

# CHAPTER 6

## KNOWLEDGE AS THE ULTIMATE ASSET OF WEALTH

The Knowledge Theory of Value

ὄλως δὲ τὸ πλουτεῖν ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ χρῆσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐν τῷ  
κεκτηῆσθαι

[“and in general being wealthy consists in the use made  
rather than in the fact of possession”]

Aristotle, *Rhetorica*, 1361a23

ὅποιοι γὰρ ἂν τινες ὦσιν οἱ χρώμενοι, τοιαῦτα καὶ τὰ  
πράγματα αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκη εἶναι

[“such as they happen to be the users, such are of necessity  
the things to them”]

Prodicus (apud *Eryxias*, 397e)

οὐδὲ τὸ ἀργύριον ἐστὶ χρήματα, εἰ μὴ τις ἐπίσταιτο  
χρῆσθαι αὐτῷ

[“not even money is a utility (goods), unless one knows how  
to use it”]

Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 12

μηδὲν ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν ὃ οὐκ ἐπιστήμη περιέχει

[“there is no good which is not comprised in knowledge”]

Plato, *Meno*, 87d8

ἡ σοφία τοῦ πλείστου ἄξιον κτῆμα φαίνεται

[“integrated and in-depth knowledge appears to be the most  
valuable possession”]

*Eryxias*, 394a

Power was experienced and acknowledged as the paramount factor in the reality of the high classical era. At the core of power in human affairs, knowledge was recognised as the dominant source. In order to have the power to effect things and create results, one has to know how to do it: this is so in arts, crafts and behaviour, in action and production, in intrasocietal and interstate relationships. Everything in man's life is a question of an *art* of doing or making; even morality consists in skills to handle successfully situations of definite descriptions, to address victoriously certain kinds of problem in human relationships. Without artful knowledge, power in man is a factor of not much *consequence*. Even on the physical level of cosmic reality, force without meaningful finality, without an intelligent order emanating from it, is an anomaly in the world-scheme of only temporary impact. Such anomaly is quickly submerged into the ocean of *natural logic* permeating reality.

Just as in the root and essence of power, knowledge was discovered; so, too, it was found constituting the real nature of wealth. It goes without saying that wealth enjoyed high positive status and exercised a fascination comparable only, if at some distance, to power at that most dynamic age. Power is knowledge turned active - something that by nature it is, being thoroughly pragmatic. Similarly, wealth is knowledge turned value. *Wealth is knowledge transformed into value: concrete as determinate utilities (goods or services); or abstract as value in general, i.e. money.* We have seen in Chapter 4 above the Aristotelian articulation of this idea in his general theory of exchange

value. Now we shall probe into the origins, and first developments, of this conception in the pregnant milieu of high classicism [1].

Something inherent in the Greek worldview reached a lightning-like awareness in the classical age: that *good is the useful and beneficial, bad the useless and harmful* [2]. The view was naturally brought into prominence by the “new philosophy” of the fifth century B.C., the Sophistical Movement. Socrates, the prominent child of the same spirit, adopted the outspoken utilitarianism of the prevailing rationalism, and gave it an extended application and absolute formulation. There were two general categories of positive estimation in ancient Greek value-judgements: *ἀγαθόν* (good) and *καλόν* (beautiful, well-formed, noble). The two were *not* divided as between a moral and an aesthetic realm, in the way customary to modern attitudes and theorising. The former was equally used in nonmoral contents [3], just as the latter in strictly ethical ones. The difference in meaning laid in that *ἀγαθόν* signified some advantage, gain, benefit or utility generally represented by the object so denominated, whereas *καλόν* referred to well-built form. Socrates, daringly pushed ancient Greek utilitarianism a step further: beauty, as well as goodness, represented an advantage, a utility, one residing in the structural form of the object concerned. Excellence of form is *instrumental* to some end. The more well-shaped is a thing, the better it subserves its proper end and purpose. The best contour in the cutting edge of a knife, is one that cuts best. The most provocative utilitarianism reigned supreme in all dimensions of human perfection and in all fields of human effective activity [4]. Again, this was an inherent experience of ancient Greek mentality, which the Sophists, and the Athenian arch-sophist among them particularly, brought into sharp focus. The athletic (agonistic and antagonistic) ideal of life helped towards an increased self-awareness of that experience: gymnastic training both revealed and enhanced the beauty of corporeal form in the athletes and empowered them to reach maximal performance in the contests.

The functionality of beauty constituted an aesthetic pragmatism that nicely complemented the functionality of virtue and the corresponding moral pragmatism of classical antiquity. Virtue and

beauty are both excellences or perfections of underlying natures, and as such they constitute the capacity to heightened activity and superlative achievement on the part of the objects whose natures are so perfected. Furthermore, moral and aesthetic functionalism are on a par with the general pragmatism of knowledge so characteristic of the Golden Era. Excellence of all sorts, and intellectual excellence (wisdom, knowledge) among them, is instrumental in achieving some appropriate end, in effecting significant results not normally realizable otherwise. Such specific end and results are thus characteristic of the particular excellence in question each time. Reality, and the ancient mind's perception of it, is thoroughly *functionalistic*: things exist, and are such as they are, for a specific purpose, which supplies the ultimate reason of their being. *Beings have tasks to perform, ends to realise.*

Being well-formed is that quality in a thing which renders it apt and capable of conferring a certain benefit on the individual commanding it. Benefit, advantage, profit, refer, on the other hand, to the satisfaction of a human need or want. Goodness is precisely the property of utility, that a thing is serviceable (because of its nature, structure and condition) for the purpose of need-satisfaction and want-fulfilment.

Good is the capacity to satisfy. The good thing is thus a vessel for this potency - it is (a store) of *value*. Goodness is *value*, and value is utility in satisfying human needs and wants.

In the great age of Greek rational pragmatism, the epoch of high Classicism, one would never stop short of the final questions. If we have apprehended the nature of goodness, we could not help asking - what then is ultimate goodness, or, in equivalent formulation, what is ultimate value? The question is not speculative or metaphysical in an antipragmatic sense. The point is that many goods can turn out actually harmful. An object possessing (positive) value may thus (and often does) become detrimental to the existence and well-being of man. Its capacity to confer benefit is cancelled in such cases, and reversed. The practical question requiring philosophical articulation is: what, if any, is some good that would self-ensure the realisation of its natural potential to satisfy human needs? The potency of such a

good could not be thwarted in any way or under any conditions. It is the ultimate, absolute good. The value residing in such a good will provide the absolute criterion and measure of all value-utility. *If we could succeed in identifying that good, we would have solved the puzzle of (objective) value.*

In the context of the New Philosophy in the Age of Reason and Pragmatism, *knowledge emerged as absolute value, utility and goodness, as the ultimate asset of wealth.* The genesis of the view, as an articulate philosophical position, is to be found in ancient Sophistics, particularly in the teaching of Prodicus. But before we approach the question of origins, it is best to follow the mature Socratic analysis of the doctrine, with its Academic follow-up.

The classical Theory of Wealth can be determined chiefly from three extant explicit treatments of the topic, all directly or indirectly relating to Socrates and the relevant Socratic position. They are at the beginning of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* [5], at a section of the Platonic *Euthydemus* [6], and in the dialogue *Eryxias*, one of the spurious tracts encompassed in the Platonic corpus [7]. To these a fourth should be added in Plato's *Menon*, although not explicitly treating of wealth [8]. The identity of the fundamental articulation in all three sources allows us to exploit indifferently and complementarily their analyses in order to reconstruct the complete, coherent picture.

Wealth is accumulated capital. To be wealthy is to possess a large amount of goods (concrete goods or commodities, abstract goods or money, general goods, or any kind of asset) [9]. The Greek word rendered as goods is *χρήματα*. The expression has the same root with the verb *χρῶμαι*, use or need, be in want of [10]. The word frequently meant money, as abstract utility in itself, but it always retained the more general sense of goods indifferently concrete or abstract. *Χρήματα* are not things in general or even possessions. There exist things, and things that one possesses as well, which are not goods. *Goods (χρήματα) are things that are, and as being, of use: they are things useful* [11]. A country's money may be totally useless elsewhere; or things highly useful in one place, may be irrelevant in another, because

of a (radical) difference in the prevailing way of life [12]. Bearing in mind the identity of utility with beneficiality (profitability) [13], goods (*χρήματα*) are equally things *beneficial* [14].

The transition from things to goods (from *πράγματα* to *χρήματα*) is of fundamental significance: it focus on the *use* things are being (or are capable of being) put in relationship to human activity and ends. Wealth is essentially an accumulation of things usable, of utilities. Utilities (things of use and benefit to us) are there to satisfy our needs and fulfill our wants: goods are things needed for man's well-being [15]. But it is not only their immediate availability that is required with a view to human well-being. Their presence at request, i.e. their possession by an individual, does not automatically secure his well-being: in order to that their *use* is essentially implicated. For the benefit from the goods (that is, the satisfaction of human needs, wants and desires) accrues to man not by their mere present availability, but by their (*competent*) use [16].

Now in order to elicit the benefit from the goods capable of delivering it, one must: (a) have them available to himself, that is *possess* them, i.e. have them under his own control; (b) *use* them; and (c) use them *correctly*. For a misuse of a utility will produce harm despite its *inherent capacity* to benefit. Furthermore, systematic, non-accidental right and wrong use depends on knowledge and ignorance respectively [17]. The ability to use things and to use them correctly is a skill and an art, and as such it is cognitive in character. Knowledge constitutes all expertise in the correct use of things. No alleged distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that can qualify this foundation in cognition of all practical and technical expertise. For the ancient mind, knowledge-how (to do things) depends on and proceeds from knowledge-that, of facts, of how things are. Between theoretical, scientific knowledge and practical dexterity in its application there exists the relation holding between science and technology: in principle, they are the same. What is required to turn knowledge-that in knowledge-how is, at most, more or further knowledge of relevant facts. Knowledge, therefore, theoretical and practical simultaneously, representing accurately reality as it is and,

thus, charting the right course in life, knowledge, in one word thoroughly pragmatic in nature, draws the inherent profit out of the goods (utilities), activates, so to speak, their beneficent function. Without knowledge there is no benefit, but rather *harm* in wealth. In fact, the more possessions of goods accompany deficient knowledge, the more the harm (not the profit) that is likely to proceed from them. It is better for the ignorant man to possess fewer assets [18]. Things which one does not know to use so (= correctly) as to elicit profit from their possession are not goods and real wealth *for him*. And in the absence of the appropriate knowledge, possessions will cause harm when put into use [19].

Following exclusively this line of thought, the idea of goods as things endowed with the inherent capacity to satisfy human wants is pushed to the margins of theory and stands practically eclipsed. *Things are not in themselves goods, but only relative to the state of knowledge which is able to put them into profitable use.* In fact, things commonly held as goods (like wealth, health, formosity, strength of body, nobility, authority and social status, virtues as abilities to act successfully in given kinds of circumstances) are worse (= more harmful) than their opposite states and qualities, if accompanied by ignorance. Ordinary goods are in themselves neither utilities nor disutilities; they have no intrinsic value. *The only valuable thing, the only true utility, is knowledge; the only valueless thing, the only true disutility, is ignorance* [20].

It is not only that the common goods can actually cause harm when put into service without appropriate knowledge; not only their value in direct use is minimal if ignorance commands them. But even their value as instruments of exchange is negligible under such blind command. For their exchange, in order to be fruitful, must be governed by knowledge, as much as their direct utilisation. To exchange something which one's ignorance makes useless and a disutility, for something else which the same or similar ignorance renders equally useless and a disutility, is an exercise in vanity accumulating disutilities and thus raising the level of potential and actual damage to oneself and one's interests. It may even be claimed



that the disutility in exchange of a thing (commonly taken as utility), possessed by an individual deficient in knowledge, is greater than its actual disutility as a concrete potential utility in direct use, and this by reason of its translatability into a potent range of possibly more dangerous concretisations of its value [21].

Since the exchange, also, of a thing (commonly held to be a utility) in ignorant hands is a disutility (and, thus, a negative value), it follows that, *on such ultimatist count, not even money is an absolute utility*: coupled with *ignorance*, it will tend to produce so much the greater havoc as it is more potent in itself; it will tend to increase the level of malfunction, of harm, of disutility [22].

Under certain conditions - and ultimately in the absence of commanding knowledge - a presumed utility turns into a disutility: instead of producing profit, it causes damage. Promised gain is actualised as loss. Instead of the expected flow of benefit from the asset, one gets a sequence of harm. But, the radical argument run, a thing whose utility requires an external factor for its activation is no real utility in itself. A true utility must be self-activated, just as anything essentially X is X by itself and does not need anything else to activate its X-ness, something namely else whose nonexistence would make of X a non-X. Such instability in being of a thing, such precariousness, so to speak, in its existence, is manifested by the fact of its occasional lapse into displaying a character opposite to its reputed identity mark. The argument then deduces, from the occurrence in actual fact of this anomaly, the spuriousness in the presumption of the thing being *really* X. Thus, to the statement that wealth (capital) is good (beneficial, i.e. a utility), one opposes the fact that in some cases and for some people wealth is shown to be noxious; the inference then is that wealth (capital) is not in itself *really* (*essentially*) good (genuinely beneficial and a full-proof utility) [23].

*What makes a thing into an actual utility, is its right use under the command of knowledge. Just as what makes a thing into an actual disutility, is its wrong use (mis)guided by ignorance.* Even things ordinarily detrimental to one's interests, like enemies, can be turned into nice profit by a wise use, just as their opposites (friends in the

example) commonly can [24]. As has been articulated before, things are not utilities or disutilities in themselves but relative to the state of knowledge commanding them. Thus, e.g., wealth is good, beneficial and a utility to him who is good and intelligent, it is bad, harmful and a disutility to him who is bad and ignorant. Things are goods, i.e. utilities, in so far as they are beneficial, i.e. useful in satisfying human wants. Individuals are good, i.e. utilities, in so far as they are beneficial, i.e. useful in satisfying human wants. Thing-utilities are proper commodities, person-utilities provide services. Furthermore, an entity's (thing or person) goodness resides in its excellence (perfection) of nature, or of a particular character of its nature. While the directive excellence of human nature is cognitive, intellectual perfection (wisdom) [25]. Consequently, man's goodness depends ultimately on his knowledge. Knowledge represents man's perfection; it also renders man into a utility. Knowledge renders a thing, as well, into a utility. So that which makes things to be utilities is what constitutes individual excellence and makes man a utility. And thus quite generally: things are such with regard to utility and disutility as their users are. *Such like as the users are, such are the things to them* [26].

This was in substance the doctrine of the eminent Sophist Prodicus [27]. Its most general formulation is to be found in the notorious *Protagorean dictum*: πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν [man is the measure of all things-as-utilities, of those that are that they are (such) and of those that are not, that they are not (such)]. This *homo-mensura* statement [28] significantly refers to χρήματα (i.e. goods or utilities) and not to πράγματα (things) or to ὄντα (beings) [29]. Things, taken ontologically, are like utilities: they bear intrinsic reference to man in that their character is measured and judged by man's individual and generic nature. Even more - things are utilities; they are *usables* for man; it is their use that determines the perception of them by man. The perception itself consists in the thing being tested and tasted, so to speak, of its being used by man, ultimately for

filling some vacuum of his, for replenishing a want, be it the destitution of a nonoperative faculty, the depletion of an idle potency.

We are moving here on firm Sophistic ground. Man is the measure of all things; and he measures them by using them. The measure is, ultimately, a measure of utility, of value. Every judgement balances the “weight” of things, calibrates their usability. The common measure of all, that which reduces the multifariousness of reality to commensurability and, hence, an orderly, rational pattern, *in use*. But then, the way the users are determines the measure employed in weighting things, hence the definition of their character. Protagoras and Prodicus weave the same canvas.

Apprehending reality in perception or conception means understanding how it relates to man. And this ultimately consists in seeing how a thing’s existence, in whole or in part, *fits* to human being. Such fitness expresses the kind and degree of adaptation of things to man. Perceiving and conceiving things we judge about (levels of) adaptation, ways in which they can be put into use (for us). *Qualities of things are, thus, fundamentally, indexes of utility, according to a complicated scheme of reference capable of doing justice to the wealth of existence.* The sweetness, for example, of honey indicates its profitability for our digestive apparatus proximately and for our being generally; while sour taste is normally a sign of incompatibility with our system. *Disgusting sensation is a warning of harm.* The *bitterness* of honey for the palate of the ailing organism means again that something is going amiss; such bitterness in a substance endowed normally with the property of sweetness, furthermore, signals that what is going wrong is in fact some disorder in the percipient’s constitution.

*Ontology has been construed economically: things (πράγματα) are significant as usables, utilities (χρήματα).* Similarly, *epistemology has been construed economically: grasping a thing in sensation or thought means judging (weighting) its utility.*

Use reigns supreme. Without it there is no true possession. And knowledge directs use. So we come again to the conclusion that knowledge is the ultimate asset of wealth, a utility of the last resort, a

necessary *utility*, therefore an absolute one. *Knowledge cannot be perverted, but by some higher order ignorance.* Another eminent Sophist, Antiphon, explained that capital hoarded and left unconsumed and uninvested is wealth unfunctional and, therefore, nonexistent for all significant purposes. It will make no difference whether it lies idle or has vanished, for example being stolen. No real harm comes from its disappearance. It is as good (useful and valuable) as a stone buried deep into the earth. A wealth of utilities accompanied by a penury of wits is no active capital, no real wealth - they are not real, functioning utilities in such association [30].

We must be careful to clarify the real import of these arguments and doctrines. On what we would call (using contemporary philosophical jargon) *conceptual* level, the obvious focal point is the firm understanding, indeed definition, of goodness in terms of utility (beneficiality, profitability), and, correspondingly, of badness in terms of disutility (harmfulness, detrimentality). The question then posed is, Which things are good/bad (useful and beneficial / useless and detrimental)? In answering it, it is evident that the same thing can be useful and beneficial or useless and harmful, depending on the object (thing or state or event) in relation to which the utility or disutility of the thing in question is considered. The same thing may be beneficial to some beings and detrimental to other, similarly beneficial for some conditions and untoward for others, or advantageous to some events and a hindrance for others. This fact does not, of course, render the category of goodness / badness indeterminate and unstable [31]. To speak in the ancient philosophical vocabulary, the essential character of goodness / badness is definite and immutable: it consists in utility / disutility. This corresponds to the fixation of the Platonic ideal types, and the determinacy of meaning of the (contemporary) concepts. And the pregnant point of the principal question above noted, is the degree of fixation obtaining in the concrete world of change. Is the nature of concrete reality that of a condition of continuous flux in which the only constant points of reference are ideal determinations or concepts extraneous to the real processes of perpetual mutation - or is it rather that of a dynamic *field* with focal points *in* it representing actual con-

crete essences, i.e. stable configurations of characters constituting an essential nature? [32]

The utility and disutility of things depends *proximately* on the object, time, condition and other circumstances, *in relation* to which it is considered. But the utility (and disutility) of things depends *ultimately* on their right (wrong) use and, hence, on *knowledge* (ignorance). In calling knowledge the ultimate asset of wealth (as well as of power) I mean that knowledge is absolute utility, that is utility which does not require anything else apart from itself in order to be activated as such. *Knowledge is useful and beneficial in relation to all objects, times, conditions and other circumstances.* Therefore, it is goodness as such. *The Good unqualifiedly consists in knowledge* [33]; it has to do with the *intellection, the apprehension* of reality, and with the *intelligibility* of reality, what I have above called, its transparency and luminosity.

Certain fundamental features of knowledge compared with the corresponding ones of what is commonly held to be wealth clearly indicated the validation and confirmation of knowledge, against common wealth, as of the essence of goodness. Rational knowledge (reason) *grows* with time, while everything else (beauty for example) decays with it. There is a prime season, a culminating point, the springtime for everything, beyond which point time is antagonistic to it. Not so for intellect and knowledge and the reason of things: reason (never ceases to) develop with the advancement of time. Reason and Time both mark the evolution of reality [34]. Time for reason, and for reason alone, does not count as an onerous liability and cost, but as a potent asset with yield [35].

Furthermore, common wealth as accumulated goods has to be partially expended in order to be translated into the satisfaction of needs, wants and desires when they occur. One parts with a part of it, the sum spent, so that one may satisfy a want of his. On the other hand, reason has not to be spent and reduced in order to supply the needed benefit at the appropriate time. Quite the opposite, reason (and knowledge) grows with every use in which it is put. Reason is the only thing whose use does not diminish in any way its stock, but on

the contrary augments and improves it [36]. All common goods are produced or acquired through processes involving destruction; reason alone is exempt from this: its exercise represents a gain without a loss as the processes involved bring always a benefit [37].

