The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

Latin Tenses in *Bo, Bam*

John B. Bury

The Classical Review / Volume 3 / Issue 05 / May 1889, pp 195 - 196

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00194739, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00194739

How to cite this article:

John B. Bury (1889). Latin Tenses in *Bo, Bam*. The Classical Review, 3, pp 195-196
doi:10.1017/S0009840X00194739

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

The Classical Review

MAY 1889.

LATIN TENSES IN *BO*, *BAM*.

PERHAPS it is from despair of finding any more satisfactory explanation that comparative philologists apparently still acquiesce in the old theory which represents those puzzling Latin futures in *bo* and imperfects in *bam* as compounded of the verbal stem and the auxiliary *fuō, fuam* (φύω; *bhānāmi*; Eng. *be*). R. Thurneysen repeats and supports this view in *Bezzenberger's Beiträge*, viii, p. 281, where he cites the relation of *superbus* to *ὑπερφύαλος* (*sic*) as an instance in which the *bh* of *bhav* (*bhu*) has become *b* in the middle of a Latin word. The comparison of *superbus* with *ὑπερφύαλος* is doubtless correct, but the connexion of both or either with *fuō, φύω* is as certainly unwarranted. It is at least far more probable that *superb(i)-us* and its Greek equivalent **ὑπερφι-ος*, which has only survived¹ in the diminutive form *ὑπερφί-αλος*, are formed directly from **ὑπερφι*, an instrumental case of *ὑπέρ*. The change of *-b(i)us* to *-bus* in *superbus* is paralleled by the change of *-b(i)us* to *-bus* in dative or ablative plural, and is due to the accent. *Dubius* (formed from instrumental **dubhī*) was originally oxyton, and hence the *i* remained; whereas in *superb(i)us* *j* following the accent vanished. Compare the relations of *καίειν* and *κνῆν*, &c., as explained by Fick (*Bezz. Beitr.* ix. 317 sqq.).

To the theory which derives *-bo -bam* from *fuō, fuam* there are serious objections. In the first place it assumes the loss of *u* (*v*), which in *fui, φύω, bhānāmi* is a vital element

of the verbal organism. In the second place, it assumes the principle of auxiliary formations, which as far as we know were not a feature of the Indo-Germanic language. It is hardly to be supposed that any one now regards *amavi* as a corruption of *ama-fui*; and the view which found in the last syllable of *μινίθω* the 'root' of *τίθημι* has probably few supporters. The idea that *-bam, -bo* are auxiliary verbs seems hardly more plausible.

In examining these forms we can derive some help of a negative kind from Celtic. We cannot refuse to compare the Irish *b*-future with the Latin *b*-future. Now Latin *b* in the middle of a word may (where it is not parasitic) represent *bh, dh*, or a velar media. But as Irish *b* does not arise from a guttural or from *dh*, it follows that the *b* with which we are concerned must have come from *bh*.

Before attempting to account for this *bh* I must briefly refer to a general theory of the origin of verbs and nouns, which follows from the inevitable hypothesis of 'sentence-words.' According to this theory, verbs and nouns are the results of the differentiation of words (not roots but actually spoken words) which were originally, neither verbs nor nouns, or both verbs and nouns—*Infinite*, as they are called by Fick, to whose lucid exposition I may refer (*Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1881, p. 436). The word which expressed the idea 'drink' was not at first defined as 'I drink,' 'thou drinkest' or 'the drink,' but might bear any one of these determinations according to the gesture (&c.) by which it was accompanied. The process by which these originally indifferent words were differentiated into the various parts of speech, with declension and conjugation, is one of the

¹ There are many cases in which one language has preserved only the diminutive form. For example, *ἀστὴρ*: *stella*, *ἰὼν*: *viola*; conversely, *δῆγυλος*: *varius*: *αἰδῶλος* (if I am right in explaining *αἰδῶλος* = *Φασιδῶλος, variolus*).

chief problems which the science of language has to solve. Fick has shown that the inflexion of *léiqmī*, *léiqsi*, &c., rests on the words, *léiqi*, *liqēni*, *liqai*, *liqdhai*, which are in form noun-cases. It follows that we may in general expect to find the same formative elements, which appear in the declensions of nouns, appearing in conjugations of verbs.

An obvious instance is the case of the futures and aorists in *s* (*fazo*, *rexi*, *λύσω*, *ἔλυσα*, *bhaviṣyāmi*, &c.). We need not hesitate to regard this *s* as essentially the same as that *s* which appears in Sanskrit loc. plur. *su*,¹ in Greek locatives in *σι*, and in dative plurals in *s*.

