenerabilis, uerendustamenerit qui conscientia secretorum conscio terrorem potest in cutere. Scitum est illud ethici quia *nil tibi se debereputat, nil conferetumquam, qui te participem secreti fecit honesti*”, transl. Joseph B. Pike.

¹⁹ Cicero, 53-54, “On Friendship” in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 165.

²⁰ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 12, “Utique diues familiaris esse nouit, amicus num quam auararo”, transl. Joseph B. Pike.

not take the rich as a homogeneous category, but refers only to the extremely rich as potentially having difficulties in being friends with others. However, in Cicero's view such a situation is not caused by others not genuinely desiring true friendship with the very rich, but by the rich's disregard for the importance of friendship:

Now, just as this man's character, as I said, prevented him from winning true friends, so the riches and influence enjoyed by men of power often stand in the way of true friendships. For not only is fortune itself blind but also it generally makes blind the men it has embraced, with the result that, as a rule, they are swept away by pride and inflexibility. Nothing in the world can be more intolerable than a fool who is blessed by fortune. And we may observe that men who previously were affable in character are changed by power and influence and prosperity; they spurn old friendships and favour new ones. But what is more foolish, when men have the resources, the influence and the opportunity to gain whatever they wish, than to acquire the other things which money can buy – horses, servants, splendid clothes, costly tableware – but not to acquire friends, who are, if I may so put it, the best and the finest kind of furniture for life? Indeed, when they are procuring those other things, they do not know for whom they make these purchases or for whose sake they go to all this trouble; for each of those things belongs to the one who can gain them by his strength. But when it comes to the friendships he has, each man enjoys a permanent and fixed ownership of them, so that, even if those acquisitions, which are, effectively, gifts of fortune, should continue as his property, it remains true that a life devoid of friends and abandoned by them cannot be a happy one.²¹

As a result of friendship's limitation only to the virtuous, in order for it to be maintained, only honourable deeds can be asked of friends. Friendship cannot be used as a pretext for betraying one's country or committing a vile deed. The reason behind it is that friendship implies both parties, the demander and the provider, to be virtuous, or a vile act cannot be demanded or provided by a virtuous man. John of Salisbury only mentions this rule of friendship he takes up from Cicero, but does not go into much detail about it "It has become a law governing friendship that only what is honourable may be required of friends or be conferred by them."²² Cicero, the initial exponent of this rule of friendship, goes into significantly more detail about the matter before concluding it:

²¹ Cicero, 54-55, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 166.

²² John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 11, "Et lex amicitia e illa prae ualuit qua sola honesta appeti licet ab amicis aut fieri", transl. Joseph B. Pike.

It is, therefore, no excuse for wrongdoing that you have committed wrong for the sake of a friend; for since it was a belief in each other's virtue that brought you together as friends, it is difficult for the friendship to continue, if one forsakes the path of virtue. But there would be nothing wrong in laying down a law, that it is right, either to grant a friend his very wish, or to obtain our every wish from them, given that we are endowed with perfect wisdom; but the friends I am speaking of are those before our eyes, the ones we are able to see or have heard of in history, those known to everyday life; from men who belong to this category should we draw our examples, but especially, I accept, from those who approximate most to wisdom.²³ Accordingly, let us enact this law concerning friendship, that we should not request shameful things, nor carry them out, if asked. For it is a shameful excuse and one that must in no circumstances be accepted for a man to plead, in the case of wrongdoings in general and especially of those against the Roman state, that he acted in the interests of a friend.²⁴

Flattery is the Enemy of Friendship

Both Cicero and John of Salisbury consider flattery as being the exact opposite of friendship. Moreover, they depict it as a destroyer of friendship and of virtue. On the one hand, John extensively treats the issue of flattery throughout his third book of the *Policraticus*, going into classifications of flatterers and exposing their harmfulness in much detail. In fact, the frivolous courtiers about whom John writes in the first three books of the *Policraticus*, discussing their vices (hunting, gambling, drinking, and going to fortune-tellers, superstitions) can all be catalogued as flatterers. When talking about how flattery affects friendship, he considers that criticism from a friend should always be preferred to flattery, as the former is aimed at correcting the individual and thus embittering him, while the latter makes him sink even more into vice:

Then too, our critic is either friend or foe. If a foe offers an insult he has to be endured; if a friend makes a mistake he is to be put right; if he should do the instructing he should be given attention. He who gives erroneous praise confirms the error, while a flatterer allures and leads into error.²⁵

²³ Cicero, 37-38, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 161.