Having established that rational knowledge is the ultimate asset of wealth (since it alone is necessarily under all circumstances useful and beneficial), we may be tempted to deny real goodness (utility) of everything else, irrespective of how useful it may turn out to be in given circumstances and at time, even under normal circumstances and for most of the time. This involves the claim that what is useful under certain conditions (however light), is *not really* useful [38]. The underlying principle is that what is really x must be under any and all conditions x. As this holds true for inherent qualities, the assumption is that utility (and beneficiality) are such inherent qualities of things. To avoid the (moral and economical) monism of goodness (utility) which in antiquity had been explicitly expressed by the Socratic Eucleides, was dialectically endorsed by Plato and was famously articulated in Stoicism, one has not to lapse into pure subjectivism and relativism, by maintaining that utility is a relative property having meaning only in connection with the object in relation to which the utility of a given thing is considered. For reality is essentialistic. Things have natures (generic, specific and individual) forming a nexus within which what things are *apt* to effect, quite generally, is objectively determined. Utility is an aptness to promote some result.

Certain things are so constituted as to be capable of directly satisfying human wants. This they do *under normal conditions*. Such things are *final* utilities. Other things are so constituted as to be capable of *indirectly* satisfying human wants, by being in various ways prerequisites to the realisation of final utilities. This function they, too, perform *under normal conditions*. Such things are also real utilities, albeit intermediate or instrumental ones. Corresponding explications for disutilities are right at hand. The fact that utilities may be, under special circumstances, productive of harm, against, so to speak, their true nature, does not make them disutilities, although

the fact is practically significant and theoretically indicative of the necessity for further articulation [39].

Of all the multifarious variety of utilities two emerge as crucially important: *money* and *knowledge*. The former is *abstract utility* as such, *the power to be of use in itself*. This can on occasion be abnormally abused, too; that is, it may turn to disutility for him who “maltreats” it. *Money is abstract value as such, indeed the (formal) measure of value*, but in view of the possibility of its ill use, *is not the ultimate, self-secured asset of wealth*.

Knowledge on the other hand is a utility, the *only* one, which guarantees its right use. For real knowledge implicates its use: it is inherently pragmatic. Knowledge involves the criterion of its correct use: there can be no ignorant use of knowledge *to the extent that it goes*, no bad (ineffectual, harmful) use of it, as there may easily be an ignorant use of any other utility, in its own field of applicability, a wrong (ineffectual, harmful) use of it [40]. Wrong use of knowledge, or, rather, deliberate withholding of its (necessarily correct application), is due, when it happens, to ulterior reasons implicating wider horizons and depths of knowledge, and, thus, confirms the general principle. To *possess* knowledge is to have secured *ipso facto* its *right use*. To no other utility is this the case.

Knowledge is, therefore, *the highest concrete value* [41], and *the content-definite measure of value*, as Aristotle figured from a different but connected perspective [42]. Money, by contrast, is the *formal* measure of value. Knowledge is the substance of value. This fact presents two complementary aspects. *First*, knowledge *transforms* things into goods, i.e. appropriates things for specific uses, whether directly, by intelligent selection and fitting allocation, or mediately, by suitable modification and adaptation. Knowledge makes utilities, produces goods. The difference between goods and mere things is the amount of knowledge embodied into the former, which renders them apt for a certain use, capable of performing some specific task, of functioning to a given end. *Second*, knowledge *activates* the realisation of utilities as such, is required to put them into the *actual, right* use for which they are (by the previous appropriation of things as

goods) intended. *Ultimately*, the knowledge needed and absorbed into things to make them goods, and the knowledge needed for the correct employment of them as utilities, is one and the same. But *proximately*, the two do differ: one may develop the craftsmanship to execute expertly certain designs and follow skillfully corresponding routines of production, without in the least acquiring thereby the dexterity of masterly use of the utility created by the former process. On the one hand there is the formal structure enabling something to perform a function as means to an end. On the other, there is the finality of its form, the purposefulness of its character, its employment for the end intended by its form. *Knowledge of forms* and *knowledge of ends* are distinct, though converging; but in the last analysis they must necessarily coincide in the *knowledge of reality* [43]. Furthermore, knowledge involved in the production of goods (the creation of utilities) is knowledge involved in the use of things out of which the goods in question are produced. Knowledge how to make is reducible to knowledge how to use. We can thus better appreciate why knowledge is intrinsically pragmatic. Fundamentally, *knowledge is knowledge of what to do with things, a superior skill of using things to one's profit* [44] *for the optimal self-realisation of human nature*. Knowledge emerges as the definitive factor in the utility of things, including, obviously, services [45].

Since knowledge is the utility which creates and activates in final analysis the utilities of all other things, *it is the utility of last resort, the dynamism of wealth as capital in itself*. The factors of production and use are ultimately reducible to knowledge. Labour and work is knowledge in exercise, in actual use: it is the use of the utility *knowledge*. Land and the temporal dimension of human activity (i.e. space and time as the necessary framework of all becoming and concrete existence) are in themselves independent parameters (as is the natural existence of things), but as conditions of human activity, as goods and utilities, in their acquisition and in their use, they essentially involve knowledge. Capital above all, as active wealth, is no mere sum of things, not even an accumulation of utilities, but *knowledge embodied in things*. Moreover it registers the *degree* and



*quality of knowledge* embodied, since this is its amount. *Things are worth as much as the obtaining level of knowledge is that goes into their realisation as utilities. The cause of increased wealth is increased knowledge.* Goods and services which involve the state-of-art level of knowledge at a given time, are the most valuable then.

Herein lies the substance of the *Classical Knowledge Theory of Value*: the value of a utility is the knowledge involved in it, the knowledge required for its realisation as the utility that it is [46].

There are important corollaries from this view.

*First*, in a period of ascending knowledge, the level of knowledge (i.e. man's penetration into the order of existence) is higher at each succeeding time. On the other hand, there is a basic level of knowledge involved in the use of bodily parts (especially the hands) in following simple mechanical instructions. The knowledge required here is the organic ability to use one's body as an instrument of strength for the realisation of purely physical results, like digging or cutting or pounding [47]. Now the level of knowledge involved in such processes is determined by the natural constitution of man, *it is given and it is the same for all times*. Since the peak of knowledge is moving higher with the lapse of time in positive epochs, *the distance from top to basis in the ladder of knowledge is continuously increasing*. This means that the value-differences will grow more and more intense, in goods and services and labour and land and time.

*Second*, let us assume (1) a sufficiently extended period in human history of unbroken improvement in knowledge of reality; or, what amounts to practically the same thing, under optimistic conditions of human history (i.e. some equivalent form of the idea of progress), let us assume a big enough interval of time, or, at the limit, history at large, so that we may disregard the occasional regresses in man's development. Let us further assume (2) the twin classical belief in the finitude of human knowledge, that, on the one hand, the intelligibility of reality is definite by nature and that, therefore, it may be definitely revealed; and that, on the other, man is so constituted that he may receive, at least in principle, the full content of being's intelligibility by means of his entire apprehensive apparatus [48]. It

follows that complete knowledge of reality is essentially finite and, also, attainable within an appropriate length of time. It is, moreover, plausible to hypothetise that knowledge, freely developing and starting from its basic level, progresses initially with difficulty, then it speeds up, and finally approaches its completion quasi-asymptotically, according to the general principle of acute resonance to the point of perfection in every realisation-movement. So that the general form of the degree of knowledge as a function of time under the said assumptions must be like the following (abstracting from the stepwise progress at points of fundamental breakthroughs, like the neolithical revolution, i.e. the introduction of agriculture in human life) (Fig. 5).

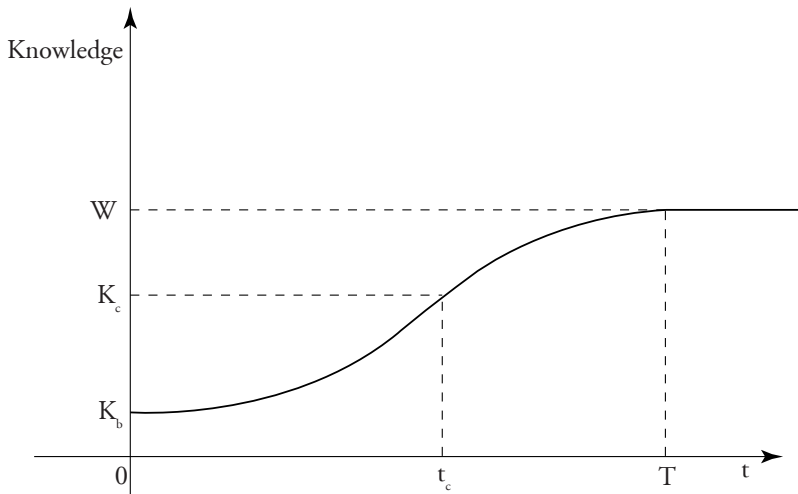


Fig. 5

Starting at  $t=0$  we have basic knowledge  $K_b$ . At  $t=T$  complete knowledge of reality (i.e. total wisdom,  $W$ ) has been realised under the ideal conditions of our hypothesis. At the critical point of time  $t_c$  the amount of knowledge has reached its critical value  $K_c$ : the change of knowledge with time starts to *decelerate*.

On the other hand, the amount of wealth as a function of knowledge under constant amount of things (resources available) may be represented as in the schema below (Fig. 6).

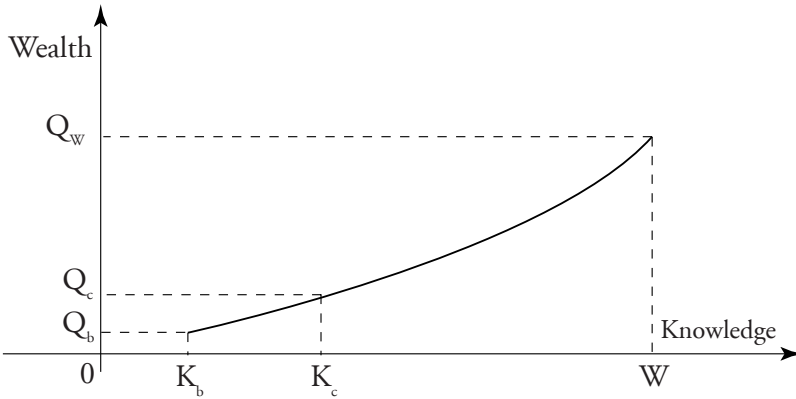


Fig. 6

It is reasonable to assume that, with the advance of knowledge, an increment of knowledge creates a greater increment of wealth, other things being the same than before with less knowledge available. For simplicity's sake we may assume that this increase in the marginal response of wealth to knowledge is proportional to the amount of knowledge. Hence the form of the diagram. At basic knowledge  $K_b$  the utility of things is at value  $Q_b$ ; at wisdom level  $W$ , the utility of things reaches its maximal value  $Q_w$ .

Figuring now wealth as a function of time under the complex hypothesis envisaged, we obtain the following diagram (Fig. 7).

At  $t_0$  the value of a given set of resources is  $Q_b$ , corresponding to the basic degree of knowledge. At  $t_c$ , it is  $Q_c$ , the value of utilities corresponding to the critical level of knowledge:  $Q_c$  is the critical mass of wealth for the given sum of resources. Up to it, the increase of wealth

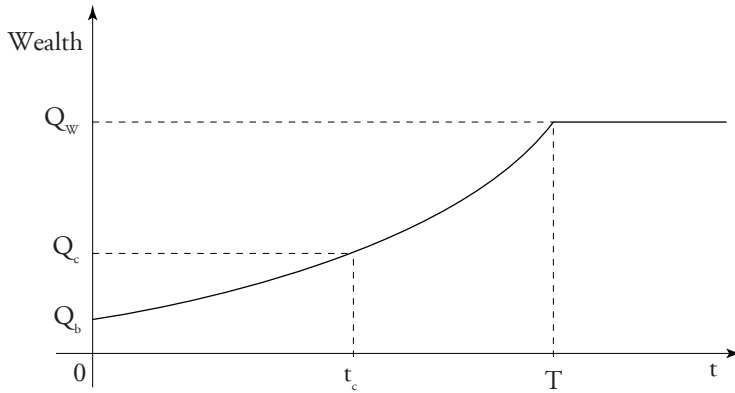


Fig. 7

with time is rapid, as the two functions  $K(t)$  and  $Q(K)$  are then upbeat. After that point the two functions behave in opposite ways: the latter continues to accelerate, while the former starts to decelerate. We may assume that the result is a more or less constant rate of increase for wealth with time. At  $t=T$  the saturation condition for knowledge has been achieved, with corresponding value of things  $Q_w$ . Henceforth, this value must remain constant with the passage of time.

With increased knowledge, man will tap more natural resources than were available to him when he knew less of reality. So that one must modify accordingly the statements in the above analysis. There will be an improved version of the function  $Q(t)$ , for its first two segments, taking account of the additional increase of value due to the increased amount of resources. On the other hand, however, with the advance of knowledge more and more resources are needed to sustain its progress. Therefore, on the whole, additional resources produced by the development of knowledge are balanced by more resources consumed for this development. The general form of the function, and its three distinct stages, will approximately remain unchanged. With the consequence that *as man attains his optimal self-realisation [49], the value of things tends to remain constant and wealth reaches its saturation point.*

## NOTES

- [1] The question of wealth was bound to be a standard topic of Sophistics, treated repeatedly in various contexts and perspectives. Sustained economic theorizing we discover in Prodicus (v. nn. [26], [27]) and Antiphon (v. *Appendix G* and *H*).

Wealth was experienced and conceived preeminently positively in the era of self-conscious affirmation and dynamic projection. Similarly to that of power, the vocabulary of wealth has infiltrated philosophical terminology in a revealing way. Already Anaximenes applied the concept to describe the inexhaustibility of his *Ur-substance*; (Fr. B3 DK): τὸν ἀέρα ἄπειρον εἶναι καὶ πλούσιον διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἐκλείπειν [“He (sc. Anaximenes) maintained that air is infinite and rich because it is deficient for nothing (in no respect)”]. The primary principle is never failing. Empedocles uses the idiom of wealth-possession to express unsurpassable intellectual attainment (Fr. B 129.2 DK; cf. B 132.1): μῆκιστον πραπίδων πλούτων ἐκτήσατο [“he possessed greatest wealth of mind”]. With wonted poetic accuracy, Pindar panegyricized at the start of his *Isthmian Ode V* “the mightily potent gold”, τὸν μεγασθενῆ χρυσὸν combining power with wealth (see the entire passage for the splendour of wealth). Democritus (B302 DK) spoke of “the perpetual desire for wealth over all”, διηνεκῆς ἐπὶ πᾶσιν πλούτου ἐπιθυμία (the idea is surely Democritean, even if the passage in which it is embedded is not genuine verbatim). Aristotle, in late Classicism, considered wealth as setting the price for the value of everything; *Ars Rhetorica*, B, 1391a1: ὁ δὲ πλούτος οἶον τιμῆ τῆς ἀξίας τῶν ἄλλων [“(monetary) wealth is, so to speak, the price of the value of all else”]. He succinctly expressed the relationship between Economics and wealth: the latter is the object of the former as a

theoretical discipline, and its purpose as an applied one (*Ethica Nicomachea*, 1094a9): οἰκονομικῆς τὸ τέλος πλοῦτος [“wealth is the end of Economics”]. Just as health is the object and aim of (theoretical and applied) Medicine.

Wealth encountered philosophy in the person of Callias, arguably the richest Athenian at the second half of the 5th century. Reason and money were never on better terms than at that time, during the high peak and, subsequently, the final struggle of Athens in her bid for hegemony. The close partnership in nature between knowledge, power and capital was nicely reflected in corresponding personal intimacies. Callias was in best terms of friendship with, and a munificent patron of, the eminent representatives of the New Age Philosophy of High Classicism, the Sophistical movement. There was a healthy mutuality of interest in these relationships: Callias supplied the money and the Sophists knowledge and the art of reasoning. Thereby Callias improved in supreme human excellence, i.e. wisdom, while the Sophists, too, benefited from his wealth. Callias’ lavish spending on intellectual pursuits was proverbial. Plato maintains that he disbursed on Sophists more money than all other Athenians collectively (*Apology of Socrates*, 20a; cf. Xenophon, *Symposium*, I, 5). He seems to have dissipated in such noble intellectual pursuits an enormous fortune which he inherited from his father: the grandfather’s census stood at 200 talents; the father had contrasted habits from those of Callias (cf. Aeschines, *Callias*, Fr. 34 Dittmar p. 284=73G), and the son succeeded to reduce his patrimony to just two talents at about 388 B.C. (Lysias, *pro Aristophanes bonis*, §8). He reached extreme poverty in extreme age (Athenaeus, XII, 537b-c). The wealth of his grandfather can be gathered from the amount he was fined on charges of bribery in connexion with his embassy to the Great King (Demosthenes, *De Falsa Legatione*, 273-274): 50 talents. Callias knew everything regarding the particulars of the various Sophists (*Apology*, 20b). By his ministrations to the Sophists, and the intimate relationship developed between him and them, he appeared to partake in their wisdom, their pragmatic knowledge of reality (*Cratylus*, 391c): σοφισταῖς Καλλίας πολλὰ τελέσας χρήματα σοφὸς δοκεῖ εἶναι (“Callias, having expended on Sophists a large amount of money, appears to be wise”). In the Xenophontian *Symposium*, Callias endeavours to persuade Socrates and his companions to accept his invitation to the famous dinner at his house, by promising to reveal to them, despite appearances, a Callias adept in philosophical argumentation (I, 6). He displays a piece of what he means

in IV, 1-4. Socrates in *Theaetetus* (164e) jokingly names Callias as the real trustee over Protagoras' property and affairs: he, to a great extent, took care of the great Sophist's liabilities. Xenophon puts in Socrates' mouth, in a sportive context, the naked description of the respective interests explaining Callias' and Prodicus' initial rapprochement: Antisthenes (Socrates in mock seriousness declares) possesses the art of pandering to the wants and desires of men; he is a higher kind of procurer, a spiritual pimp. Xenophon, *Symposium*, IV, 62: (Socrates is addressing Antisthenes) οἶδα μὲν, ἔφη, σε Καλλίαν τουτοῖ προαγωγέοντα τῷ σοφῷ Προδικῷ, ὅτε ἐύρων τοῦτον μὲν φιλοσοφίας ἐρῶντα, ἐκείνον δὲ χρημάτων δεόμενον· οἶδα δέ σε Ἰππία τῷ Ἡλείῳ, etc. ["For I am well aware of the fact, he (sc. Socrates) said, that you procured this Callias to the wise Prodicus, when you perceived on the one hand the former in love of philosophy, while on the other the latter in need of money. And I am well aware as well of the fact that you did the same thing to Hippias of Elis etc."]. There was a characteristic *bon mot* ascribed to Aristippus (IVA 106 Giannantoni) and on inferior evidence to Antisthenes (VA 166 G - where, of course, read ἐπεὶ μάλλον σοφίας <ἀν> ἢ χρημάτων ἐπεμελοῦντο in place of the false transmitted reading χρημάτων ἢ σοφίας). The question was why philosophers seek the company of the wealthy but not the other way round: because, the reply went on, philosophers know what they are in need of, whereas the rich men do not. But it was recognised that, in case of a relationship between the two sides, mutual interest, expressed in mutual acceptance and satisfaction, provides the bond for the connection; v. e.g. Aristippus [IVA] Fr. 40G. Aristippus (we have noted above) was a Socratic that received payment for his teaching like the Sophists.

Callias' house was the theater of many Sophistical encounters, teachings, exhibitions, disputations. Two extant dialogues, the Platonic *Protagoras* and the Xenophontian *Symposium*, take place there. Callias is studiously organising such feasts (Xenophon, *Symposium*, I, 4). In both works, the attitude to Callias is sympathetic, if not friendly, and even (especially with Xenophon) laudatory. The Xenophontian Socrates is in fact made to rouse Callias to grander designs and a major political role; VIII, 39-43.

Pungently critical perhaps, but not downrightly negative, was Aeschines' view of Callias in the dialogue bearing his name. What we know of the actual contents of the dialogue is preciously little. The difference in *ethos* and style between Callias and his father Hipponicus

was related and commented upon (Aeschines Fr. 73 Giannantoni = 34 Dittmar). Presumably, it was a typical case of sparing on the part of the father contrasted to the son's spendthriftiness. But from what we know, as above observed, Callias' expenditure went chiefly into intellectual goods. The example provided in Fr. 75 Giannantoni = 36 Dittmar, in all likelihood coming from this work of Aeschines, testifies to the favourable treatment of Callias in it: being accused (in the course of court hearings where he was prosecuted for an unspecified capital offence) of letting his cousin Aristides (the renowned Athenian general and statesman) and his family to live in manifest indigence, while himself being the richest Athenian and, moreover, having frequently availed of Aristides' authority with the Athenians in public affairs, Callias, feeling the impact on the jurors of this side-attack, asked for Aristides himself to testify as to the truth of the matter: apparently, he had often begged of Aristides to accept his royal donations to him, but to no avail; Aristides denied steadfastly to take them, declaring that it was more fit for him to be proud of his penury than for Callias to be proud of his wealth.

