

## Harvey's Greek Lectures

Harvey's Greek lectures were published in 1581 by Henry Bynneman, as part of the appendix to Jean Crespin's *Lexicon Graecolatinum*. This lexicon was first printed in 1566 on the continent. There are five copies of the Bynneman edition in the US: Huntington, Folger, U. Chicago, U. Illinois, and the Library Company in Philadelphia.

There are two lectures, the first one three pages long and the second one six, both printed in extremely small type. The lectures are entitled *G.H.'s First (Second) Lecture on the Learning of the Greek Language*. They were discovered by T.W. Baldwin while researching *William Shakespere's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke* in the 30s. He identified the author as Gabriel Harvey and was able to deduce from good evidence that the first lecture was delivered in 1573 and the second in the fall of 1575. If this last is correct the second lecture was delivered a few months after the *Rhetor*.

The lectures were delivered by Harvey when he was Greek instructor at Pembroke Hall. Like the *Rhetor* and *Ciceronianus* they are inaugural lectures, but whereas those two were addressed to the entire university community, these are directed only to the Greek students at Pembroke.

In preparing the transcription I used a photocopy of the text owned by the Univ. of Illinois. Because of the small type there were some parts that I couldn't make out. Anything I wasn't sure of I enclosed in brackets in the transcription. In copying the text I eliminated the accents and spelled out the contracted words in full. Whenever I encountered a word I thought to be a typographical error, I changed it to what I thought to be the correct reading and marked it with an asterisk, and gave the original reading at the end of the document.

### Synopsis of Greek Lecture 1

Harvey begins by saying that he is unqualified to be the Greek instructor, but that he was forced into the job by necessity, because no one else would take it. But though he hasn't studied the language long enough to be a skillful teacher, yet he is a diligent and enthusiastic student and he and the class can learn together.

He then discourses briefly on the brilliance of the Greek authors and the importance of reading their work in the original rather than in translation: "It's a sad thing to see with another's eyes, to hear with another's ears, and almost everything becomes worse when it is altered, like beer that's poured from jar to jar, or a tree transplanted from place to place."

He says that it is important to learn the rudiments of the language as quickly as possible, and that the best way to do so is by studying the grammar of Peter Ramus. The students will begin their reading of Greek with that part of the Greek catechism that deals with the Law and Ten Commandments. Harvey says that this is not his own idea, but the recommendation of his predecessor (Hales). He nevertheless praises the practice, because the students can thereby

combine language study with moral edification. Rather droll, this. Harvey seems to me a bit uncomfortable talking of religious matters. He refers to the Ten Commandments as "the Oracles of the Law," and then speaks of the Law as a kind of Platonic "Idea." The Law not only teaches human and divine virtues, but most importantly, it teaches man to "know thyself." To me it's comical the way Harvey puts a classical spin on the Torah.

Harvey then describes classroom procedure. In going over the Greek catechism he will translate everything twice. First he'll give a word-for-word translation, and then he'll phrase the passage in the best Latin possible, so that the students might learn to do the same. In this practice they will be following Cicero, who translated into elegant Latin Plato, Xenophon, Aratus, etc. After translating the passage he will subject to a brief "Ethical Analysis" any part of the subject matter that he thinks might require elucidation. Finally, he will subject the passage to grammatical analysis and "scholastic exegesis," whatever that is.

Next Harvey encourages his students to imitate three individuals who distinguished themselves as students of the Greek language at a very early age: Henricus Stephanus, who was almost still a boy when he translated their Greek catechism from the French; Louis Stella, who at the age of fifteen could explicate any Greek author and lectured to large crowds on Lucian and Aristophanes; and Johann Thomas Freig, who by the age of ten had studied the Greek authors extensively. After this mention of three foreigners, Harvey feels obliged to mention three Englishmen who were their equals: Smith, Cheke and Carr.

In conclusion, Harvey lists the excellent resources the students have to assist them -- the Greco-Latin dictionaries and Greek grammars compiled by Clenardus, Antesignanus, Ramus, Crespin, Budaeus, and Stephanus. He expresses the hope that in the future a man will not be considered educated unless he knows Greek. He apologizes for the short and simple speech but hopes that it might nevertheless kindle in the students a zeal for studying the Greek language.

### Synopsis of Greek Lecture 2

Harvey begins by saying that it has been almost two years now that he has been serving as Greek instructor. He is reluctant to resume his duties for yet another year, not only because of his lack of experience in the subject but also because he's so busy. There are many others in the college more capable of serving than he, but they are unwilling to do so. He will assume the task rather than abandon the class.