²⁴ Cicero, 40, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 162.

²⁵ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan, Book III, 14, "Et enim aut inimicus reprehensurus est aut amicus. Si inimicus insultat, ferendus est. Amicus autem si errat, docendus. Si docet, audiendus. Laudator uero et errans confirmat errorem et adulans illicit in errorem", transl. Joseph B. Pike.

On the other hand, Cicero does not go as far as to make out of flatterers an ethical category. He highlights the role of friends' advice in life, even when it is under the form of criticism:

So let this be enacted as the first law of friendship: that we should ask of friends only what is honourable and that we should act honourably on behalf of friends; we should not even wait to be asked, but should constantly show enthusiasm, never hesitation; as to counsel, we should not be afraid to offer it freely; in friendship the influence of those friends who give good advice should be of first importance, and it should be applied when there is need for advice, not only openly but sharply as well, if occasion demands, and, once applied, it should be obeyed.²⁶

He goes on to present different tactics to pose the truth to a friend, as the friend's openness to criticism may vary and may endanger the friendship. Cicero emphasizes nonetheless that, in a friendship, the truth is absolutely necessary.

The truth can create trouble, if indeed it gives rise to dislike, which poisons friendship; but complaisance is much more troublesome, as it is tolerant of a friend's misdeeds and allows him to rush away out of control. The greatest fault, however, is in the one who rejects the truth and is driven to a position of self-deception by his complaisance. Accordingly, in this matter it is necessary to employ all reason and care, firstly that advice is offered without acrimony, and secondly that criticism is free from insult. And in the case of complaisance (since we are happy to adopt Terence's word), let courtesy be present, and let flattery, that encourages faults, be banished afar, since it is not even worthy of a free man, let alone a friend; we do not live on the same terms with a tyrant as we do with a friend. But if a man's ears are so closed to the truth that he is unable to hear what is true from a friend, one should lose all hope for the health of his morals.²⁷

If a friend is unable to handle the truth from another friend, then, in Cicero's opinion, the friendship is to be abandoned, as the friend has morally decayed beyond repair. Cicero only suggests that in the case of a tyrant flattery would be permitted, but he avoids making such a claim. John of Salisbury, however, goes further and states that in the case of the tyrant flattery is the only solution. This is because the tyrant is not only deaf to the truth, as the friend in Cicero's example, but also the tyrant can and would harm any critic.

²⁶ Cicero, 44, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, p. 163.

²⁷ Cicero, 80-90, "On Friendship" in *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie, pp. 175-176.

Conclusion

All in all, it can be easily observed that, on the topic of friendship as in many others, John of Salisbury is greatly indebted to Marcus Tullius Cicero's works, fact which he does not hide, but, on the contrary, shows overtly through direct quotation and by mentioning Cicero as his source. But it is not a mere adoption of Cicero's opinion that we see in the *Policraticus*, it is an organic evolution, due to the change in view upon language inside John's cultivated Christian circle. Both authors consider that friendship is based on virtue and cannot exist without it, but John takes the concept forward and makes truth the defining mark of virtue. Both consider that friendship is scarce, but give different reasons for it. Both name flattery as the enemy of friendship and advise towards honesty amongst friends, be it even harsh. Both show reluctance to the possibility of friendship existing amongst the rich. Both deny its possibility in relation to tyrants. However, in the middle of all shared views, John of Salisbury in each instance takes Cicero's ideas, adapts them, and develops them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois, 1990, ed. J. D. Douglas, transl. Robert K. Brown, Philip W. Comfort.
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius, *On Life and Death*, Oxford University Press, 2017, ed. Mirriam T. Griffin, transl. John Davie.
- Grellard, Christophe; Lachaud, Frederique, *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, Brill, Leiden, 2014.
- of Salisbury, John, *Policraticus*, Brepols, 1993, ed. Keats-Rohan.
- of Salisbury, John, *Fivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers*, Octogon Books, New York, 1972, transl. Joseph B. Pike.
- of Salisbury, John, *Policraticus*, Cambridge University Press, 2007/1990, translated by Carry J. Nederman.