What emerges from Aeschines' dialogue is a munificent Callias, as the fact must have been. The criticism addressed to him was probably indirect: a great part of his munificence being exercised on the Sophists, Aeschines contented that it was ill-directed. For we know that in the same dialogue, "Pre-Socratic" philosophers (Sophists in the stricter - for us - sense as Prodicus and "natural" philosophers of the high-Classical Enlightenment like Anaxagoras) were the target of a viruluous attack, focusing on the public quality of some notorious pupils of theirs (Fr. 73 G = 34 Ditt.). - Inferences drawn from the Socratic *Epistle* VI (included without warrant, but on the ground of Hirzel's far-freched speculations, as Fr. 35 of Aeschines' *Callias* by Dittmar, something taken over, albeit hesitantly, by Giannantoni in his now standard collection as Fr. 74) are not to be relied upon. No doubt, of course, however, the Socratic anatomy of wealth would be the main object of the work, with emphasis (to be expected) laid more on the "cynic" elementary self-sufficiency, than on the cognitive essence of all utility.

Another eminent member of a Socratic movement, Stilpon of the Megaric School, left a work doubly entitled *Aristippus or Callias* (II O Fr. 23 Giannantoni). Some critics in antiquity apparently denied the authenticity of all works going under the name of Stilpon (Diogenes Laertius I, 16), but, it seems, on flimsy reasons. The duplicate title is symbolic, if not significant: Aristippus articulated emphatically, perhaps



exaggeratedly, the Socratic utilitarianism in its more hedonistic (Benthamite) construal.

Callias represented in an uncanny way Athenian wealth in its intimate partnership with the philosophy of High Classicism at the era of the Athenian Imperium. *He expresses the standpoint of the informed, knowledgeable and intellectually alert capitalist in an age marked by intense onward thrust.* In Xenophon's *Symposium* he promises to disclose himself philosophical to the philosophers (I, 6). Socrates reminds him of the promise later on in the dinner (III, 3) offered by Callias in celebration of Autolyclus' athletic victory. Callias will oblige, but on condition that each one of the guests will declare *what he is good at*. The *formulae* used to signify the proposed object of discussion are appropriate to classical cognitivism and intellectualism: (III, 3) ὅ,τι ἕκαστος ἐπίστασθε ἀγαθὸν ("whatever each one of you *knows* for a (or, as) good", with the implication strongly connoted, as inherent in the classical pragmatism of knowledge, "*what kind of good are you capable of realising*"); (*ibid.*) ὅ,τι ἕκαστος ἡγείται πλείστου ἀξίον ἐπίστασθαι ("what is the thing worth most that each one of you believes to know"); (III, 4) ἐφ' ᾧ μέγιστον φρονῶ ("in that thing in which I take highest pride"); (III 5) ἕκαστος εἴπη ὅ,τι ὠφέλιμον ἔχει ("let everyone declare what things profitable does he command"). We meet here the typically classical equation good (ἀγαθὸν) = beneficial (ὠφέλιμον) = valuable (ἀξίον) = object of justified pride, something one has that he may appropriately think highly about (ἐφ' ᾧ μέγα φρονεῖν).

Of the six chief views as to the subject proposed, three have to do positively or negatively with wealth.

1) Charmides is proud of his newly acquired poverty (IV, 29-33). He concentrates on, and denounces, the *burdens* of wealth, which he experienced tumultuously in his previous state of affluence: (a) problems of safe keeping, (b) public contributions, (c) private envy and (d) constraints on freedom of general movement.

2) Antisthenes (= Fr. 82 Giannantoni) takes greatest pride at his wealth, although he owns no discernible accumulation of goods (Xenophon, *Symposium* IV, 34-45). Wealth resides in mind (in the soul), not in the amount of the actual possessions, as it measures not the quantity of physical things, but the amount of satisfaction in the individual. The point here is not the reduction of wealth to utility and of utility to (ultimately) knowledge, but the internal analysis of desire and

satisfaction, which utilities are essentially referred to. The analysis of Antisthenes' position and of the fuller Platonic theory of pleasure, whose prefiguration the Sophist's view represents, is given in *Appendix I*. It is there shown that we find in these investigations the classical foundations of Marginalism.

3) Callias is proud of his wealth - in the common sense of the word (IV, 1-4). The practical and pragmatic capitalist is jovially wearied with the eternal philosophical queries concerning justice. He boasts that he actually makes men more just by the time that he hears the philosophers disputing about what is the just. His method is simple: he is the *supplier of money*. The individual who receives it, has the means of getting in possession of the requisites and, therefore, does not want to risk wrongdoing as a way of providing himself with them (IV, 2). The criticism exercised by Antisthenes on this paradox, that one is becoming juster by having money bestowed to him, turns then to the question whether the beneficiaries of Callias' largess return to their benefactor money or gratitude. No, they do not; some in fact return ill will. Their improved justice, then, does not apply to their relationships with him who was the cause of it. A new paradox, solved once again by Callias appealing to the common experience of many a craftsman who, while providing others with the products of their artifice, cannot help themselves in their own line of business (say, housemakers); IV, 3-4. - There is an obvious sporting spirit in all this. The substantial point, however, of Callias' position is worth-making: the risk of wrong-doing becomes prohibitive, not the more heavy the penalties for wrong-doing are, but the more unnecessary it is. And it is more unnecessary, the more available the capital is, the more intense, and intensely growing, the economic activity is. *Morality is a question of a well-functioning economic activity.*

Besides works such as the aforementioned on the foundations of economics related in some way or other to Callias, the capitalist maecena of letters, there is a relevant piece by Antisthenes catalogued in the Diogenean list of his works (Diogenes Laertius VI, 15-18) under the perplexing title: *Περὶ νίκης οἰκονομικός*, *Concerning Victory, Economics (or a discourse on Economy)* V. Antisthenes = V A 41 Giannantoni, II p. 151.24). For a mention of various approaches to the difficulty posed by the title, especially in view of the complete lack of any indication as to the work's actual contents, cf. Giannantoni, op. cit., IV pp. 246.7. There can be little effective doubt that it is a case of double title, a practice quite

usual with the Alexandrian scholars. The form of the title parallels exactly other items in the list, (a) *Περὶ τῶν σοφιστῶν, Φυσιognωμικός*; (b) *Περὶ παιδοποιίας ἢ περὶ γάμου, ἐρωτικός*; (c) *Περὶ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι, ἀντιλογικός*; (d) *Περὶ ὀνομάτων χρήσεως, ἐριστικός*. The expedient of introducing Niceratus from Xenophon's *Symposium*, IV, 6, and making of the transmitted text a supposed *Περὶ Νικηράτου, οἰκονομικός* is artificial and downright impossible: "concerning Niceratus" is absurd as a philosophical title. In all the double titles of the form referred to above, one (more often the second) member defines the aspect under which or in which the subject identified by the other (usually the first) member is considered. For instance the treatise concerning the Sophists (a) focuses on their physiognomic qualities; the one (b) treating of love and the erotic attraction is offered as an investigation of marriage and procreation of children; there is a study on reasoning (esp. on inquiry by question and answer) (c) from the point of view, or with the end, of formal disputation; and the study on the use of language (usage of words) is conducted in eristical manner or with an eristical point. By analogy, in the case of the work in question, an inquiry concerning victory and how to win in various kinds of situation may be assumed to consist in an analysis of *successful* management of resources (human, monetary and physical) and circumstances. The economic unit meant was probably broader than the household as an estate or firm (Xenophon), it could be any kind of enterprising agency even if not quite as extensive as the one envisaged in the work on Economics belonging to the Peripatetic School and ascribed to Aristotle, an entity which could also be a State.

On the other hand, the emphasis on the essential unity of the art of ruling - whether it referred to the art of political administration and general governance or to that of economic management and rational direction - was a major underlying point of the Sophistical - Socratic teaching, as it is evidenced by the repeated Platonic articulations.

To such a construal of the general character of Antisthenes' work fits well the doctrinal content elicited in Appendix I for the Antisthenean theory of wealth. The wise man (in the sense of the Cynic and, later, the perfected Stoic) cannot but win in all kinds of encounter, since he is by definition *undiminishably wealthy*, as existing always in a state of fulfilment.

There could be a (theoretical) possibility that the contents of Antisthenes' work had to do with the economics of victory in a more strict sense: a study on the amphidromous interplay between power and

economy principally in a State, with direct reference to, and upon the immediate occasion of, the Peloponnesian War and its disastrous outcome for the Economic Super Power, Athens. But, although this may well have been a recognisable overtone of the treatise, it would scarcely suit the Antisthenian spirit of individual isolationism as its main line of inquiry.

There is testimony for another work on (at least among other issues) foundational Economics, by one of the lesser, but faithfulest, companions of Socrates, Criton. It bore the title *Περὶ τοῦ πλέον ἔχειν*, *On having the advantage (over others)*, i.e. *On profiting*. V. Diogenes Laertius II, 121 = VI, B, 42 Giannantoni, II p. 635.

- [2] For a general orientation regarding this crucial outlook in antiquity, v. A.L. Pierris, *Concerning the End*, 1996 (in Greek), pp. 2-68, esp., 2-7.

Menedemus' reasoning in Fr. 18 (G. Giannantoni, *Socrates et Socraticorum Reliquiae*, vol. I pp. 515-6) is a special case having a particular point: *καὶ δὴ καὶ τόδε ἐρωτᾶν εἰώθει* (sc. Menedemus): *“τὸ ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου ἕτερόν ἐστι;”* “ναί.” *“ἕτερον δέ ἐστι τὸ ὠφελεῖν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ;”* “ναί.” *“οὐκ ἄρα τὸ ὠφελεῖν ἀγαθόν ἐστιν”*. [“And in fact Menedemus used to ask the following question: what is other from another, is it not other from that another? - Yes. - But conferring benefit is other than goodness? - Yes. - Consequently, conferring benefit is not good”]. The quotation is given as an example of Menedemus' use of *Eristics*; he was inscribed in the general current going under the name of Megaric, and then Eretric, Philosophy, instituted by Euclides, Socrates' pupil. The point was that since benefiting and goodness are not the same, the one cannot be the other. The problem consists in the notorious difficulties with predication experienced and expressed by that School. The copula was considered by them to signify necessarily an identity: every is - statement was for them an identity-statement. In fact, to avoid the inference that, in such a case, all things are identical (logical Eleatism), Menedemus reformed language: in place of “this thing is white” (which for him would require the identity of the thing in question with whiteness), he instituted the form of expression “this thing has been whitened”. In Greek this is expressed without employing the perfect tense of the verb *to be*, thus avoiding the crux; one would say *τὸ πρᾶγμα λελεύκωται* (V. Fr. 20 Giannantoni). Menedemus went so far as to abrogate the validity of negative or complex propositions. In the former case, he had once more recourse to a reformation of language (involving also

necessarily the former one): instead of “this thing is not X”, he would allow: “this thing has been non-X-ed” (v. Fr. 18 Giannantoni). - In the present case of benefiting and goodness, identity must be construed to extend to the linguistic expression in ordinary speech itself, since goodness is *in re* (or in meaning as we would say in modern parlance) identical with utility, usefulness and beneficiality.

Such eristic niceties, of course, even though meant seriously by the Megarics - Eretrians (a logical impasse was taken to imply ontological conclusions in the way delineated above), could not derail the fundamental experience of the Greek mind, according to which to be good *is* to be beneficial. In fact, Menedemus assumes as much to create the impasse: people are assumed to be shocked at the conclusion of his reasoning (namely that conferring benefit is not good), and to, as a result, try to find a way out of the impasse without denying the force of the argument - just as the corresponding reasoning in the case of simple, positive predication caused the reformation of language (with its implications) as a way of avoiding unacceptable ontological theses (i.e. Eleatic Monism).

- [3] V. my study (referred to *supra*, Chapter 5, n. [19]) esp. pp. 368-372.
- [4] Rampant, universal (moral and aesthetic) utilitarianism was proclaimed by Socrates consonantly to the general (Sophistic) spirit of the age. Xenophon reports his master's clear enunciation of the principle of pragmatism in all spheres of human action in the course of his colloquy with the sophist Euthydemus, to whom Plato also “dedicated” one of his dialogues. Socrates there argues as follows. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV, 6, 8-9: ἀρ' οὖν, ὦ Εὐθύδημε καὶ τὰγαθὸν οὕτω ζητητέον ἐστί; Πῶς; ἔφη. Δοκεῖ σοι τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶσιν ὠφέλιμον εἶναι; Οὐκ ἔμοιγε. Τί δέ; τὸ ἄλλω ὠφέλιμον οὐ δοκεῖ σοι ἐνίοτε ἄλλω βλαβερόν εἶναι; Καὶ μάλα, ἔφη. Ἄλλο δ' ἂν τι φαίης ἀγαθὸν εἶναι ἢ τὸ ὠφέλιμον; Οὐκ ἔγωγ', ἔφη. Τὸ ἄρα ὠφέλιμον ἀγαθὸν ἐστὶν ὅτῳ ἂν ὠφέλιμον ᾖ; Δοκεῖ μοι, ἔφη. Τὸ δὲ καλὸν ἔχομεν ἂν πως ἄλλως εἰπεῖν; ἢ [εἰ] ἐστὶν <δ> ὀνομάζεις καλὸν ἢ σῶμα ἢ σκεῦος ἢ ἄλλ' ὅτιοῦν, ὃ οἴσθα πρὸς πάντα καλὸν ὄν; Μὰ Δι' οὐκ ἔγωγ', ἔφη. Ἄρ' οὖν, πρὸς ὃ ἕκαστον χρήσιμον ᾖ, πρὸς τοῦτο ἕκαστῳ καλῶς ἔχει χρῆσθαι; Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη. Καλὸν δὲ πρὸς ἄλλο τι ἐστὶν ἕκαστον, ἢ πρὸς ὃ ἕκαστῳ καλῶς ἔχει χρῆσθαι; Οὐδὲ πρὸς ἓν ἄλλο, ἔφη. Τὸ χρήσιμον ἄρα καλὸν ἐστὶ πρὸς ὃ ἂν ᾖ χρήσιμον; Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ ἔφη. [“Is it not, then, Euthydemus, that the good as well

should be inquired after in such a way? How, he said. Does it seem to you that the same thing is beneficial to all? No, not to me in any case. What then, does it not seem to you that what is beneficial to somebody is sometimes harmful to someone else? Very much so, he said. *And would you hold that anything else is good than the beneficial (useful)?* Certainly not I, he said. It follows that the beneficial is good to him to whom it is beneficial, does it not? I think so, he said.

And now with regard to the beautiful (the well-formed), have we to maintain something different? Or (to be specific) is there something that you call beautiful - be it a body, or an implement or anything else of whatever description - which you know to be beautiful (well-formed) with a view to everything? By Jove, certainly not I, he said. Hence then, each one thing can be appropriately *well used* with a view to that, to which it would be useful? Very much so, to be sure, he said. And now, *each thing is beautiful (well-formed) with a view to anything else than to that with a view to which the thing can be appropriately well-used?* Not with a view to anything else, he said. It follows that *the useful is beautiful (well-formed) with a view to that, to which it is useful?* It certainly seems so to me, he said"].

The gist of the argument under these abstract formulations is that *just as goodness consists in benefit, so beauty entails usefulness*. Both values are objectively relative: they intrinsically refer to something else to which they are conducive. Something good cannot be harmful; nor can something beautiful, in so far as beautiful, be of no use to any purpose whatsoever. Goodness and beauty are excellences, and as such they are expected to maximise performance in appropriate respects. They consist in intrinsic qualities of objects, but with an essential relationship to proper fields of exercise: they are *empowering attributes*, such as enable the object to perform best in specific tasks. The functionality of beauty was explicitly maintained by Socrates. So Xenophon, *Symposium*, V, 4, introduces such functionality into the very definition of well-formedness: ἦν πρὸς τὰ ἔργα ὧν ἕνεκα ἕκαστα κτῶμεθα εὖ εἰργασμένα ἢ ἢ εὖ πεφυκότα πρὸς ἅ ἃν δεώμεθα, καὶ ταῦτα καλὰ ["Things are beautiful (well-formed) if they are well-wrought with a view to the work for the sake of which we get what we possess, or if they are well-constituted by nature with a view to what we need"].

The same twin point that Socrates is reported to have made in his encounter with the sophist Euthydemus, is also more concretely urged in the narrated teaching exhibition to his follower Aristippus. (Xenophon,

*Memorabilia*, III, 8, 1-8). We find here, *first*, (§§ 1-3) the analysis that the good *is good for something, is what serves a purpose, is beneficial to something*, especially in removing an obnoxious condition. In fact, we meet here with an extreme, pragmatic formulation of the principle of utilitarianism: one cannot acknowledge, nor does one need, some good that is good for nothing. *Secondly*, as in the previous passage, the same point is repeated with regard to *beauty* or, in other words, to *good shape, to a well-formed object* (§4). This *objective relativism* of goodness and beauty leads to their identification (§§5-6): things are good and well-formed to the extent that they are serviceable with reference to some purpose. Usefulness is of the essence of goodness and beauty. The examples offered (§§6-8) consolidate the point, illustrating, furthermore, a significant consequence: *things can be simultaneously well-formed (beautiful) and ill-formed (ugly), good and bad, in relation to their several utilities and disutilities*, i.e. with respect to the ends toward whose realisation they are serviceable or, on the contrary, useless and untoward. The entire passage is particularly revealing as to Socrates' real position on the nature of moral value and obligation, since it is presented as an esoteric example of teaching by question-and-answer (the Socratic dialectical process) delivered to one of his major pupils (Aristippus) - definitively beyond his typical exoteric "aporetic" treatment of issues when engaged in his usual pursuit of expounding the real ignorance of some presumed "professor of knowledge". The whole discussion is reported by Xenophon as follows:

(§1) Ἀριστίππου δὲ ἐπιχειροῦντος ἐλέγχειν τὸν Σωκράτην, ὥσπερ αὐτὸς ὑπ' ἐκείνου τὸ πρότερον ἠλέγχετο, βουλόμενος τοὺς συνιόντας ὠφελεῖν ὁ Σωκράτης ἀπεκρίνατο οὐχ ὥσπερ οἱ φυλαττόμενοι μὴ πῃ ὁ λόγος ἐπαλλαχθῆ, ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν πεπεισμένος μάλιστα πράττειν τὰ δέοντα.

[“(§1) And when Aristippus endeavoured to put Socrates to the test, just as he has been questioned by him previously, Socrates, wanting to benefit the audience, answered not in the way people do who take care lest their reasoning get entangled and change course, but as being convinced of doing the appropriate thing (in dialectical argumentation as being sure of what he is talking about).

(§2) ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἤρετο, εἴ τι εἰδέειν ἀγαθόν, ἵνα, εἴ τι εἴποι τῶν τοιούτων, οἶον ἢ σιτίον ἢ ποτόν ἢ χρήματα ἢ ὑγίειαν ἢ ρώμην ἢ τόλμην, δεικνύοι δὴ τοῦτο κακὸν ἐνίοις ὄν. Ὁ δὲ εἰδώς, ὅτι, ἐάν τι ἐνοχλῇ ἡμᾶς, δεόμεθα τοῦ παύσαντος, ἀπεκρίνατο ἥπερ καὶ ποιεῖν κράτιστον·

(§3) ἘΑρά γε, ἔφη ἐρωτᾶς με, εἴ τι οἶδα πυρετοῦ ἀγαθόν; Οὐκ ἔγωγ', ἔφη. Ἄλλ' ὀφθαλμίας; Οὐδὲ τοῦτο. Ἄλλὰ λιμοῦ; Οὐδὲ λιμοῦ. Ἄλλὰ μῆν, ἔφη, εἰ γ' ἐρωτᾶς με, εἴ τι ἀγαθόν οἶδα ὃ μηδενὸς ἀγαθὸν ἐστίν, οὐτ' οἶδα, ἔφη, οὔτε δέομαι.

(§4) Πάλιν δὲ τοῦ Ἀριστίππου ἐρωτῶντος αὐτόν, εἴ τι εἰδέειν καλόν. Καὶ πολλά, ἔφη. ἘΑρ' οὖν, ἔφη, πάντα ὅμοια ἀλλήλοις; Ὡς οἶόν τε μὲν, οὖν, ἔφη, ἀνομοιώτατα ἔνια. Πῶς οὖν, ἔφη, τὸ τῷ καλῷ ἀνόμοιον καλὸν ἂν εἴη; Ὅτι νῆ Δί', ἔφη, ἔστι μὲν τῷ καλῷ πρὸς δρόμον ἀνθρώπῳ ἄλλος ἀνόμοιος καλὸς πρὸς πά-

(§2) For Aristippus asked him if he knew anything good, with this purpose in mind, that if Socrates mentioned in reply some of the things usually thought as such, like food or drink or money or health or strength or daring, then Aristippus would show the thing mentioned being bad in some cases. Socrates, however, knowing that, if something annoys us, we are in need of that which will make an end of it, answered in the manner which is most effective:

(§3) Well then, he said, are you asking me whether I know something good for fever? Surely not I, he replied. Then for ophthalmia? Nor this one. Maybe for hunger? Still not for hunger. But then surely, Socrates said, *if you ask me whether I know of some good which is good for nothing, the answer is that neither do I know anything like that, nor do I stand in need of it.*

(§4) And again, when Aristippus queried him (sc. Socrates) whether he knows anything well-formed (beautiful) - Very many indeed he said. Are they then, he persisted, all similar to each other? Some of them as far as possible, he said, dissimilar, indeed. But how then, he retorted, might, what is dissimilar to the beautiful,



λην, ἔστι δὲ ἀσπίς καλὴ πρὸς τὸ προβαλέσθαι ὡς ἐνὶ ἀνομοιοτάτη τῷ ἀκοντίῳ, καλῶ πρὸς τὸ σφόδρα τε καὶ ταχὺ φέρεσθαι.