He tells the students that they have been studying Latin for a long time and are thoroughly familiar with Rome, and that it is now time to travel to Athens, "the wisest, most eloquent, most learned city the sun has ever shone upon." There they will meet Isocrates, Lucian, Demosthenes, Euripides, Homer, Plato, Xenophon and Aristotle.

After some remarks about the importance of education and the need for hard work ("man wasn't born for leisure and the pleasures of the body, but for honor and glory"), Harvey states that a knowledge of Greek is not only useful for every learned profession, but almost essential. He then launches into the body of the speech, in which he discusses the numerous words in use in the

Liberal Arts that are borrowed from the Greek. The organization is as follows:

### Grammar

- Etymology (monosyllable, patronymic, etc.)
  - Greek borrowings in the Latin authors
  - Names of literary genres (tragedy, comedy, epic)
  - Names of Muses
  - Book titles (Baldwin quotes this long list in full)
  - Common words in Latin with a Greek origin (pater, mater, etc.)
- Syntax (anomaly, ellipsis)
- Prosody and Orthography (comma, parenthesis, etc.)

### Rhetoric

- Style
  - Tropes (irony, metaphor, etc.)
  - Figures
    - Figures of language (anadiplosis, anaphora, etc.)
    - Figures of thought
      - Logismos (epanorthosis, prosopopoeia, etc.)
      - Dialogismos (aporia, prolepsis, etc.)
- Delivery (monotony, chironomy, etc.)

### Logic

- Invention (topics, analytic, apodeictic)
- Judgment (category, analogy, method, etc.)

Mathematics (cube, cone, dodecahedron, etc.)

Physics (zodiac, horizon, meteor, etc.)

From the above outline this passage might seem very dull, but Harvey approaches it with great energy and tries to make it as interesting as possible, through the use of various rhetorical devices. Here's an example: "I hasten to those fertile and spacious plains of the rhetors, where vast forces of Greek soldiers and generals, so to speak, are marshaled. First of all, their queen and commander herself is of a most ancient Greek lineage (for you well know that Rhetoric is derived from the Greek *rheo*), and in her camps and provinces she maintains hundreds and hundreds of supporters. They dwell in two camps, that of Style (called by Hermogenes and Aristotle *lexis*, by Phalereus *hermeneia*, by Quintilian *phrasis*), and that of Pronunciation or Delivery (which goes by the name of *hypocrisis*). For those things pertaining to Invention, Arrangement and Memory belong not to the tongue, but to the mind, not to eloquence, but to wisdom, not to speech, but to reason, and therefore they can and should be assigned not to Rhetoric, but to her sister Dialectic. Under the command of Style are Tropes and Schemes. And every trope follows the standard of

either Metonymy or Irony or Metaphor or Synecdoche. . . "

On a couple of occasions Harvey adds a little humor by relating etymological blunders committed by scholars in the Middle Ages who were ignorant of Greek. For example, Peter Comestor derived the word *eunuch* from *eu* (good) and *nike* (victory), because the castrated state represents a glorious victory over the flesh.

Harvey goes on to say that he is sure that all of his students are convinced of the necessity of learning Greek, which is denigrated only by those who feel shame for not knowing it. Nevertheless, he lists some authorities for its study. He mentions the apologies written by Erasmus, Budaeus and Crocus, and the examples of Cato the Censor and Augustine, who both took up the study of Greek at an advanced age. He then proceeds to the 15th century humanists, who as old men studied under Chrysoloras, Lascaris and Chalcondyle, thus reviving Greek learning in the West after 700 years of neglect. The Greek language and Greek literature have received an abundance of extravagant praise from numerous quarters.

Harvey says that they will begin their reading with Isocrates. He believes that this is much better than to begin with poetry, as some teachers do. Harvey compares these teachers to nurses who feed babies wine instead of milk. Much better to begin with something easy, pleasant, clear, precise and accessible. Isocrates is the sweetest and richest stylist of them all, and aptly called the Attic Siren. He is easy for beginners, charming for more advanced students, and for those who understand him well the wisest of the eloquent and the most eloquent of the wise.

From this mention of the wisdom of Isocrates, Harvey segues into his closing remarks about the importance of *utility*. The flowers of style are insufficient if unaccompanied by the fruits of wisdom. He recites a poem he wrote as an adolescent, based on a fable by Avienus (actually Phaedrus). It is about how when the gods chose their sacred trees, Minerva alone in her wisdom chose a fruit tree. Harvey tells his students that if they are to fully appreciate Isocrates there is need of many kinds of analysis: Grammatical, Rhetorical, Dialectical, Ethical, Political. Harvey hopes that in the lectures to come this analysis will reveal to them both the beauty and wisdom of Isocrates.