On the same principle I propose to identify the *b* of *ibo*, *ibam* with the *b* in *tibei*, *nobis*, *ibus* (*is*), *rebus*, with *φ* in *ἴφι*, *σφι*, *βίηφι*, with *bh* in the Ssk. cases *bhyam* (*tū-*

bhyam, *asmābhyam*), *bhyām* (dual), *bhyas*, *bhis*, with *b* in Slav. *tebě*, *sebě*. I submit that 'Infinities' of the type *léiqbhi*, *liqbhéi*, were in use before nouns and verbs had come into existence as distinct parts of speech. In the Greek forms, and in Sanskrit, we have *bhi* (*bhī-*); in the Latin singular forms (*tibi*, *sibi*, *ibi*, *-cubi*, *ubi*), and in Slavonic we have an unmistakable *bhei*.² Latin *bus*, which we can hardly refuse to identify with Ssk. *bhyas*, was originally *bhjos*, we may similarly assume the loss of *i* in the terminations *bo* and *bam*.

Along with such words as *bherē*, *ei*, *deiki*, there existed other forms, such as *éibhi*, *éibhō*, and from these were formed systems of verbal tenses; e.g. *eibhio* (*ibo*), *eibhiam* (*ibam*), while they also entered into nominal declensions.³

JOHN B. BURY.

¹ In Greek this form has survived in *μεταξύ* (basis **μετακ*, **μεταξ* : *μέτασσα* :: *πéριξ* : *περίσος*). I conjecture that it also survives in *αἰσν-μήτης* (*αἰσν* for *αἰσν* : *αἰσα* = *αἰτα*, Osc. *acteis* = *partis*, cf. *aestumo*).

² Lat. *beis* (*nobis*) : *bei* (*tibi*) :: Ssk. *bhis* : *φi*.

³ Another instance of this principle is the imperative in *dhi* (*crudhī*, *κλῦθι*), as compared with cases in *θi* (*οἰκοθι*).

NOTES ON ARISTOTLE'S *ETHICS*.

I. 5,8, πολλοὶ λόγοι καταβέβληνται πρὸς αὐτὰ is, I believe, commonly translated 'many arguments have been laid as a foundation to prove them,' rather a bold metaphor from *καταβάλλειν κρηπίδα*. I now find that Ramsauer translates 'have been published,' giving as proofs the expressions *καταβεβλημένοι παιδεύσεις*, *μαθήματα* = the common, current studies from *Politics* 1337b21, 1338a36. I had previously arrived at his conclusion independently, comparing Plato *Soph.* 232d, τὰ γε μὴν...δὲ ἀντειπεῖν δεδομωμένα πον καταβέβληται γεγραμμένα τῷ βουλευμένῳ μαθεῖν, where the form of expression reminds one of the original legal use of *καταβάλλειν*, 'file, deposit among the public records' (see L. & S.), from which the general meaning 'publish' was derived.

I. 8,10, τὸ γὰρ ἡδεσθαι τῶν ψυχικῶν. It certainly seems as if this must mean 'The feeling of pleasure is a mental state,' not bodily, according to the doctrine laid down in X. 3,6. Ramsauer quotes this, but adds with characteristic candour that he cannot see the bearing of the remark on the passage. With these words omitted the general meaning is perfectly clear, and the expression, as I think, more pointed than the commentators have suspected. 'The life of the good man

is in its very nature pleasant;' here come the debated words, then 'whatever one is called a lover of, that is pleasant to him; thus a horse to the lover of horses, a spectacle to the lover of sights; and, in the same way, just acts are pleasant to the lover of justice, and virtuous acts generally to the lover of virtue.' It is clear that to prove his general position, ἐκάστῳ ἐστὶν ἡδύ, πρὸς δὲ λέγεται φιλοσοιοῦτος, he finds it best to begin with the simplest instances, material ones, e.g. a horse, a spectacle; then from what all admit in these obvious cases there is an inference to the less obvious case where the thing loved is immaterial, e.g. virtue. Perhaps then he insists on pleasure being a mental state to show that there is no need that the object exciting it should be a material one; e.g. if pleasure were really ἀναπλήρωσις of the body—the opinion he refutes in Bk. X.—the exciting object could only be material food. I once thought the dubious words could be rendered 'the feeling of pleasure is found in connexion with psychical objects' (as well as material), e.g. in connexion with τὰ κατ' ἀρετὴν (which are ψυχικαὶ ἐνέργειαι, I. 8,2); now, however, I think this interpretation impossible, for allowing there were no objection to the meaning given in it to τὰ ψυχικά, Aristotle