(§5) Οὐδὲν διαφερόντως, ἔφη, ἀποκρίνεται μοι ἢ ὅτε σε ἠρώτησα εἴ τι ἀγαθὸν εἰδείης. Σὺ δ' οἶει, ἔφη, ἄλλο μὲν ἀγαθὸν ἄλλο δὲ καλὸν εἶναι; οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅτι πρὸς ταῦτά πάντα καλά τε καὶ ἀγαθὰ ἔστι; πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἡ ἀρετὴ οὐ πρὸς ἄλλα μὲν ἀγαθὸν, πρὸς ἄλλα δὲ καλὸν ἔστιν, ἔπειτα οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸ αὐτὸ τε καὶ πρὸς τὰ αὐτὰ καλοὶ τε καὶ ἀγαθοὶ λέγονται, πρὸς τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ καὶ τὰ σώματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καλά τε καὶ ἀγαθὰ φαίνεται, πρὸς ταῦτά δὲ καὶ τὰλλα πάντα οἷς ἄνθρωποι χρῶνται καλά τε καὶ ἀγαθὰ νομίζονται, πρὸς ἅπερ ἂν εὐχρηστοι ἦ.

be itself beautiful? Because by Jove, he replied, to the man who is well-formed for foot-race there is another dissimilar man well-formed for wrestling; and a shield well-formed in connexion to being thrown before one as protection is furthest afar from the javelin, something well-formed for forceful and rapid motion.

(§5) You answer me, he said, in no respect differently than when I asked you whether you know anything good. And what then, he said, do you think that one thing is good, another is well-formed? Do you not know that all things are well-formed and good in one and the same respect (for one and the same task and purpose): first, virtue (i.e. pragmatic excellence) is not good for other things and well-constituted for others; then men are said to be “noble and good” in the same respect and for the same things; furthermore, human bodies appear well-formed and good for the same purposes; and, finally, it is for the same things that all else, which is being used by men, is taken as well-constituted and good, namely for those things for which it would be serviceable.

(§6) ἼΑρ' οὖν, ἔφη, καὶ κόφινος κοπροφόρος καλὸν ἐστι; Νῆ Δί, ἔφη, καὶ χρυσῆ γε ἀσπίς αἰσχρόν, εἰάν πρὸς τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἔργα ὁ μὲν καλῶς πεποιημένος ᾖ, ἡ δὲ κακῶς. Λέγεις σὺ, ἔφη, καλὰ τε καὶ αἰσχρὰ ταυτὰ εἶναι;

(§7) Καὶ νῆ Δί, ἔγωγ', ἔφη, ἀγαθὰ τε καὶ κακὰ· πολλάκις γὰρ τό τε λιμοῦ ἀγαθὸν πυρετοῦ κακὸν ἐστι καὶ τὸ πυρετοῦ ἀγαθὸν λιμοῦ κακὸν ἐστι· πολλάκις δὲ τὸ πρὸς δρόμον καλὸν πρὸς πάλην αἰσχρόν, τὸ δὲ πρὸς πάλην καλὸν πρὸς δρόμον αἰσχρόν· πάντα γὰρ ἀγαθὰ μὲν καὶ καλὰ ἐστι πρὸς ἃ ἂν εὖ ἔχῃ, κακὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσχρὰ πρὸς ἃ ἂν κακῶς.

(§8) Καὶ οἰκίας δὲ λέγων τὰς αὐτὰς καλὰς τε εἶναι καὶ χρησίμους παιδεύειν ἔμοιγ' ἐδόκει οἷας χρῆ οἰκοδομεῖσθαι κ.λπ.

(§6) Would then it follow, he retorted, that even a dung-basket be beautiful? By Jove, he exclaimed, yes, and indeed a golden shield be ugly (deformed), *if the former is well-made and the latter ill-made for their respective proper tasks (works, functions)*. Are you in effect maintaining, he said, that the same things are both well-formed and ill-formed?

(§7) This, and indeed, by Jove, I (also) claim, he said, (the same things to be both) good and bad. For very often what is good in the case of hunger is bad in the case of fever, and, conversely, what is good in the case of fever is bad in the case of hunger; and very often on the other hand what is well-constituted for footrace is ill-constituted for wrestling, while also what is well-constituted for wrestling is ill-formed for footrace. *For in all cases, things are good and well-formed for those tasks, for which they are well-adapted; they are bad and ill-formed for those, for which they are ill-adapted.*

(§8) And in saying (sc. Socrates) that the same houses are beautiful and useful, he seemed to me (Xenophon is speaking in the first person as the writer of Socrates' *Memoirs*) to teach how they should be built. etc."].

There follows a deduction *exempli gratia* of the basic *form* of a house from the *purposes* which it is meant by its nature to serve. The structure of a whole, and the constitution of its parts, are determined by the end to which it is meant to minister. Of what kind a thing is depends on the function which it exists to perform, the task which it exists to achieve, the aim which it exists to accomplish. Finality is the ultimate *raison d'être* of existence. *The form of being is an inference from the end of being rather than vice-versa.* In Aristotelian philosophical jargon, final causality is the fundamental factor of reality. We have here in Socrates the clearest anticipation of the Aristotelian stark teleology. But the Socratic emphasis is more pragmatic: he expounded in no uncertain words a full-blown conception of utter *Utilitarianism* and *Functionalism*. Aristotle's *Teleology* represents on the other hand a metaphysical projection of such basic *Pragmatism*.

It is clear from the Xenophontic evidence, as well as by reason of the general sophistical spirit of fifth century thought, that the historical Socrates really upheld such a rigorous Pragmatism, applicable equally to the domains of knowledge, morality and aesthetic value.

On the other hand, in the dialogue entitled *The Greater Hippias* (*Ἰππίας Μελίων*) and belonging to the Platonic corpus, Socrates (in a reputed direct colloquy with the Sophist Hippias of Elis) is made to question the validity of a definition of *καλόν* (well-formed, "fine") which will equate it either with the useful (*χρήσιμον*) or the profitable (*ὠφέλιμον*). The "dialectical" argumentation is part of the general framework of the dialogue, whose aim is to test dialectically candidates for a definition of beauty, well-formedness or fineness. In 295c it is proposed that *τοῦτο γάρ δὴ ἔστω ἡμῖν καλόν, ὃ ἂν χρήσιμον ᾖ* ["let this be for us well-formed, which would be useful"]. A string of examples provides the necessary inductive basis for this definition. "Fine eyes" are these which do their work of seeing well. We call the entire body well-formed if it discharges its various functions well, if it performs well in various respects such as foot-race or wrestling-activities, that is, which reveal clearly abilities and disabilities structural and performative in the body concerned. Similarly we think with regard to "fine" animals, implements of every description, land- and sea- vehicles, instruments, professions and social institutions and codes of justice. 295d-e: *ἀποβλέποντες πρὸς ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἢ πέφυκεν, ἢ εἴργασται, ἢ κείται, τὸ μὲν χρήσιμον καὶ ἢ χρήσιμον καὶ πρὸς ὃ χρήσιμον καὶ ὅποτε χρήσιμον καλόν φάμεν εἶναι, τὸ δὲ ταύτη πάντῃ ἀχρηστον αἰσχρόν* ["Paying attention to each one of

*these things - the way it is constituted, how it has been worked out, the state it is in - we call well-formed that which is useful, and in respect of its being useful, and for the end for which it is useful, and at the time when it is useful; while that which is, by reason of its constitution, construction or condition, in every way useless - we call ugly (ill-formed)"]. Well-formed is thus what is serviceable, what serves well its proper use, to which it is to be put according to its natural or artificial make-up and condition.*

To this analysis the criticism is urged that it fails to differentiate between utilities for good and utilities for bad; and therefore it leads to the *prima facie* unacceptable position, that a fine (well-formed, beautiful) thing may be useful (and fine) for a bad end. Before pointing out this impasse, “Socrates” draws attention to the fact that the proposed definition is equivalent to an alternative one, according to which well-formed is the *empowered thing* (295e5-10). *Utility and efficiency are necessarily co-implicated. Useful with a view to x is what has the power to effectuate or realise x. Incapacity is uselessness. Thus power is essentially beautiful, impotence is intrinsically ugly.* To this view, fits well, “Socrates” observes, the cardinal doctrine of the supremacy of wisdom: knowledge is the finest, most beautiful, thing; ignorance the ugliest (296a5-6).

The criticism to the utilitarian definition of “beauty” may now be formulated in terms of the equivalent equality *well-formed = powerful*. For capacity can be, we ordinarily perceive, for evil. (296b3-c5). And it cannot be, “Socrates” maintains as a matter of course, that a fine thing is useful for bad work; 296c6-d1: *ταύτην τὴν δύναμιν καὶ ταῦτα τὰ χρήσιμα, ἃ ἂν ἦ ἐπὶ τὸ κακόν τι ἐργάζεσθαι χρήσιμα, ἄρα φήσομεν ταῦτα εἶναι καλά, ἢ πολλοῦ δεῖ;* [“Such power and those utilities which would be useful in doing ill (working for a bad result, produce evil) - are we perhaps going to claim that they are “fine” things, or nothing is further than this removed from our thinking?”].

Now this is a typical instance of a general practice, common in the Platonic “early-Socratic” dialogues, where a Platonic bias (anticipatory of mature Platonic doctrine) masks the true meaning of the genuine Socratic critique, especially in connection with its positive content. *Four* points are worth making here. (a) Capacities, excellencies and well-formed things can certainly produce evil. Yet, (b), there is no (positive) capacity for evil. When an ability effectuates a bad result, it is a case of ill-use that is responsible for the untoward outcome. Power is intrinsically positively valued: it is its ill-use that is negative. Furthermore, (c), the ill-use of a

capacity is not the work of a stronger power which is capable of putting the former ability into an ill-use. Rather an ill-use is always a *misuse*. But, (d), a misuse is an objective *error*, a certain misalignment between capacity and task: a capacity is put into the wrong track. What causes such misalignment is some *defect*, a negative trait. In the first place, the defect may reside in the capacity itself: *for a mighty power cannot be deflected from its proper work*. But, on the other hand, the proper function of a capacity may be put in the wrong ulterior use. In such a case, the defect lies in that capacity whose proper work involves essentially the use of the work of the former capacity. E.g. corporeal strength, well discharged and thus, so far, blameless, may be employed in committing an atrocity for bad reasons. The vice (i.e. the defective state) now dwells in the deliberative faculties of man. *The point is that a wrong move must necessarily be made for the wrong reasons*: it consists in a misalignment between means and ends, stemming ultimately from a false perception of ends. In cases where the error is due to a mistaken alignment of well-defined means and fully apprehended ends, we have simply accidental malfunctioning of judgement.

The upshot of all this is that there is no such thing as a power-for-evil (capacity-for-bad-things) or a utility-for-bad-ends. Negative results proceed from a flawed power-basis and are the work of disutilities. And disutilities are flawed utilities. To put it most abstractly, *negativity is inferior positivity*. *A bad outcome is the work of a defective utility and an infirm power somewhere in the causal nexus productive of that outcome*. *Bad is the inferior*, in the last resort. The resolution of the first “Socratic” criticism in the above referred to passages from *Hippias Major*, passes through a resolute negation of the thesis assumed without much ado in 296b8-c1: ἀλλὰ μέντοι δυνάμει γε δύνανται οἱ δυνάμενοι (sc. ποιεῖν τι κακόν)· οὐ γάρ που ἀδυναμία γε [“but certainly those able (of doing something bad) are empowered to do so by some power; for it is not by some incapacity that they can do it”]. In reality (and it was characteristic of the ancient Greek experience of life as well as fully developed doctrine in mature Platonism), *a bad result always and necessarily postulates the existence of a defect, a misutility (misalignment) and an incapacity at some appropriate causal center*.

The case is clearer if we abandon the general level of discourse and concentrate instead on what are really and content-wise the utilities and beneficialities involved in human affairs and actions. A particular *utility* consists specifically in the *power* to satisfy concrete human needs and

wants. Advantages, benefits, profits in this context express such satisfactions. A utility is thus necessarily beneficial, it represents the capacity to confer the corresponding benefit to the individual exercising control over it. Such potencies are also necessarily positive. The satisfaction of a real human need cannot be negative. Negative however can be the satisfaction of wants not involved in, or inferred from, human nature - or the satisfaction of such wants in unnatural priorities. But then, once more, the issue is one of objective *error* in identifying the nature of a want, or the degree of its priority. We shall see that this objective defect means ultimately a subjective error (in the strict cognitive sense) implicated in the concerned individual's mind and knowledge-system. Which is another way of disclosing the intellectual basis of all wrong-choice and wrong-doing. *The root of all ill-action is defective knowledge, absence of wisdom. Knowledge is the supreme good.*

Having superficially disposed of the first (relevant) definition of beauty, "Socrates" proceeds to a second one. This is framed by taking the criticism against the former proposal at its face value and correcting accordingly that proposal. Suppose that fine (well-formed) is the thing which is useful in effecting some good, one that has the power to produce good; 296d8-10: *ὅτι τὸ χρήσιμόν τε καὶ τὸ δυνατόν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τι ποιῆσαι, ταῦτ' ἐστὶ τὸ καλὸν* ["...that what is useful, and has the power, with a view to produce good, this is a thing well-formed (fine, beautiful)"]. Well-formed then is not what is simply useful and serviceable, but what is profitable, beneficial (296e1-2; 5-6).

The criticism now to this improved definition of "fineness" is even more palpably superficial than the previous attempt. It rests on the assumption of the so-called "transitivity" of causality. Cause and effect, the argument runs, are different (297a2-3 and following). What the new definition tells us is, in effect, that the "fine" (the well-formed, the beautiful) is that which causes good as its result (296e7 - 297a1), is a kind of "father" to the good, which in this image is conceived as an "offspring" (297b2-8). But if the cause is not the effect, nor is the father (the same with) the son, nor the effect is the cause or the son is the father, then the "fine" is not good and the good is not "fine" - a totally unacceptable position (297b9-d1). Hence the definition of the "fine" as profitable, i.e. productive of good, fails, too, just as the former one (297d2-8).

The argument is indeed unacceptable. Its assumed major premise (the "transitivity" of causality) not only is in itself untenable, but it runs counter to the ancient Greek experience of life and the World, as well as

to the principal conceptual articulations of causality in antiquity. The cause, fundamentally, repeats itself in the effect: it induces in another thing some similarity to itself. Action is the manifestation of an essence, and its work is to stamp its own character to where it is exerted. *All power is power of self-propagation, making as much as possible of the "other" like one.* The causal force creates its own image whatever it seizes upon. If it cannot succeed, or succeed thoroughly, in this, it is a proof of its incapacity. Thus the Platonic criticism collapses completely, from a formal point of view: its basis is invalid.

Besides, on a deeper level of understanding, it is true that  $\tau\delta\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\delta\upsilon\nu$  refers to the constitutional and structural aspects of a thing, which render it useful and profitable, whereas  $\tau\delta\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\delta\upsilon\nu$  refers to its usefulness and profitability in themselves. So, between them, there is the distinction of what (non-relative) properties are apt to effect what specific beneficial result. If, therefore, we wish to fine-tune the analysis, we may say that both attributes refer to the same property, but one does it from the point of view of the inner structure which forms the foundation of the property, while the other refers to it under the aspect of the positive result effected by virtue of that structure. The property in both cases is utility and beneficiality.  $T\delta\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\delta\upsilon\nu$  is utility and beneficiality residing in a well-formed thing;  $\tau\delta\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\delta\upsilon\nu$  is utility and beneficiality as treasure-store of actual benefit.

There are possible other nuances in such fine-tuning. Something is profitable by reason of its ability or aptitude to generate benefit. But the realisation of the benefit inherent in the good's capacity to engender it is not self-activated: factors may intervene which cancel (partly or wholly) the profitability of the beneficial. So the good is not an actual benefit *ipso facto* - with the exception of the ultimate or absolute good which is, as such, an unstoppable benefit in actuality, so to speak. *The common Sophistic, Socratic and Platonic position is that such a pure benefit is knowledge.* But of this more in the sequel.

Here it is well to conclude this long discussion with four observations. *First*, the useful is a positive reality (concept) as such. Utility is intrinsically utility for the good. Hence usefulness and profitability in essence coincide. *Second*, a well-formed object is an object well-positioned to discharge optimally the function and service to which its nature intends it. Similarly, a good thing is something representing an actual benefit: it is a store of use and benefit, i.e. of value. *Third*, in view of the two former points, the well-formed and the good coincide (though

they are distinguishable conceptually in a number of various fine modalities of aspect). And, *finally*, utilities and beneficialities are not entirely self-fulfilling conditions with regard to actual objects possessing them. In other words, a utility or profitability is not automatically translatable into an actual, fully-valued benefit to an object into whose store of advantages they belong. The single exception to this rule is provided, naturally, by the absolute and perfect good and “fine” thing, namely knowledge and wisdom. - Such was undoubtedly the position of the historical Socrates. The treatment of these questions in *Hippias Major* is rudimentary, tentative and dialectically superficial. This fits well with the general character of the dialogue, which is, I believe, rather unworthy of even the early “Socratic” works of Plato. In fact, the other piece in the Platonic corpus known as (for contrast) *Hippias the Lesser* (*Ἰππίας Ἐλαττων*) is quoted by Aristotle as “the Hippias” *simpliciter*. This appears to suggest that it is that work which is considered by Aristotle the only existing genuine work of Plato entitled *Hippias*, a probability that would leave the authenticity of *Hippias the Greater* more than uncertain.

- [5] The work was probably written during Xenophon’s sojourn at Scillus in Triphylia near Olympia. When banished from Athens as a result of his philolaconism, he was granted an estate in Scillus by virtue of his close connexions with influential Spartans, including his friendship with King Agesilaus. The sentence of exile must have been passed after the battle of Coronea in Boeotia, where the Spartans under Agesilaus inflicted defeat on Athens and her allies (395/4 B.C.). Xenophon was intimately connected with Agesilaus, his plans and his operations since 396 B.C., and has returned to Greece in his company. Xenophon abandoned Scillus, when Spartan hegemony collapsed after the defeat in Leuctra (371 B.C.). Triphylia was then attached to Elis, under the general guarantee of the new emerging dominant power, Thebes. Xenophon moved then to Corinth. Around 365 B.C., Athens rescinded the decree of banishment: Xenophon could now visit freely his native city. He died probably in Corinth, 360/59 B.C. (Diogenes Laertius II, 56, quoting Demetrius of Magnesia). The *Oeconomicus* could have been written anytime between 394 and his death, perhaps before his leaving Scillus. Running his estate at Scillus may have provided the occasion, and his absence then from active political and military life, the leisure, to do this.

Xenophon’s interest in “practical” matters is evidenced everywhere in his writings - and it is nothing peculiar in an age of robust pragmatism.



His preoccupation with Economics comes also into focus with his singularly important work on *Ways and Means*, or *Revenues* (*Πόροι*). Of the last more in the third part of the present work.

- [6] *Euthydemus* belongs to the transition phase from Plato's minor Socratic dialogues (like *Charmides*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, *Euthyphro*, *Crito*, *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, *Menexemus*) to his middle period integral masterpieces (*Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Republic* and the difficult to locate *Phaedrus*). The intermediate group seems to include also *Meno*, *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Cratylus*. After the tentative nature of dialectical analysis in the earlier set, here the Platonic Socrates endeavours to define his own position in contradistinction to various foils taken from existing, contemporary thinkers and thought-movements. Plato wants obviously to establish his own standing as "teacher of wisdom" vis-à-vis other available alternatives. In *Euthydemus* the main foil is sophistical eristics. In fact, the economic passage in this dialogue which I am presently analysing is introduced as an example of hortatory argument (addressed to youths engaged in learning) produced by Socrates before the Sophists Euthydemus and Dionysodorus and their pupils (278c-d). In fact, there is in the dialogue a distinct atmosphere of teachers competing for pupils before them: there is too much emphasis on winning the argument or, even, face-saving. Furthermore at the very end of the dialogue (304c-307c) Plato confronts a severe criticism of philosophy exercised by a certain rhetorician held in high esteem for his wisdom. He maintained that philosophy is mere waste of time (*οὐδενὸς ἄξιον πρᾶγμα*, a thing of no value, 305a1), and gave as an example of its futility the very disputation which Euthydemus purports to relate. The wise man in oratory is not named, but the indications supplied show that he must be Isocrates, the head of a school of higher education in liberal arts, whose "philosophy", principles, curriculum and manner of training stand at the antipodes of Plato's philosophical Institute, the Academy. "Socrates" dismisses the renowned man's criticism. Oratory has to do with politics, broadly conceived: forensic pleading and public panegyrics, as well as persuasive speeches in deliberative bodies, the general Assembly or the select Council. Oratory is subservient to political action. Philosophical and political discourse are two distinct things. The critique's platform is halfway between the two, a sophistical posture in the boundary line between the philosopher's calling and the politician's profession, *μεθόρια φιλοσόφου τε ἀνδρὸς καὶ πολιτικοῦ* ["borders of, or borderline cases

between, a philosopher and a politician”], as Prodicus had aptly described such men’s essential character, one enjoying widespread approval (305c-e). But (Plato goes on to maintain) hybrids of two positively valued things are worse than either of them. (Only mixtures of two different “bad” constituents, which do not regard the same thing, may improve upon both of them. Midway houses between a good and a bad position are better than the bad but worse than the good). The liberal, grammatic, rhetoric and sophistical training envisaged by Isocrates, gives neither good philosophers nor good statesmen (306c). Plato is for the scientific treatment of each discipline, be it philosophy or gymnastics, rhetoric, generalship or economics (as the theory of money-making, *χρηματιστική*); cf. 306d-307c, esp. 307a3-6. Needless to be said that the Platonic linking together of Sophistics with the Isocratic programme for higher education is nicely balanced by the Isocratic emphatic affiliation of Sophistics with Socratic and Platonic philosophising. *The sharp point of distinction was between scientifically articulate knowledge and liberal persuasiveness.*

The above noticed programmatic features of *Euthydemus* connect it with the vastly different *Phaedrus*, in which, significantly, there is again an end reference to Isocrates. Only in this dialogue the reference is not hostile: it leaves open the question of the nature of the relationship between the two men. Plato in effect wonders (or lets it appear as if one wondered) whether philosophy would gain the upper hand in the direction of the doubtlessly eminent abilities of the adversary. *Phaedrus* is clearly an *inaugural* piece, exhibitionist in the best sense of the word. It must have marked the institution of the Academy, as the forum of Platonic philosophy. This accords nicely with the substance of the ancient tradition that it was Plato’s first written work. *Euthydemus* must have followed relatively closely. In fact, there are signs of cardinal, mature Platonic conceptions in the work. Chief among them is the prefiguration of the central doctrine in the *Republic* regarding the preparatory nature of mathematical truth in the ascent towards the first principles of reality: mathematics is the necessary penultimate stage in that process, but has to hand over its prerogatives to dialectics (= philosophy) which alone can reveal the true meaning and reason behind mathematical truths. (V. *Euthydemus*, 290b-c). As Plato founded his Academy shortly after his return from the first visit to Syracuse and his personal contacts in Sicily and Southern Italy with the Pythagoreans (388-7 B.C.); we may therefore conjecturally locate *Euthydemus* around 385-380 B.C.

We ascribed (n. [5]) to Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* a date of composition between 394 and 371 B.C. Which of the two works is the earlier? Was Xenophon expounding which were Socrates' real views on economic value *after* Plato gave his philosophical interpretation of his master's statements, or, conversely, was Plato revealing Socrates' exacter meaning and fuller articulation after Xenophon reported somewhat inadequately their common teacher's position on the matter?

To judge from the content of the respective accounts, the Xenophontian is:

1) *Less rigorous*. Knowledge to use correctly, i.e. profitably, a utility (the goods) is essentially involved in the concept of wealth. This is the aimed at conclusion, and it is employed right at the start of the inquiry (I, 8), in the midst of the argument, without due, explicit separation of the distinct steps in the reasoning process. The explanation follows.

2) *More radical*. Socrates would go to the extreme that misuse or non-use of goods because of ignorance how to properly use them, renders them not real *property* of the man who legally owns them. A possession must be useful and beneficial to the possessor, *actually*, not merely potentially and in so far as its own intrinsic nature is concerned. In other words, a subjective element enters essentially into the notion of goods: they are goods to him who knows how to benefit from them. So much is common ground for both the Xenophontine and Platonic accounts. But in the former, this subjective and cognitive element enters into the concept of possession and property as well. Something is really possessed by someone, if he knows how to use, and benefit from, it. So *Oeconomicus*, I, 5-7: Οἶκος δὲ δὴ τί δοκεῖ ἡμῖν εἶναι; ἀρα ὅπερ οἰκία, ἣ καὶ ὅσα τις ἔξω τῆς οἰκίας κέκτηται, πάντα τοῦ οἴκου ταῦτά ἐστιν; Ἐμοὶ γοῦν, ἔφη ὁ Κριτόβουλος, δοκεῖ καὶ εἰ μὴδ' ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πόλει εἶη τῷ κεκτημένῳ, πάντα τοῦ οἴκου εἶναι ὅσα τις κέκτηται. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἐχθροὺς κέκτηνται τινες; Νῆ Δία καὶ πολλοὺς γε ἔνιοι. Ἡ καὶ κτήματα αὐτῶν φήσομεν εἶναι τοὺς ἐχθροὺς; Γελοῖον μεντὰν εἶη, ἔφη ὁ Κριτόβουλος, εἰ ὁ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς αὔξων προσέτι καὶ μισθὸν τούτου φέρει. Ὅτι τοι ἡμῖν ἐδόκει οἶκος ἀνδρὸς εἶναι ὅπερ κτήσις. Νῆ Δί, ἔφη ὁ Κριτόβουλος, ὅ,τι γέ τις ἀγαθὸν κέκτηται· οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐκ εἴ τι κακόν, τοῦτο κτήμα ἐγὼ καλῶ. Σὺ δ' εἰκας τὰ ἐκάστῳ ὠφέλιμα κτήματα καλεῖν. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη· τὰ δὲ γε βλάπτοντα ζημίαν ἔγωγε νομίζω μᾶλλον ἢ χρήματα. ["Well then, an estate - what do we think it is? Is it the same as a house or does it include whatever a person possesses outside the house as well? Is all this part of the estate? I certainly think, said Critobulus, that

even if it is not even in the same city as the possessor, everything a person possesses is part of his estate. Don't some people also possess enemies? Yes, by Zeus, and some in fact have a great many. 'hen shall we also include enemies among their possessions? It would certainly be ridiculous, said Critobulus, if someone increased the number of a man's enemies and then were paid wages for doing so, as well. Yet, you know, we thought a man's estate was the same as his property. That's true, by Zeus, said Critobulus, but of any good (thing) he possesses; *if something is bad, by Zeus, I don't call it a possession. You seem to be calling property whatever is beneficial to the owner. I most certainly do, he said, and I consider what is harmful to be loss rather than goods*".

Notice that estate, *οἶκος* is the standard *economic* unit in antiquity, a *family firm*. It comprises all assets (real estate, implements, animals, crops, money) belonging to the head of the family. This has nothing to do with the modern construct of an assumed precapitalist and non-market domestic economy.

3) The Xenophontean account is also *more dynamically* progressive. It is definitively pro-business and decisively entrepreneurial in a way that Platonic expositions never are. In the whole tract *Oeconomicus* the straightforward emphasis lies on good management of the economic unit of ancient society, the house-estate or house-firm. The manager need not be the owner, but must be an expert in the art of managing an economic entity. He can earn a lot of money by his skills (*Oeconomicus*, I, 4). Economic management involves scientific knowledge leading to successful practical application (cf. e.g. *Oeconomicus*, I, 1). The purpose of the art of management is to increase the accumulation of wealth (*ibid.* I, 4): *αὔξειν τὸν οἶκον* ["increase the house-firm"]. This is what the successful manager will do: *καὶ πολὺν τε μισθὸν... φέροιτ' ἄν, εἴ δύναιτο οἶκον παραλαβὼν τελεῖν τε ὅσα δεῖ καὶ περιουσίαν ποιῶν αὔξειν τὸν οἶκον* ["he would certainly make a lot of money, if he were able to take over a house-firm or estate, discharge the necessary payments, and by making a surplus, increase the firm"]. Cf. II, 1 *αὔξοιμι τὸν οἶκον*, augment the house-firm. To do this one must contrive revenues (*μηχανᾶσθαι προσόδους*, I, 21); or contrive to make money and accumulate capital (*μηχανᾶσθαι χρήματα*, II, 7). The point is that one does not necessarily need to own capital in order to be a good capitalist: capitalism is a question of knowledge in the field of economics - theoretical knowledge in a deeply pragmatic sense, one that secures practical success should the opportunity present itself, should the knowledgeable economic

man be entrusted with the management of an economic entity. So Socrates, the wise but poor philosopher, is called upon to advise on the proper management of a house-estate. For his want of wealth does not imply an equal want of the science of wealth (II, 12). In fact, Socrates is seen as (II, 10) *ἔν τι πλουτηρὸν ἔργον ἐπιστάμενον περιουσίαν ποιεῖν* [*“knowing one certain way of making wealth: the creation of a surplus”*]. Socrates disclaims, with his wonted irony, such prerogatives of economic adeptness for himself, arguing from his lack of practical experience with the matter (II, 12-13). But he confesses that he is no stranger to the subject, and one thing which he can affirm unhesitatingly is the *principle of Economic Rationalism*; II 16-18: *ὁμολογῶ δὲ μεμεληκέναι μοι οὔτινες ἕκαστα ἐπιστημονέστατοί εἰσι τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει. καταμαθῶν γάρ ποτε ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τοὺς μὲν πάνυ ἀπόρους ὄντας, τοὺς δὲ πάνυ πλουσίους, ἀπεθαύμασα, καὶ ἔδοξέ μοι ἄξιον εἶναι ἐπισκέψεως ὅ,τι εἴη τοῦτο. καὶ ἤρην ἐπισκοπῶν πάνυ οἰκείως ταῦτα γιγνόμενα. τοὺς μὲν γὰρ εἰκῆ ταῦτα πράττοντας ζημιουμένους ἐώρων, τοὺς δὲ γνώμη συντεταμένη ἐπιμελουμένους καὶ θάπτον καὶ ῥᾶον καὶ κερδαλωτέρων κατέγγων πράττοντας. παρ’ ὧν ἂν καὶ σὲ οἶμαι, εἰ βούλοιο μαθόντα, εἴ σοι ὁ θεὸς μὴ ἐναντιόιτο, πάνυ ἂν δεινὸν χρηματιστὴν γενέσθαι* [*“I confess that I have been interested in learning who in the city are most knowledgeable about each occupation. For once I learned that in the same line of work some were very poor while others were very wealthy, I was quite amazed, and I thought it was worth investigating just why this should be so. And upon investigation I found that this happens quite properly. For I saw that those who do these jobs in a haphazard way incur loss, while I discovered that those who conduct the management of their affairs with vigorous judgement accomplish them more quickly and more easily and more profitably. And if you wished to learn from those success stories - provided no god stands in your way - I think that you would become an astute businessman”*].

There can be no doubt that Xenophon’s Socrates is virtually the historical Socrates. Plato is clearly “re-writing”, reconstructing, his teacher. On the basis of Xenophon’s picture, and deploying the several accounts of the chief Socratics and Plato in a way balancing one against the others for each one of them, we can come pretty close to that eminent figure of high-classical rationalism and sophistical New-Philosophy.

In the present question, the likelihood is that Xenophon’s report of Socratic economic teaching is the earlier, as well as being the more accurate. Plato’s treatment in the *Euthydemus* is meant as a philosophical

correction to the *dilletanti's* account, while simultaneously being an exhibition piece in illustration of the dialectical method constitutive of the novel School of thought as practised in the new school, the Platonic Academy. So that we may tentatively posit *Oeconomicus* somewhen between 394-385 B.C., and *Euthydemus*, as suggested above in about 385-380 B.C.

- [7] *Eryxias* was among the few dialogues in the Platonic corpus considered in antiquity as spurious; they fall under the heading *Νοθεύόμενοι* in the transmission of the Thrasyllian tetralogies. But it stands out among the other *μονεθ?λεμοι* by the quality of its contents. Save for a certain uncertainty of execution, or rather opaqueness in its design, it could well have been genuinely Platonic. There is also the very nonplatonistic acknowledgement of irrationality in someone's belief-system: Critias (the eminent interlocutor in the dialogue) will not succumb to the force of reason, to the power of Socratic argumentation. V. 403c-d; 405b-c. But this might be a deliberate thrust, intended to reveal a character trait of Critias, one of the Thirty Tyrants in Athens, who held sway in the aftermath of the total Athenian defeat in the Peloponnesian War. *The dialogue most probably belongs to some Socratic.* One tradition ascribed it to *Aeschines of Sphettus*, the Socratic (v. Suda s.v. *Αἰσχίνης* = Fr. 25 Giannantoni = I 1 p. 256 Dittmar). According to ancient testimonies, there was a group of dialogues called *headless* (*ἀκέφαλοι*) and attributed in the main to Aeschines. *Eryxias* belonged to this group. The dialogues of this group shared a general style and manner of composition which was criticised as extremely faint and unstrung, failing to exhibit the Socratic tension and vigour (Diogenes Laertius II 60-61 = Fr. 22 Giannantoni = I, 1 pp. 248-50; 255 Dittmar). On this account, a certain (not otherwise attested) Peisistratus of Ephesus condemned them as spurious (*ibid.*). To the group of the "headless" dialogues, there was contrasted another group of seven dialogues, which were indeed stamped by the Socratic ethos, although these, too, were also considered by some critiques as unAeschinean, for the opposite reason (*ibid.*). (For the "Socratic kind", *εἶδος Σωκρατικόν*, of disputational (dialectic) reasoning and style, cf. Aelius Aristides, *Περὶ ρητορικῆς* I 20 (II 24 Dindorf = Fr. 30 Giannantoni; id. *Oratio XLVI*, II 295 Dindorf = Fr. 29G; id. II 369 Di.; Athenaeus III 611D = Fr. 16G); Demetrius, *On Style* (*Περὶ Ἑρμηνείας*) 297 = Fr. 32G; Cicero, *Brutus*, 292; Maximus Tyrius XXIV, 5; XXVIII, 6. Aeschines' literary style was very highly esteemed: Phrynichus in

Photius, *Bibliotheca* cod. 61 (p. 20b 23 sqq. Bekker) = Fr. 33 G; cf. *ibid.* cod. 158 (p. 101b 4 sqq. Bekker); Hermogenes, *Περὶ ἰδεῶν*, II 12, 2 (II 419, 27 sqq. Spengel) = Fr. 20G; *ibid.* (II p. 356.18 sqq. Sp.); Anonymous, *Περὶ ρητορικῆς* (I2 p. 211.25 sqq. Spengel - Hammer) = Fr. 35G; Plutarch, *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*, 26, p. 67D-E = Fr. 11G; Michael Psellos, *de S. Gregorii theologi caractere* in W. Brinkmann, *Quaestiones de dialogis Platonis falso addictis specimen*, diss. Bonn 1891 p. 5 n. 1 = Fr. 36G; Diogenes Laertius II 63 = Fr. 13G. Now, the general course of reasoning in *Eryxias* may very aptly be described as faint, loose and lacking in vigour: we do not find in the invention and disposition of the whole that fixedness of purpose and overall tense coherence, which characterise the Platonic composition, not even the tight style, terse exchange and combative spirit which we ought to expect from a Socratic reporting a Socratic argumentative encounter. We may further notice that among the “headless” dialogues there was a certain *Erasistratus*, bearing the name of the nephew of Phaeax (contemporary and rival of Alcibiades), who starts the discussion in *Eryxias*. The debate, finally, in the dialogue under consideration is carried on by Socrates and both his interlocutors Eryxias and (the tyrant-sophist) Critias, either of whom could be elevated to the position of the title on perhaps equal claims, although Critias rather prevails in this respect. Maybe this situation was reflected by the fact that the dialogue went initially nameless, and as titleless it was reckoned headless before later (Alexandrian) critiques gave it the name it bears now, probably to distinguish it from the Platonic *Critias*. Two more dialogues from the group of the “headless” ones also show uncertainty as to the main interlocutor. One (or were they many?) was called the *dialogue(s) of Cobblers* (*Σκυτικοί*, probably to be corrected to *Σκυτικός*). Another was entitled *On Virtue* (*Περὶ Ἀρετῆς*), obviously on a different principle of titling: on the same count our *Eryxias* should have been named *On Wealth* (*Περὶ Πλούτου*). In fact, the Hellenistic philologists gave to classical pieces of work (e.g. Plato’s dialogues) a double title, one deriving from the main interlocutor, the other from the content.

On the whole, Aeschines’ authorship of *Eryxias* turns to be not unlikely. In fact, it is rendered probable by the striking similarity of the beginning of *Eryxias* with that of the dialogue *Miltiades*, considered genuine by the prevailing verdict of ancient criticism, indeed taken as the first among Aeschines’ works (Fr. 22G.).

<p><i>Eryxias</i> (392a)</p> <p>Ἐτυγγάνομεν περιπατοῦντες ἐν τῇ στοᾷ τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ἐλευθερί- ου</p> <p>ἐγὼ τε καὶ Ἐρυξίας ὁ Στειριεύς</p> <p>εἶτα προσηλθέτων ἡμῖν Κριτίας τε καὶ Ἐρασίστρατος ὁ Φαίακος τοῦ Ἐρασιστράτου ἀδελφιδοῦς</p> <p>- ἐτύγγανεν δὲ τότε νεωστί παρὼν ἀπὸ Σικελίας καὶ τῶν τόπων τούτων ὁ Ἐρασίστρατος</p>	<p><i>Miltiades</i> (Fr. 76G)</p> <p>Ἐτύγγανεν μὲν οὔσα πομπή τῶν μεγάλων Παναθηναίων, ἐκαθήμεθα δὲ ἐν τῇ Στοᾷ τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ἐλευθερίου</p> <p>ἐγὼ καὶ Ἄγγων ὁ Θηραμένους πατήρ καὶ Εὐριπίδης ὁ ποιητής</p> <p>παρῆλθε δ' οὖν παρ' αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς [...] Μιλτιάδης ὡσπερ ἐπίτηδες,</p> <p>καὶ γὰρ [...]</p>
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The parallelism is extraordinary and convincing.

The chief problem concerning such an ascription of *Eryxias* to Aeschines would be the reduplication of his treatment of wealth, given that he devoted to this subject his dialogue *Callias* as well, one of the “genuine seven”. But this is hardly decisive: a different context and aspect would suffice for the reconsideration. [The number *seven* both of the works considered authentic - pace the eccentric extremists - and of the “headless” dialogues point to, and confirm, the Hellenistic origin of the groupings. The Alexandrian critics decided e.g. the “classical” canons in the various fields of composition; thus there was for instance a tragic “*Pleias*”, seven eminent tragic writers].

In the past, the following dialogues from the Platonic corpus transmitted as spurious from antiquity, were assigned to Aeschines: *Περὶ Ἀρετῆς*, *Ἀξίλοχος* and *Ἐρυξίας*. Cf. Giannantoni, *op.cit.*, vol. IV nota 56 p. 586. The same and the *Περὶ Δικαίου* were attributed to Simon the cobbler, the intimate Socrates’ acquaintance, by A. Boeckh (in his work *Simonis Socratici, ut videtur, dialogi* IV, 1810). The critical tendency in our age was to relegate these works to unrelieved spuriousness of later



dates. *Eryxias* in particular was e.g. by Taylor conjectured to belong “to the beginning of the Academic polemic against Stoicism, in the early decades of the third century”. (A.E. Taylor, *Plato, The Man and his Work*, 1960<sup>2</sup>, p, 550). This will not do. Stoic themes, and indeed characteristic Stoic (“paradoxical”) theses exist in genuine Platonic works. Independently of whether *Eryxias* is an Aeschinean work or not, the dialogue must, in any case, be dated quite early. The close similarity of its development of the subject to that of the initial chapters of Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* and the economic passage in Plato’s *Euthydemus*, as well as the fuller treatment of the points made, fits well with a date of composition slightly later than that of *Euthydemus* - say, around the middle of the first half of the fourth century B.C.

It is significant that we find in *Eryxias* the more extreme formulation of the Xenophontian *Oeconomicus* regarding the disqualification from even the status of possessions (and not only of goods) of things useless, which are useless as a matter of fact and with respect to particular individuals, not in themselves and respecting their inherent qualities and capacities or disabilities to be of use. *Eryxias*, 400c: δῆλον οὖν ὅτι οὐκ ἂν εἶη ἕκαστά γε τούτων κτήματα, εἴπερ ἔνιοι τῶν κεκτημένων μηδὲν διὰ τοῦτο πλουσιώτεροι φαίνονται [“It is clear therefore that each of those things would not be (true) possessions, if some of those who possess them do not seem to be wealthier on that account”]. *Κτήματα* (possessions) is the transmitted word in the manuscript tradition. But we could normalise the formulation by correcting to *χρήματα* (goods) as I proposed in n. [12]. - However, in view of the occurrence of the same extreme push in *Oeconomicus*, we should perhaps retain the transmitted expression.

- [8] Plato, *Meno*, 87c-89a. The question there is whether virtue (excellence) consists in knowledge or is a different thing. In the course of the argument the main point is that the benefit of any thing whatsoever (including psychic characters and mental attributes) results upon its *correct use* (*ὀρθή χρῆσις*) and is due to knowledge. This brings this passage into intimate connection with the previous, and main, three.

The date of composition for *Meno* may be putatively set at the final stage before the opening of the Academy (c. 388 B.C.).

- [9] *Eryxias*, 399e5-6: τὸ γὰρ χρήματα πολλὰ κεκτηῖσθαι τοῦτο εἶναι τὸ πλουτεῖν [“for to possess many goods is to be wealthy”]. This in reply to the question, 399d4-5: λοιπὸν δὴ σκέψασθαι τί ἐστὶν αὐτὸ τὸ πλουτεῖν

["it remains therefore incumbent to examine what is in itself being wealthy"].

An accumulation of goods is essential to wealth and capital. Against ideas that would restrict the amount of accumulated capital to a norm dictated usually by some notion of basic self-sufficiency (*autarctia*) for human nature (cf. n. [17] *ad fin.*), it had been seen that, unlike final goods (intended for immediate consumption, i.e. for the satisfaction of human needs, wants and desires), whose "size" has to be, so to speak, tailored to the want that they are meant to satisfy, capital has by nature no such limitation as to its magnitude. Aristippus the Socratic had hit the nail exactly on the head (fr. 75 Giannantoni): *οὐχ ὡσπερ ὑπόδημα τὸ μείζον δύσχρηστον, οὕτω καὶ ἡ πλείων κτήσις· τοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τῇ χρήσει τὸ περιττὸν ἐμποδίζει, τῇ δὲ καὶ ὅλη χρησθῆναι κατὰ καιρὸν ἔξεστι καὶ μέρει* ["In the case of, for example, shoes, the larger size is inconvenient; not so for a greater amount of possessions. For with shoes what is superfluous (with regard to the size of the feet) impedes the use of them, whereas the great accumulation of goods can be used in aggregate or in part as opportunity presents itself"].

We shall see in the sequel, that, on the other hand, capital accumulation and true wealth are no mere heap of things, a hoarding of goods left inactive. But the dynamism of capital, however, has no bounds, limited only by the obtaining possibilities of use. Aristippus himself sets the objective limits to money concentration (Fr. 78): *modus pecuniae querendus est qui nec maior necessitate praesenti possit esse, nec minor* ["a mode of money holdings should be sought, which would neither possibly exceed the level of current demand, nor fall short of it"]. *This may be taken to amount in fact to the first explicit formulation of the Quantity Theory of Money.*

[10] The potent specification of the root in matters of human activity, moral and economical, has been analysed above (Chapters 2 and 4) in connection with the Aristotelian *χρεία*, a word with the same root.

[11] *Eryxias*, 400e10-12: *ὅσα μὲν ἄρα τυγχάνει χρήσιμα ὄντα ἡμῖν, ταῦτα χρήματα· καὶ ὅσα δ' ἀχρεῖα, ταῦτα δ' οὐ χρήματα* ["those things that as a matter of fact are useful to us, these things are goods; and those things that are useless, these are not goods"]. The way Socrates is made to argue for this explanatory definition is highly instructive; v. next note.

Strictly speaking, the general category of *usefulness* includes things which we would not subsume under the proper notion of *goods*: for instance, we use (and, therefore, there is use and usefulness for us of) conversation between us (or, we use each other in conversation), we use each other by inflicting harm, and we have a use and employment of things in our several occupations and lines of business without necessarily counting those things as goods. Goods appear therefore to be a division of utilities, of things useful. *Goods are those useful things which are useful for the satisfaction of needs and desires, the fulfilment of wants in man.* We are all along used to talk of utility in the economical context meaning usefulness in satisfying human needs, wants and desires, so that utilities and goods are equivalent expressions. Nonetheless, the argument is clarifying. 400e-401e (immediately following the passage quoted at the beginning of the present note):

*Πῶς οὖν, ἔφη ὁ Ἐρυξίας ὑπολαβὼν, ὦ Σώκρατες; ἢ ἔστιν ὅτι χρώμεθα πρὸς ἀλλήλους τῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ τῷ βλάπτειν καὶ ἑτέροις πολλοῖς; ἄρα ἡμῖν ταῦτ' ἂν εἴη [τὰ] χρήματα; καὶ μὴν χρήσιμά γε φαίνεται ὄντα. οὐκ αὖ οὐδ' οὕτως ἐφαίνετο ἡμῖν ὅτι ποτ' ἔστιν τὰ χρήματα. ὅτι μὲν γὰρ ἀνάγκη χρήσιμα εἶναι, ἐάνπερ μέλλῃ χρήματα ἔσεσθαι, τοῦτο μὲν ἐκ πάντων ὠμολογεῖτο σχεδόν τι· ἀλλὰ ποῖα δὴ τῶν χρησίμων, ἐπειδὴ γε οὐ πάντα;*

*φέρει δὴ, εἰ πάλιν ὧδε μετίομεν, ἄρα μᾶλλον τι εὐρεθείη ὃ ζητοῦμεν, τί ποτ' ἔστιν ὃ χρώμεθα*

[(Socrates just before had concluded that goods are things useful, not goods things useless) “How then, oh Socrates, Eryxias said taking up the argument. Is it not true that we use discourse to each other, and harm, and many other things? Are then these things goods to us? For really they seem to be useful indeed. And so again neither in this way could we apprehend what on earth are the goods. That things must of necessity be useful, if they are to be goods, so much commanded indeed virtually universal consent. The question was which of the useful things are goods, since not all are.

Come now, let us pursue the matter in the following way in case that it might more readily be

χρήμασιν, καὶ πρὸς τί ἡϋρηται ἡ τῶν χρημάτων κτῆσις, ὡσπερ τὰ φάρμακα πρὸς τὸ τὰς νόσους ἀπαλλάττειν; ἴσως γὰρ ἂν ἡμῖν οὕτως μᾶλλον φανερόν γένοιτο, ἐπειδὴ ἀναγκαῖον μὲν φαίνεται, ὅσαπερ τυγχάνει χρήματα ὄντα, ταῦτα καὶ χρήσιμα εἶναι, τῶν δὲ χρησίμων γένος τι ὃ καλοῦμεν χρήματα. λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη σκέψασθαι τὰ πρὸς τίνα χρεῖαν χρήσιμα χρῆσθαι χρήματά ἐστιν. πάντα μὲν γὰρ ἴσως χρήσιμα, ὅσοι-σπερ πρὸς τὴν ἐργασίαν χρώμεθα, ὡσπερ γε πάντα μὲν τὰ ψυχὴν ἔχοντα ζῶα, τῶν δὲ ζώων γένος τι καλοῦμεν ἄνθρωπον.

εἰ δὴ τις ἡμᾶς ἔροιτο τίνος ἂν ἡμῖν ἐκποδῶν γενομένου οὐδὲν δεοίμεθα ἰατρικῆς οὐδὲ τῶν ταύτης ἐργαλείων, ἔχοιμεν ἂν εἰπεῖν ὅτι εἰ αἱ νόσοι ἀπαλλαγείσαν ἐκ τῶν σωμάτων καὶ μὴ γίγνοιτο παντάπασιν, ἢ γιγνόμεναι παραχρήμα ἀπαλλάττοντο. ἔστιν ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἡ ἰατρικὴ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἢ πρὸς τοῦτο χρησίμη, πρὸς τὸ νόσους ἀπαλλάττειν. εἰ δὲ τις ἡμᾶς πάλιν ἔροιτο τίνος ἂν ἡμῖν ἀπαλλαγέντος οὐδὲν δεοίμεθα χρημάτων, ἄρ' ἂν ἔχοιμεν εἰπεῖν;

discovered what we are in search of - namely, What is it that we use in using goods, and to what purpose has the possession of goods (of money) be instituted, as, e.g. medicines have been found for release from illness? For perchance this is the way by which the matter would become clearer to us. Since it seems necessary that whichever things are in fact goods, they are indeed useful, while on the other hand what we call goods represents a species of things useful; *it remains to consider for what use (need) things useful to use are utilities (goods)*. For all things are in effect useful, which we use in any given business, just as all entities having soul are animals, but a certain species of animals we call man.

If now someone were to ask us, By doing away with what thing would we stand in no need of medicine, nor of its instruments; we would be in a position to answer that this would happen should illnesses be removed from our bodies and not be engendered at all in them, or, if engendered, be dislodged forthwith. For, as it appears, medicine is that among the sciences, which is useful precisely for this, for release from illnesses. If now again someone were to ask us, By doing away with what thing would we stand

εἰ δὲ μή, πάλιν ὠδὶ σκοπώμεθα· φέρε, εἰ οἶός τε εἶη ζῆν ἄνθρωπος ἄνευ σίτων καὶ ποτῶν, καὶ μὴ πεινῶ μηδὲ διψῶ, ἔσθ' ὅτι ἂν ἢ αὐτῶν τούτων δέοιτο ἢ ἀργυρίου ἢ ἑτέρου τινὸς ἵνα ταῦτα ἐκπορίζηται; - οὐκ ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ. -- Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰλλα κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον· εἰ μὴ δεοίμεθα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος θεραπείαν ὧν νῦν ἐνδεεῖς ἐσμεν, καὶ ἀλέας καὶ ψυχῶν ἐνίοτε, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσων τὸ σῶμα ἐνδεεῖς γιγνόμενον προσδεῖται, ἄχρηστ' ἂν ἡμῖν εἶη τὰ καλούμενα χρήματα, εἰ μηδεὶς γε παντάπασιν μηδενὸς δέοιτο τούτων ὧν ἔνεκεν νυνὶ βουλόμεθα χρήματα ἡμῖν εἶναι, ἵνα ἐξικοίμεθα πρὸς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ τὰς ἐνδείας τοῦ σώματος, ὧν ἂν ἐκάστοτε δεώμεθα.

εἰ δ' ἔστιν ἄρα πρὸς τοῦτο χρήσιμον ἢ τῶν χρημάτων κτήσις, πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος θεραπείαν τῶν ἐνδειῶν, εἰ γοῦν ἡμῖν τοῦτο ἐκ μέσου ἀναιρεθείη, οὐδὲν ἂν δεοίμεθα χρημάτων, ἴσως δ'

in no need of goods (money), do we have what to say?

And if the reply is not immediately forthcoming, let us once more consider things in the following way: come now, if man was capable of living without food and drink, and did not feel hunger or thirst, is it possible that he would be in need either of them or of currency or of some other means for their provision? - It does not seem to me at any rate. Well then, consider the rest in the same way. If we did not need for our bodily attendance those things which we are in want of, like heat and coolness at times, and all other things which the body, being in want of, needs; then what are being called *utilities* (goods) would be *useless*, since no one at all would need nothing of those things for the sake of which we want to have at our disposal (possess) goods (wealth, money), with the purpose of ministering to the desires and wants of our body, by supplying the things that at each time we need.

If now possession of goods (wealth, money) is useful for such an end, for the attendance of the wants of the body; then should this be annulled away, we would stand in no need of goods

ἂν οὐδ' εἴη παντάπασιν χρήματα. -- Φαίνεται. -- Φαίνεται ἄρα ἡμῖν, ὡς ἔοικεν, τὰ πρὸς ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν χρήσιμα τῶν πραγμάτων ταῦτα εἶναι χρήματα.

(wealth, possessions, money), maybe there would not even exist goods (wealth, possessions, money). - It appears so. - It appears therefore to us, as it seems, that goods are things useful for that concern”].

Noticeable is the revealing word-play (401b) *τὰ πρὸς τίνα χρείαν χρήσιμα χρῆσθαι χρήματά ἐστιν*. All four main words have the same root with *χρῶμαι* (need, use): *for what use (need) things useful to use are utilities (goods)*. The whole issue concerning the distinction between utilities and things useful, may appear pedantic, but it brings into sharp focus the crucial point: goods, wealth and money, therefore value, are utilities satisfying needs, wants, desires of human nature. Things useful for this attendance to human wants are things having value, utilities, i.e. goods, wealth and money.

Furthermore, there is a second gain from the elaboration of that distinction. One can thereby dispose of a standing criticism against Utilitarianism, that it confuses neutral, “technological” (“technocratic”) serviceability with moral and political evaluations. As I have explained elsewhere in this work, the modern separation of “value” from “fact” is absent from the classical thought. *Value is the character of significance of a fact, and it is a fact as any*. On the other hand, however, one can well distinguish various kinds of facts according to their “depth” and “significance”, or, in ancient parlance, to their *essentiality*. In the issue at hand, facts relating to human wants (needs, desires) and means of their satisfaction form a pretty basic level of rational discourse, and thus sustain the evaluative system of human action. But they are “neutral and technocratic” in the sense of modern moralism and politicalism: they regard certain *adaptabilities* between objects natural or artificial and human nature, between man and his (given or made) world. Usefulness may be, however, broadened to include any kind of adaptability or serviceability whatever, what is appropriate and useful, for example, in the commission of an act of disutility with regard to human nature. With reference to this broader use of usefulness, utility proper is less “neutral” and “technological” (“technocratic”), one might (misleadingly) say.

But even this assumed broad sense of usefulness needs substantial qualification, indeed correction. Since utilities are conditional upon the natures and essences of things, and especially of human beings, there can be no usefulness for a disutility. The close semantic correlation between *utility* and *need* in ancient thought (expressed by the etymological identity of words signifying the one or the other dimension of human action), makes it virtually contradictory to speak of a “neutral” usefulness for an (objective) disutility. Utilities are conjugated to wants, and these are firmly anchored on the solid ground of human (individual and general) nature. Thus in *Eryxias*, 404c-405b, it is argued that *not* all things which may *be used* to effectuate a positive result (an objective good = utility = thing having *value*) are *useful* to the realisation of that result. Since this formulation would drive an unacceptable wedge between *being used* and *being useful*, we should redraw the conceptual terrain by stating that:

(1) οὐκ ἄρα ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι, δι’ ὧν ἐκπορισαίμεθα τὰ πρὸς ἕκαστα χρήσιμα, καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς τὰ αὐτὰ χρήσιμα εἶναι [“it is not therefore necessary that things, by means of which we provided what was useful to a certain end in view, are themselves useful to the same end”], 404e9-11;

and (2), more generally, οὐκ ἂν ἄρα φαίνοιτο ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι, ὅσων ἄνευ μὴ οἶόν τε γίγνεσθαι, ταῦτα καὶ χρήσιμα εἶναι πρὸς τοῦτο [“it would not, therefore, appear necessary, that things, without which something positive cannot be attained, are also themselves useful to it”], 405b1-3. This more general conclusion is shown by reference to negative conditions (like ignorance or sickness or lowliness) being necessary antecedents (and obligatory prerequisites) of positive corresponding attainments (scientific knowledge, health, excellence).

An example will illustrate the point (403d8 - 404a3). A house is a definite utility since it offers protection to man and satisfies various needs of his. There are furthermore things useful to the building of a house, the necessary materials and the required implements for the work. These are useful for the house. At one more remove, there are implements required in order to provide for the useful materials and the first-order useful instruments of work. These third-order requirements are, also, useful to the house. We may proceed indefinitely in this ladder of prerequisites. But somewhere (at different points in the corresponding lines of ascent for the various second-order utilities in the satisfaction of man’s need for cover) prerequisites stop being truly useful with a view to the final product. What is required for the realisation of a positive state of human

nature beyond a certain degree of regression, is not necessarily useful to that state, although it may even well be indispensable for its attainment.

The wedge is now pushed between requirement in general for a final utility and real usefulness to that utility - not between utility and usefulness, as proposed in the former part of *Eryxias*, and analysed before in the present note. *Things useful are utilities (of various degrees of remoteness from final utilities), and hence goods.* This conclusion is not presented as one commanding common approval among the interlocutors in the dialogue; 405c1-3: ἐπειδήπερ οὐ δυνατοί ἐσμεν ὁμολογήσαι ὁπότερον ταῦτά χρήσιμά τ' ἐστὶν καὶ χρήματα ἢ οὐ ["since we are not able to concur or whether the same things are useful things and goods or not"]. But "Socrates" is clearly aiming in this direction at the final part of the dialogue.

One critical point for wishing to draw a wedge somewhere appropriately in the ladder of successive means employed ultimately for the satisfaction of human wants, is to wield off attacks based on the general idea that utilities cannot be disutilities and *vice-versa*. This supplies a very characteristic illustration of the radically objectivistic turn of classical mentality. The above analysed discussion in *Eryxias* of the issue regarding the usefulness or otherwise of the various stages required for the realisation of a final utility, is embedded in the preceding dialectical treatment of the question, *What does utility (value) ultimately consist in?* In fact, within the very discussion of the "wedge", the general point is explicitly made twice. *First*, under the form of a statement to the effect that usefulness and uselessness are permanent characteristics of things (once the end result is defined); thus a thing once useless must always be useless (404b2-5), and, conversely, once useful-always useful (404b5-c1). And, *second*, under the form of the equivalent statement (404c2-4) that a thing cannot be a disutility (something, i.e., bad) and simultaneously useful for a utility (i.e. for a good thing); for a disutility is, precisely, a thing conducive to something bad. We shall come back to this issue, once the more fundamental question about the ultimate asset of wealth has been sufficiently clarified.

[12] The argument runs thus in *Eryxias*, 399e7-400e10:

Ἔτι μὲν ἄρα, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, κἂν  
οὕτως ὑπόλοιπον εἴη σκέψασθαι  
ὁποῖά ἐστι χρήματα, ἵνα μὴ ὀλί-

["There is, I said, another  
question to discuss, so that we  
may not again disagree about it a



γον ὕστερον περὶ τούτου αὐτὰ πάλιν φαίνησθον διαφορομένω. αὐτίκα γὰρ οὗτοι Καρχηδόνιοι νομίσματι χρῶνται τοιῶδε· ἐν δερματίῳ σμικρῷ ἀποδέδεται ὅσον γε στατήρος τὸ μέγεθος μάλιστα, ὅ,τι δέ ἐστιν τὸ ἐναποδεδεμένον, οὐδεὶς γινώσκει, εἰ μὴ οἱ ποιῶντες· εἴτα κατεσφραγισμένῳ τούτῳ νομίζουσιν, καὶ ὁ πλείστα τοιαῦτα κεκτημένος, οὗτος πλείστα δοκεῖ χρήματα κεκτηῖσθαι καὶ πλουσιώτατος εἶναι. εἰ δέ τις παρ' ἡμῖν πλείστα τοιαῦτα κεκτημένος εἶη, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον πλούσιος εἶη ἢ εἰ ψήφους πολλὰς τῶν ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους ἔχοι.

ἐν δὲ Λακεδαίμονι σιδηρῶ σταθμῷ νομίζουσιν, καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι τῷ ἀχρείῳ τοῦ σιδήρου· καὶ ὁ πολὺν σταθμὸν σιδήρου τοῦ τοιοῦτου κεκτημένος πλούσιος δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἐτέρωθι δὲ οὐδενὸς ἄξιον τὸ κτήμα. ἐν δὲ τῇ Αἰθιοπία λίθοις ἐγγεγλυμένοις χρῶνται, οἷς οὐδὲν ἂν ἔχοι χρῆσασθαι Λακωνικὸς ἀνὴρ. ἐν δὲ Σκύθαις τοῖς νομάσιν εἴ τις τὴν Πουλυτίωνος οἰκίαν κεκτημένος εἶη, οὐδὲν ἂν πλουσιώτερος δοκεῖ εἶναι ἢ παρ' ἡμῖν τὸν Λυκαβηττόν.

δηλον οὖν ὅτι οὐκ ἂν εἶη ἕκαστά γε τούτων χρήματα [so, perhaps, it should be written, in place of the transmitted κτήματα; but see

little later: what are goods? For example, the Carthaginians use money of the following kind. Something about the weight of a stater is tied up in a small piece of leather, and only those who have done this know what is tied up in it. It is then sealed and used as currency, and whoever has got the most of these is thought of as having the most money and being the richest. But among us the man who possessed the greatest amount of these would be no richer than if he had a number of pebbles from the mountain.

In Sparta they use iron by weight as currency, and moreover such iron as is useless for working; and a man who possesses a great weight of this kind of iron is thought rich, although elsewhere this possession is of no value. In Ethiopia they use engraved stones, which a Spartan would have no use of. And among Scythian nomads a man who owned Pulytion's house would be thought no richer than someone among us who owned Mount Lycabettus.

It is clear therefore that each of these things would not be goods, if some of those who possess them do not seem to be wealthier as a

n. [7] *ad fin.*] εἴπερ ἔνιοι τῶν κεκτημένων μηδὲν διὰ τοῦτο πλουσιώτεροι φαίνονται. ἀλλ' ἔστιν, ἔφην, ἕκαστα τούτων ὄντα τοῖς μὲν χρήματά τε καὶ πλούσιοι οἱ ταῦτα κεκτημένοι, τοῖς δὲ οὔτε χρήματα οὔτε πλουσιώτεροι διὰ τοῦτο, ὥσπερ γε οὐδὲ καλὰ τε καὶ αἰσχρὰ πᾶσιν τὰ αὐτὰ ἀλλ' ἕτερα ἑτέροις.

εἰ δὴ βουλοίμεθα ἐπισκέψασθαι τί δὴ ποτε τοῖς μὲν Σκύθαις αἰ οἰκίαι οὐ χρήματά εἰσιν, ἡμῖν δέ, ἢ τοῖς Καρχηδονίοις μὲν τὰ δέρματα, ἡμῖν δ' οὐ, ἢ τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ὁ σίδηρος χρήματα, ἡμῖν δ' οὐ, ἀρ' ἂν οὕτωςι μάλιστα ἐξεύρομεν; αὐτίκα εἴ τις Ἀθήνησι τούτων τῶν λίθων τῶν ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ, οἷς οὐδὲν χρώμεθα, κεκτημένος εἴη χίλια τάλαντα σταθμόν, ἔστιν ὅτι ἂν πλουσιώτερος νομίζοιτο εἶναι διὰ τοῦτο; -- Οὐκ ἔμοιγε φαίνεται. -- Ἀλλ' εἰ τοῦ λυχνίτου λίθου κεκτημένος εἴη τὰ χίλια τάλαντα, καὶ σφόδρα πλούσιον φαίμεν εἶναι ἂν; -- Πάνυ γε. --

Ἐὰρ γε, ἔφην, διὰ τοῦτο, ὅτι τὸ μὲν χρήσιμον, τὸ δ' ἀχρεῖον ἡμῖν ἔστι; -- Ναί. -- Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς Σκύθαις τούτου ἕνεκα αὐτοῖς οἰκίαι οὐ χρήματά εἰσιν, ὅτι οὐδεμία αὐτοῖς χρεία οἰκίας

result. But, I said, each of them are goods to some people and those who possess them are wealthy, while to others they are not goods and the people who own them are no richer by having them, just as what is "fine" and what is dishonourable is not the same for all people, but is different among different people.

If then we would want to inquire for what reason on earth houses are not goods to the Scythians, while they are to us; or leather pieces are goods to the Carthaginian, but not to us; or iron is goods to the Spartans, but not to us - is it not that we should find the reason in the following way? If someone in Athens owned one thousand talents in weight of those stones in the market place which we have no use of, would he be considered richer on account of that possession? - It does not seem so to me. - But if he would possess the one thousand talents in the precious red stone, we would reckon him exceedingly wealthy indeed. - Very much, certainly.

The reason being, is it not, that the one thing is useful, the other useless to us. — Yes. - Since in the case of the Scythians, too, this is the reason why houses are not goods to them, namely that there

ἔστιν· οὐδ' ἂν προτιμήσειεν Σκύθης ἀνὴρ οἰκίαν αὐτῷ τὴν καλλίστην εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ περ σίσυραν δερματίνην, ὅτι τὸ μὲν χρήσιμον, τὸ δ' ἀχρεῖον αὐτῷ ἔστιν. αὐθις αὖ ἡμῖν τὸ Καρχηδόνιον νόμισμα οὐκ οἴομεθα χρήματα εἶναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅτι ἂν αὐτοῦ κομισαίμεθα ὅσων δεόμεθα, ὥσπερ τῷ ἀργυρίῳ, ὥστ' ἀχρεῖον ἂν ἡμῖν εἴη. -- *Εἰκός γε.*  
 And here follows the definition quoted in n. [11].

is no need and use to them of a house; nor would a Schythian prefer to possess the most beautiful house rather than a goat's leather cloak, because this is useful, while the former is useless to him. And again, we do not reckon the Carthaginian currency to be goods and wealth; for it is not possible to get by it in exchange something among what we need, as we can do by our own silver coinage - and so that is useless to us”].

The examples given of *token currency* (with no appreciable commodity-value) illustrate the Platonic doctrine of fiat money, as it was articulated in Chapter 1 above. Diogenes the Cynic in his own *Republic* (*Πολιτεία*) maintains jestingly, but in seriousness, the institution of a currency consisting of knuckbones; v. V B 125 Giannantoni; and (Philodemus) V B 126.23-24; cf. Giannantoni Vol. IV p. 538 §6. It is interesting that Diogenes was the son of the banker Icesias, who was, either alone or with Diogenes' connivance, involved in a serious affair of coinage debasement (V B 1-16 Giann.).

The historicity of the specimens mentioned in the above quoted *Eryxias* passage, as well as the fundamental question of the origin of credit money in antiquity, will be handled in the second volume of the present work. Cf. *supra*, Chapter 1, n. [22].

The iron used as money in Sparta is reported to have been physically treated so as to become brittle, and thus useless as a commodity. Which implies an intentional policy of fiat money with no commodity-value basis. V. Pollux, *Onomasticon*, IX, 79; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, IX, 2. Cf. Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, V, XIV, 4.

The Scythians were non-sedentary nomads. - Poulytion was an Athenian famed for his extraordinary housewealth. - Lycabettus is a hill just outside the circuit of the walls of ancient Athens. Now it would have enormous value as real estate if it was in private hands and its development was allowed. Which again testifies to the need-basis of value.

- The *λυχνίτης λίθος* was a luminous red-coloured precious stone, the shade of the lamp-light (*λύχνος*).

The basic function of money is in the above quoted passage that of (means of) exchange: money is abstract utility having the power to be exchanged for the equivalent value of any concrete utility.

- [13] V. the analysis above in the present Chapter, n. [4].
- [14] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 13: *ἀφ' ὧν τις ὠφελείσθαι δύναται χρήματα εἶναι* ["what a person can derive benefits (advantage, profit) from are goods"]. I, 9: *σὺ ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικε, τὰ μὲν ὠφελούντα χρήματα ἡγήῃ, τὰ δὲ βλάπτοντα οὐ χρήματα. - οὕτως.* ["Therefore, it seems, you consider what is beneficial as goods and what is harmful as not goods. - Exactly."]. *Indeed, it is inherent in the classical mode of thinking that to be good is to be profitable, beneficial. Virtue itself must be profitable if it is to be good. Plato, Menon, 87d8-e4: ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ: Καὶ μὴν ἀρετῆ γ' ἐσμὲν ἀγαθοί; -ΜΕΝΩΝ: Ναί. -ΣΩ. Εἰ δὲ ἀγαθοί, ὠφέλιμοι πάντα γὰρ τὰγαθὰ ὠφέλιμα. οὐχί; -ΜΕΝ. Ναί. -ΣΩ. Καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ δὴ ὠφέλιμόν ἐστιν; -ΜΕΝ. Ἀνάγκη ἐκ τῶν ὁμολογημένων.* [SOCRATES: And indeed we are good by (the presence of) virtue? - MENO: Yes. - SO. And if good, we are beneficial (profitable); for all goods are beneficial. Not so? - ME. Yes. - SO. And, thus, virtue is something beneficial (profitable). - ME. It necessarily follows from what we agreed before"].
- [15] Plato, *Euthydemus*, 278e-279a: *Ἐὰρ γὰρ πάντες ἄνθρωποι βουλόμεθα εὖ πράττειν; ...τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο, ἐπειδὴ βουλόμεθα εὖ πράττειν, πῶς ἂν εὖ πράττωμεν; ἀρ' ἂν εἰ ἡμῖν πολλὰ καγαθὰ εἴη;* ["Is it not that all men want to fare well? ... And then the next question is, since we do want to fare well, how would we fare well? Is it not if there are available to us many goods?"].
- There follows in the dialogue (279a-c) an inventory of the basic and general categories of goods. The enumeration is introduced by the question (279a5): *ἀγαθὰ δὲ ποῖα ἄρα τῶν ὄντων τυγχάνει ἡμῖν ὄντα;* ["which kinds of beings (things) are being as a matter of fact goods to us?"]. The list comprises wealth (*τό πλουτεῖν*) - health (*ὕγαινειν*) - beauty of form (*καλὸν εἶναι*) - sound corporeal constitution and condition (*καὶ τὰλλα κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἰκανῶς παρεσκευάσθαι*) - nobility (*εὐγένεια*) - wielding power (*δυνάμεις*) - civic honours (*τιμαὶ ἐν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ*) - the so-called "moral" virtues, temperance, justice, valour (*σώφρονα εἶναι καὶ δίκαιον*

καὶ ἀνδρείον), which in the classical context are so many abilities and skills to have the right (i.e. the efficient) attitude and action in corresponding, specific types of situation - on top of all wisdom (σοφία), i.e. "scientific" knowledge. Finally, good fortune (εὐτυχία) is added (279c5), which is said to be the greatest good - but then immediately subtracted (279d), because it is in fact reducible to knowledge. The argument is revealing and worth quoting. Socrates comments that one should not include in the list twice the same thing, and then proceeds to reason that good luck has been already covered by the listing of knowledge. 279d6-280b3: *Ἡ σοφία δήπου, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, εὐτυχία ἐστίν· τοῦτο δὲ κἂν παῖς γνοίη. - καὶ ὅς ἐθαύμασεν· οὕτως ἔτι νέος τε καὶ εὐήθης ἐστί. - Κἀγὼ γνοὺς αὐτὸν θαυμάζοντα, Ἄρα οὐκ οἶσθα, ἔφη, ὦ Κλεινία, ὅτι περὶ αὐλημάτων εὐπραγίαν οἱ αὐληταὶ εὐτυχέστατοί εἰσι; - Συνέφη. - Οὐκοῦν, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, καὶ περὶ γραμμάτων γραφῆς τε καὶ ἀναγνώσεως οἱ γραμματισταί; - Πάνυ γε. - Τί δέ; πρὸς τοὺς τῆς θαλάττης κινδύνους μῶν οἶε εὐτυχέστερους τινὰς εἶναι τῶν σοφῶν κυβερνητῶν, ὡς ἐπὶ πᾶν εἰπεῖν; - Οὐ δῆτα. - Τί δέ; στρατευόμενος μετὰ ποτέρου ἂν ἥδιον τοῦ κινδύνου τε καὶ τῆς τύχης μετέχοις, μετὰ σοφοῦ στρατηγοῦ ἢ μετὰ ἀμαθοῦς; - Μετὰ σοφοῦ. - Τί δέ; ἀσθενῶν μετὰ ποτέρου ἂν ἡδέως κινδυνεύοις, μετὰ σοφοῦ ἰατροῦ ἢ μετὰ ἀμαθοῦς; - Μετὰ σοφοῦ. - Ἄρ' οὖν, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, ὅτι εὐτυχέστερον ἂν οἶε πράττειν μετὰ σοφοῦ πράττων ἢ μετὰ ἀμαθοῦς; - Συνεχώρει. - Ἡ σοφία ἄρα πανταχοῦ εὐτυχεῖν ποιεῖ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους. οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀμαρτάνοι γ' ἂν ποτέ τι σοφία, ἀλλ' ἀνάγκη ὀρθῶς πράττειν καὶ τυγχάνειν· ἢ γὰρ ἂν οὐκέτι σοφία εἴη.*

*Συνωμολογησάμεθα τελευτῶντες οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐν κεφαλαίῳ οὕτω τοῦτο ἔχειν, σοφίας παρούσης, εἰ ἂν παρῆ, μηδὲν προσδεῖσθαι εὐτυχίας.* ["Certainly wisdom, said I, is good luck; so much even a boy would know. - And he wondered; he is still such an innocent youth. - And catching him wondering about what I declared, I said, Do not you, Cleinias, know that with regard to good success in flute music, the fluteplayers are most fortunate? - He agreed. - Correspondingly then, I continued, with regard to writing and reading, the grammarians are most fortunate? - Very much so. - What then? With regard to dangers at sea do you reckon any more fortunate than the skillful skippers, speaking generally? - Certainly not. - What further? Participating in a military expedition, with whom would you be more prepared to share the dangers and the fortune, with an adept general or with an ignorant one? - With an adept one. - What more? Falling ill, with whom will you gladly run the

perils of the illness, with a wise physician or with an ignorant one? - With a wise one. - The reason being, I insisted, that (according to your belief) one would fare better coopting to act with a wise man than with an ignorant one? - He allowed the point. - Knowledge, therefore, makes in every situation men fortunate. *For wisdom, to be sure, errs not in any respect ever, but of necessity acts correctly and gains its end; for in truth otherwise it would not be anymore wisdom.*

We agreed in the end, one way or the other, as the gist of the argument, that this is how things are: *to him that knowledge is present, to him good luck is not an additional requirement*”].

“Wisdom must of necessity act correctly and gain its end”. The verb translated “gain its end” is *τυγχάνειν*. Its use is deliberate in this connection on Plato’s part. It has the same root with *τύχη* (*fortune, good luck*). The aorist of the verb (*ἔτυχον*) is also connected to *τεύχω*, *make*. Plato subtly turns these etymological connections into philosophical point. To do in the fullest and strongest sense, is to succeed, to achieve one’s purpose in action. One is fortunate, when success is realised, when one gains his purpose in acting. Good luck is fundamentally the condition whereby action is crowned with its proper success, when doing culminates in achieving. And this fortune is nothing, ultimately, but the ability to turn any (even untoward) eventualities into success. Achievement is due to expertise, and luck is either the felicity of a wise action, or the external projection of the corresponding incapacity in an erroneous move. On cognitive error as the necessary cause of all failure v. further *Appendix K*. Cf. also *supra*, n. [4].

Theophrast, the eminent Peripatetic philosopher and successor to Aristotle, relaxed the strictness of the view concerning the absolute sway of reason and knowledge in human affairs. V. Cicero, *Tusculanarum Disputationum*, V, 9, 24-25. In his *Callisthenes*, praised with moderation the sentiment (in Cicero’s translation):

*vitam regit fortuna, non sapientia*

[“Fortune, not wisdom, rules the life of man”].

It was a mot celebre: Publicius Syrus rendered it (*Sententiae*, 192): *fortuna hominibus plus quam consilium valet* (“fortune is more powerful than sound judgement in men”). The Greek original was taken from Chaeremon’s tragedy *Achilleus the killer of Thersites*, Fr. 2 Nauck<sup>3</sup>, p. 182:

*τύχη τὰ θνητῶν πράγματ’, οὐκ εὐβουλία*

[“mortal affairs are fortune, not good deliberation”].

As Cicero, *loc.cit.*, says, Theophrastus was the universal target of reproach for these statements, mildly though they were formulated by him. More than this philosophical reaction (especially in Stoic hands) adhering to the dynamic outlook of High Classicism, the poetic dictum was rejected because it merely expressed a piece of commonplace sentiment. The real point is that even for physical adversity to take full effect, ignorance of one sort or another is indispensably required. *The successful handling of events toward and untoward, is the work of knowledge.*

- [16] Plato, *Euthydemus*, 280b5-d7: 'Ὁμολογήσαμεν γάρ, ἔφην, εἰ ἡμῖν ἀγαθὰ πολλὰ παρείη, εὐδαιμονεῖν ἂν καὶ εὖ πράττειν. - Συνέφη. - Ἄρ' οὖν εὐδαιμονοῦμεν ἂν διὰ τὰ παρόντα ἀγαθὰ, εἰ μηδὲν ἡμῶς ὠφελοῖ ἢ εἰ ὠφελοῖ; - Εἰ ὠφελοῖ, ἔφη. - Ἄρ' οὖν ἂν τι ὠφελοῖ, εἰ εἴη μόνον ἡμῖν, χρώμεθα δ' αὐτοῖς μῆ; οἷον σιτία εἰ ἡμῖν εἴη πολλά, ἐσθίομεν δὲ μῆ, ἢ ποτόν, πίνομεν δὲ μῆ, ἔσθ' ὅτι ὠφελοίμεθ' ἂν; - Οὐ δῆτα, ἔφη. - Τί δέ; οἱ δημιουργοὶ πάντες, εἰ αὐτοῖς εἴη πάντα τὰ ἐπιτήδεια παρεσκευασμένα ἐκάστῳ εἰς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἔργον, χρωῖντο δὲ αὐτοῖς μῆ, ἄρ' ἂν οὗτοι εὖ πράττειν διὰ τὴν κτῆσιν, ὅτι κεκτημένοι εἶεν πάντα ἃ δεῖ κεκτηῖσθαι τὸν δημιουργόν; οἷον τέκτων, εἰ παρεσκευασμένος εἴη τὰ τε ὄργανα ἅπαντα καὶ ξύλα ἱκανά, τεκταίνοιτο δὲ μῆ, ἔσθ' ὅτι ὠφελοῖτ' ἂν ἀπὸ τῆς κτήσεως; - Οὐδαμῶς, ἔφη. - Τί δέ, εἴ τις κεκτημένος εἴη πλοῦτόν τε καὶ ἃ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ, χρωῖτο δὲ αὐτοῖς μῆ, ἄρ' ἂν εὐδαιμονοῖ διὰ τὴν τούτων κτῆσιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν; - Οὐ δῆτα, ὦ Σώκρατες. - Δεῖ ἄρα, ἔφην, ὡς ἔοικεν, μὴ μόνον κεκτηῖσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀγαθὰ τὸν μέλλοντα εὐδαίμονα ἔσεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς· ἢ οὐδὲν ὄφελος τῆς κτήσεως γίνεται. - Ἀληθῆ λέγεις. ["We agreed, I said, that if there were available to us many goods, we would be happy and fare well. - He assented. - How is it then, would we be happy because of present goods if they do not benefit us at all, or if they do benefit us? - If they benefit us, he said. - Now, is it that they can benefit us if they are only available to us, but we do not use them? As for example, if there were plenty of food to us, but we did not eat it, or plenty of drink, but we did not drink it, is it possible that we would in such cases be benefited from them? - Certainly not, he said. - What then? In connection with all artisans, if there were available to them all requisites appropriately provisioned to each one of them for his proper task, but they did not put them into use, is it that these artisans would fare well on account of their possessions (of the requisite provisions), because, that is, they (merely)

possessed everything which the artisan has to possess? Like a carpenter, if he had been well provisioned with all the implements and a sufficient quantity of timber, but he nevertheless did not frame the wood, is it possible that he would benefit from the fact of possessing the requisites for his work? - In no way, he said. - Well then, if one were possessing wealth and all the (kinds of) goods we have just before enumerated, but he did not use them, would he be well on account of the possession of these goods? - Certainly not, oh Socrates. - *The man who will be happy must therefore, as it seems, I said, not only possess such goods, but also use them; otherwise there comes no benefit from the possession. - You speak the truth.*”].

Aristotle put the point succinctly in *Ars Rhetorica*, 1361a23-24: ὅλως δὲ τὸ πλουτεῖν ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ χρῆσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐν τῷ κεκτηῖσθαι· καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἐνέργεια ἐστὶ τῶν τοιούτων καὶ ἡ χρῆσις πλοῦτος [“And in general being wealthy consists in the use made rather than in the fact of possession; for it is the actuality (activity, active existence) of such things and their use that constitute wealth”]. *Ἐνέργεια* is the full actuality of a thing as the thing that it is; it is a technical Aristotelian term. For instance land as a utility (goods) finds its actuality when it is actually used and does not lay inactive as a dead thing. Its actuality is its state and condition in which it actually offers what it can offer, namely its various uses. Thus wealth consists in the use and not the mere possession of (inactive, unworking, unused) things.

Which things? The “such things” refers to a preceding enumeration and classification of *things* entering into the “matter” of wealth, things whose actuality and use constitute wealth. The passage deserves, and repays, close attention. The enumeration gives (*op.cit.* 1361a12-15; the items listed are parts of wealth, *πλούτου μέρη*, 1361a12). (1) a large amount of money (*νομίσματος πλήθος*); (2) extensive land ownership (*γῆς πλήθος*); (3) possession of sites distinguished for their number, size and good state (*χωρίων κτήσεις πλήθει καὶ μεγέθει καὶ κάλλει διαφερόντων*); (4) implements, furniture and, generally, movable property (*ἐπιπλων κτήσεις*); (5) possession of slaves (*ἀνδραπόδων κτήσεις*); (6) possession of cattle (*βοσκημάτων κτήσεις*) - these (4, 5 and 6) distinguished for their number and good form (*πλήθει καὶ κάλλει διαφερόντων*). The same description of kinds or parts of property as wealth is given in *Politica*, 1267b9-12.

These *parts of wealth* are then classified under *four general categories* (1361a15-22): they are (1361a15-16) *useful* (*χρήσιμα*) or *liberal* (*ἐλευθέ-*



ρια) or *safe* (ἀσφαλῆ) or *proper* (οἰκεῖα). *Usefulness* is here meant in a stricter sense, specific as against the generic sdignification which covers every piece of wealth (goods, utility). In this narrower sense useful is the property, are those parts of wealth (those goods or utilities), which yield a produce, provide a revenue, give a return; they include stocks generating a flow of income but also outlays whose (once-for-all) expenditure yields a produce distinct from their use as such. (1361a16-17; 18-19. ἔστιν δὲ χρήσιμα μὲν μᾶλλον τὰ κάρπιμα ... κάρπιμα δὲ λέγω ἀφ' ὧν αἱ πρόσσοδοι). On the contrary *liberal* are the possessions which produce immediate enjoyment, which are expended upon their use without anything worthy of mention resulting beyond the use itself; these are goods consumable, final utilities for direct use in the satisfaction of human wants, needs and desires (1361a17; 18-19: ἐλευθέρια δὲ τὰ πρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν ... ἀπολαυστικά δὲ ἀφ' ὧν μηδὲν παρὰ τὴν χρῆσιν γίγνεται ὄ,τι καὶ ἄξιον). The distinction between useful and liberal goods corresponds to that between intermediate goods and *assets* on the one hand and (final) *consumables* on the other. Furthermore, *safe* goods (parts of wealth) are utilities whose possession is immediately present and of such a nature, that their use depends exclusively on the possessor, *is in his power* (1361a19-21: ὄρος δὲ ἀσφαλείας μὲν τὸ ἐνταῦθα καὶ οὕτω κεκτῆσθαι ὥστ' ἐφ' αὐτῷ εἶναι τὴν χρῆσιν αὐτῶν). Finally, *proper* possessions are those whose alienation lies in the absolute power of the possessor; alienation being effected through gift or sale (1361a21-22: τοῦ δὲ οἰκεῖα εἶναι ἢ μὴ (sc. ὄρος ἐστίν) ὅταν ἐφ' αὐτῷ ἢ ἀπαλλοτριῶσαι λέγω δὲ ἀπαλλοτριῶσιν δόσιν καὶ πρᾶσιν).

- [17] Plato, *Euthydemus*, 280e-281a: Ἐρ' οὖν, ὦ Κλεινία, ἤδη τοῦτο ἰκανὸν πρὸς τὸ εὐδαιμόνα ποιῆσαί τινα, τό τε κεκτῆσθαι τὰγαθὰ καὶ τὸ χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς; - Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ. - Πότερον, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, ἐὰν ὀρθῶς χρῆται τις ἢ καὶ ἐὰν μὴ; - Ἐὰν ὀρθῶς. - Καλῶς γε, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, λέγεις. πλέον γὰρ που οἶμαι θάτερόν ἐστιν, ἐὰν τις χρῆται ὀρθῶς μὴ ὀρθῶς πράγματι ἢ ἐὰν ἔᾳ· τὸ μὲν γὰρ κακὸν, τὸ δὲ οὔτε κακὸν οὔτε ἀγαθόν. ἢ οὐχ οὕτω φαμέν; - Συνεχώρει. [“Is it therefore, Cleinias, that the following two conditions are sufficient in making someone happy, both to possess goods and to use them? - It seems so, to me at least. - Whether of the two, said I, if one uses them correctly or even if not? - If correctly. - You speak well, I said. For I think it is of graver significance if one uses any thing not correctly that if it leaves it alone; since the former is bad,

whereas the latter is neither bad nor good. Or do we not claim this to be so? - He granted it”].

The two latter conditions of true utility (the first one taken for granted), and their absolute dependance on knowledge, is also stated in the recapitulation of the economic passage in the dialogue, 282a: *ἐπειδὴ εὐδαίμονες μὲν εἶναι προθυμούμεθα πάντες, ἐφάνημεν δὲ τοιοῦτοι γιγνόμενοι ἐκ τοῦ χρῆσθαι τε τοῖς πράγμασιν καὶ ὀρθῶς χρῆσθαι, τὴν δὲ ὀρθότητα καὶ εὐτυχίαν ἐπιστήμη <ῆν> ἢ παρέχουσα, δεῖ δὴ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου ἅπαντα ἄνδρα τοῦτο παρασκευάζεσθαι, ὅπως ὡς σφώτατος ἔσται* [“Since we are all eager to be happy; and we were shown to be enjoying well-being by using the things and using them correctly; while knowledge was the supplier of correctness and good luck; every man must then by all means, as it turns out, prepare himself to be as knowledgeable as possible (to acquire most of knowledge)”].

*The ultimate end of life is knowledge and its integral, wisdom.* The robust cognitivism of classical antiquity erupts here, too, victorious.

The same message, and the same application of it, we encounter in Plato’s *Meno*. First, right use secures the benefit from ordinary goods. Plato’s *Meno*, 87e5-88a5: *ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ: Σκεψώμεθα δὴ καθ’ ἕκαστον ἀναλαμβάνοντες ποῖά ἐστιν ἃ ἡμᾶς ὠφελεῖ. ὑγίεια, φαμέν, καὶ ἰσχὺς καὶ κάλλος καὶ πλοῦτος δὴ ταῦτα λέγομεν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὠφέλιμα. οὐχί; -ΜΕΝΩΝ: Ναί. -ΣΩ. Ταῦτὰ δὲ ταῦτά φαμεν ἐνίοτε καὶ βλάπτειν ἢ σὺ ἄλλως φῆς ἢ οὕτως. -ΜΕΝ. Οὐκ, ἀλλ’ οὕτως. -ΣΩ. Σκόπει δὴ ὅταν τί ἐκάστου τούτων ἡγῆται, ὠφελεῖ ἡμᾶς, καὶ ὅταν τί, βλάπτει: ἄρ’ οὐχ μὲν ὀρθὴ χρῆσις ὠφελεῖ, ὅταν δὲ μὴ, βλάπτει; -ΜΕΝ. Πάνυ γε.* [“SOCRATES: Let us consider, taking each case by itself, what are the things that benefit us. We mean health and strength, and beauty of form and wealth indeed. We say that these things, and things similar, are beneficial. Not so? - MENO: Yes. - SO. On the other hand, we say that these very same things harm sometimes. Or do you speak in any other way than this? - ME. No, but in this way indeed. - SO. Consider then, what is the thing which when it rules each one of the beforementioned (goods), produces benefit, and what is that which, when it rules, causes harm? Is it not that when *right use* rules acts beneficially and when not, harmfully? - ME. Very much so”].

Thus, so-called external goods depend for the activation of their beneficial capacity on their right use. It is implicitly assumed, at this stage, given the context in this passage, that right use is the effect of knowledge and consists in the knowledge how to use correctly the (kind of) things in

question. (The assumption is spelt out and proven afterwards in the passage, 88d4-e2). We discover the same principle holding when we move into the man, and in his soul, and consider psychic and mental positive attributes commonly held to be good. These are excellencies of various sorts, i.e. moral virtues (like temperance, justice, valour) or intellectual abilities (like quickness at learning, power of memory) as we would say in the modern era. But it turns out that these also are positive faculties and genuine goods (i.e. truly beneficial) by reason of knowledge either *constituting* them or *governing* them. For instance manliness or valour (*ἀνδρεία*) either consists in the knowledge and cognitive skill how to act in adverse, formidable or dangerous circumstances, in which case it is necessarily beneficial and a real utility (good); or it amounts to mere courage or hardihood, in which case it may work beneficially or harmfully, depending on whether it is led by practical wisdom and prudence, i.e. the knowledge and skill how to act appropriately in various kinds of situations. *It follows that if by excellence (virtue or positive ability) we mean something intrinsically good and, thus, necessarily beneficial, all excellence (virtue) must consist in knowledge, esp. knowledge applied, that is practical wisdom. Virtue is pragmatic knowledge, for the classical mind.* The argument runs thus in *Meno*, 88a6-d3: ΣΩ. "Ἐτι τοίνυν καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν σκεψώμεθα. σωφροσύνην τι καλεῖς καὶ δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἀνδρείαν καὶ εὐμαθίαν καὶ μνήμην καὶ μεγαλοπρέπειαν καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα; -ΜΕΝ. "Ἐγωγε. -ΣΩ. Σκόπει δὴ, τούτων ἅττα σοι δοκεῖ μὴ ἐπιστήμη εἶναι ἀλλ' ἄλλο ἐπιστήμης, εἰ οὐχὶ τοτὲ μὲν βλάπτει, τοτὲ δὲ ὠφελεῖ; οἷον ἀνδρεία, εἰ μὴ ἔστι φρόνησις ἢ ἀνδρεία ἀλλ' οἷον θάρρος τι οὐχ ὅταν μὲν ἄνευ νοῦ θαρρῆ ἄνθρωπος, βλάπτεται, ὅταν δὲ σὺν νῶ, ὠφελεῖται; -ΜΕΝ. Ναί. -ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ σωφροσύνη ὡσαύτως καὶ εὐμαθία μετὰ μὲν νοῦ καὶ μανθανόμενα καὶ καταρτυόμενα ὠφέλιμα, ἄνευ δὲ νοῦ βλαβερά; -ΜΕΝ. Πάνυ σφόδρα. -ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν συλλήβδην πάντα τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπιχειρήματα καὶ καρτερήματα ἡγουμένης μὲν φρονήσεως εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν τελευτᾷ, ἀφροσύνης δὲ εἰς τὸναντίον; -ΜΕΝ. "Ἐοικεν. -ΣΩ. Εἰ ἄρα ἀρετὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τί ἐστιν καὶ ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῷ ὠφέλιμω εἶναι, φρόνησιν αὐτὸ δεῖ εἶναι, ἐπειδὴ περ πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτὰ μὲν καθ' αὐτὰ οὔτε ὠφέλιμα οὔτε βλαβερά ἐστιν, προσγενομένης δὲ φρονήσεως ἢ ἀφροσύνης βλαβερά τε καὶ ὠφέλιμα γίνονται. κατὰ δὴ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ὠφέλιμόν γε οὖσαν τὴν ἀρετὴν φρόνησιν δεῖ τι εἶναι. -ΜΕΝ. "Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ. ["SO. Furthermore, let us consider things of the soul and the mind. You call something temperance and another

justice and manliness and quickness at learning and power of memory and personal magnificence and all suchlike things? - ME. I certainly do. - SO. Consider then; of such things, these that appear to you not to be real knowledge (science), but something other than real knowledge (science), is it not true that they sometimes harm and sometimes benefit? Take manliness; and consider the case if manliness is not pragmatic knowledge (practical wisdom), but something like a form of courage; is it not that when a man displays courage without intelligence, then he is harmed, but when he does so intelligently, he draws benefit? - ME. Yes. - SO. And so the same holds, does it not, with regard to temperance and to astuteness at learning; if they are acquired and disciplined with intelligence, they are beneficial, if without intelligence, they are harmful? - ME. Very strongly so. - SO. And so, collectively, in all the undertakings of the soul and its acts of endurance, if pragmatic knowledge (practical wisdom) leads the way, they end up in happiness (well-being); but if thoughtlessness guides, the contrary state is the result. - Me. So it seems. - SO. If, therefore, there is indeed something in soul which we call excellence (virtue), such as it is *necessary* for it to be beneficial, it must be pragmatic knowledge (practical wisdom); the reason being that all things of the soul taken in themselves are neither beneficial nor harmful, but if pragmatic knowledge or thoughtlessness accrue to them, they become harmful and beneficial. According then to this reasoning, since excellence of the soul (virtue) is beneficial, it must be some kind of pragmatic knowledge. - ME. It seems so certainly to me.”]

I render *φρόνησις* by *pragmatic knowledge* (besides the usual translation *practical wisdom*) in order to emphasise (a) that, for the ancient Greek mind, all (human) matters depend on knowledge (*Classical Cognitivism*); and (b) that knowledge makes a difference in the running of the world (*Classical Pragmatism*). *The same knowledge which unlocks to us the secrets of the cosmic system, provides the norm for human action.*

The real (ultimate, absolute) good is *necessarily* beneficial; *it does not depend for its beneficiality on any concurrence. Such good is only knowledge.* All external goods (mentioned in the first part of the Menonian passage) and, also, all psychic and mental excellencies (virtues and abilities) which do not consist in knowledge, depend for their beneficiality or harmfulness *on the right or wrong use being made of them*, and this is the prerogative of knowledge (or ignorance) correspondingly to effect. This is summed up in the final section of the

Menonian passage in question. 88d4-89a4: ΣΩ. Καὶ μὲν δὴ καὶ τὰλλα ἂ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν, πλοῦτόν τε καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, τοτὲ μὲν ἀγαθὰ τοτὲ δὲ βλαβερὰ εἶναι, ἄρα οὐχ ὡσπερ τῇ ἄλλῃ ψυχῇ ἢ φρόνησις ἡγουμένη ὠφέλιμα τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐποίει, ἢ δὲ ἀφροσύνη βλαβερὰ, οὕτως αὖ καὶ τούτοις ἢ ψυχῇ ὀρθῶς μὲν χρωμένη καὶ ἡγουμένη ὠφέλιμα αὐτὰ ποιεῖ, μὴ ὀρθῶς δὲ βλαβερὰ; -ΜΕΝ. Πάνυ γε. -ΣΩ. Ὅρθῶς δέ γε ἢ ἔμφρων ἡγείται, ἡμαρτημένως δ' ἢ ἄφρων; -ΜΕΝ. Ἔστι ταῦτα. -ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν οὕτω δὴ κατὰ πάντων εἰπεῖν ἔστιν, τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα πάντα εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ἀνηρτησθαι, τὰ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῆς εἰς φρόνησιν, εἰ μέλλει ἀγαθὰ εἶναι· καὶ τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ φρόνησις ἂν εἴη τὸ ὠφέλιμον· φαμὲν δὲ τὴν ἀρετὴν ὠφέλιμον εἶναι; -ΜΕΝ. Πάνυ γε. -ΣΩ. Φρόνησιν ἄρα φαμὲν ἀρετὴν εἶναι, ἥτοι σύμπασαν ἢ μέρος τι; -ΜΕΝ. Δοκεῖ μοι καλῶς λέγεσθαι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τὰ λεγόμενα. [(Following immediately upon the before quoted passage) “SO. And indeed, regarding the other things, wealth and suchlike, of which we were saying a little while ago that they are sometimes good (utilities) and sometimes harmful (disutilities), is it not the case that just as when pragmatic knowledge (practical wisdom or right mind) commands the rest of soul (i.e. the non-cognitive parts and faculties of it), it makes beneficial the things of the soul, while thoughtlessness renders them harmful; so in the same again way, when the soul uses and commands correctly those former things, it makes them beneficial, whereas if it does this wrongly, it makes them harmful? - ME. Very much so. - SO. And it is the intelligent and knowledgeable soul that leads correctly, the unintelligent, ignorant one that leads erroneously? - ME. This is how things are. - SO. Surely then we may affirm generally of everything that, for man, all other things depend upon the soul if they are to be good (beneficial, utilities), while the things of the soul depend upon pragmatic knowledge for the same purpose. So that by virtue of this reasoning, *what is truly beneficial will be pragmatic knowledge*. But we say, don't we, that virtue (excellence of soul and mind) is beneficial? - ME. Very much so. - SO. Therefore, don't we really claim that virtue (excellence of soul and mind) is pragmatic knowledge, either in its entirety or in part? - ME. It does seem to me, Socrates, that what has been said, has been said well”].

The cognitive nature of all virtue is here explicitly maintained. The view is based on the pivotal character of (pragmatic) knowledge in constituting the utilities of things external and internal, physical and mental. The affirmation of this doctrine comes closest to the sophistic position, that things are utilities as measured by man (with reference to

his general and individual nature) - the so-called *homo-mensura* Protagorean thesis. The Platonic formulation here betrays the true lineage of *Socratic cognitivism and pragmatism*; v. 88e4-6 in the above quoted passage: “Surely then we may affirm generally of everything that for man, all other things depend upon the soul if they are to be good (beneficial, utilities), while the things of the soul depend upon pragmatic knowledge for the same purpose”. Compare with this the Protagorean dictum: *πάντων χρημάτων μέτρων ἄνθρωπος*, of all things-as-utilities man is the measure. *Socrates gives the decisive “intellectualist” turn: knowledge is the measure.* In the Menonian passage analysed the cardinal issue is introduced by the question: *Is goodness separable from knowledge?* 87d4-8: *Οὐκοῦν εἰ μὲν τί ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἄλλο χωριζόμενον ἐπιστήμης ... εἰ δὲ μηδὲν ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν ὃ οὐκ ἐπιστήμη περιέχει ...* [“To be certain then, if there is some good separated from knowledge ...; but if there is no good which *is not comprised in knowledge ...*”]. The second alternative is then proven. *Goodness (beneficiality, utility) necessarily involves knowledge.*

Aristotle also pregnantly formulates the series use - use well - ability to use well, and applies it to wealth (goods) which is a sum of utilities (useful things). *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1120a4-8: *ὦν δ’ ἐστὶ χρεία, ἔστι τούτοις χρῆσθαι καὶ εὖ καὶ κακῶς· ὁ πλοῦτος δ’ ἐστὶ τῶν χρησίμων· ἐκάστῳ δ’ ἄριστα χρῆται ὁ ἔχων τὴν περὶ τοῦτο ἀρετήν· καὶ πλούτῳ δὲ χρήσεται ἄριστα ὁ ἔχων τὴν περὶ τὰ χρήματα ἀρετήν· οὗτος δ’ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐλευθέριος* [“On the things then that there is (need and) use, it is possible to use them both well and ill. Now wealth belongs to the category of things useful (being an accumulation of utilities). And with respect to each thing, he who possesses the corresponding excellence (virtue), uses best it. Therefore, he will use best wealth, who has the excellence (virtue, ability) regarding goods and money. And this is the liberal man”]. The only difference from the Sophistic - Socratic - Platonic tradition in this connection is that for Aristotle the excellence in handling a certain thing (or, in other words, of acting within a given field) is not simpliciter knowledge: virtue is not science, but a habit (*ἕξις*) of correct attitude and right conduct regarding things and situations of a given kind. But it involves reason and a certain balance and harmony between two extremes which is discerned and determined by practical wisdom (cf. the definition of virtue in *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106b36 - 1107a2). It represents, as the *Eudemian Ethics* puts it, a different sort of knowledge. In the end, the difference between the two positions is more verbal than substantive. Ability to handle correctly things in given (kinds of) situations

presupposes awareness of the relevant state of reality as well as, implicit, at least, cognizance of its corresponding “natural” lawfulness. It is immaterial in this respect whether such awareness and cognizance comes from habit and experience, or has been deepened by theoretical analysis. Of course, on the other hand, a lot of difference is entailed by the second possibility, *in so far as long-term success is in question*.

Emphasis on use, and on knowledge how to use, as constitutive of genuine wealth was so widespread in the Sophistic - Socratic current, that even Diogenes essentially incorporated it into his Cynicism. Diogenes pushed to the extreme that aspect of Socratic philosophy which dominated his teacher Antisthenes’ position: fundamentally a stern and one-sided preoccupation with self-sufficiency (autarcy) and indeed, at the lower and more basic level of human requirements for that matter (V. G. Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae*, Diogenes Fr. 241; cf. e.g. also Fr. 222; Fr. 257; 261; 263). Yet, he insisted that it is how one uses the goods that determines whether he is really wealthy; v. Fr. 246B (*op.cit.* II p. 649): *ἐρομένου δέ τινος εἰ ὁ δεῖνα πλούσιος, “ἀγνοῶ”, φησίν, “οὐ γὰρ οἶδα πῶς χρῆται τοῖς χρήμασιν”* [“And upon someone asking him (*sc. Diogenes*) whether a certain individual is rich, he replied “I ignore; for I do not know how he uses the goods”]. Despite the cynic colouration of Diogenes’ position, he did capture the point elaborated in *Appendix H*, that a mere hoarding of things does not constitute an accumulation of capital, and, thus, true wealth. Cf. e.g. Fr. 229.

Knowledge is real, operative wealth. The point is eloquently made by *Mohammed Mannei*, an Arab merchant banker from the Persian Gulf, commenting on oil-riches:

“Rich is education ... expertise ... technology. *Rich* is knowing. We have money, yes. But we are not *rich*. We are like the child who inherits money from the father he never knew. He has not been brought up to spend it. He has it in his hands; he doesn’t know how to use it. If you do not know how to spend money, you are not *rich*. We are not rich.

Without this knowledge, this understanding, we are nothing. We import *everything*. The bricks to make houses, we import. The men who build them, we import. You go to the market, what is there that is made by Arabs? Nothing. It is Chinese, French, American... it is not Arab. Is a country rich that cannot make a brick, or a motorcar, or a book. It is not rich, I think.” (Cited by Jonathan Raban, *Arabia: A Journey through the Labyrinth*, 1979, p. 63; quoted by D. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, 1998, p. 409).

All man-made utility is the offspring of knowledge. As Hobbes put it in his intellectually idiomatic way (*Leviathan*, p. 44, Everyman's Library, 1973): "Arts of publique use, as Fortifications, making of Engines, and other Instruments of War; because they conferre to Defence, and Victory, are Power: And though the true Mother of them, be Science, namely the Mathematicques; yet, because they are brought into the Light, by the hand of the Artificer, they be esteemed (the Midwife passing with the vulgar for the Mother,) as his issue".

- [18] Plato, *Euthydemus*, 281a1-d1: *Τί οὖν; ἐν τῇ ἐργασίᾳ τε καὶ χρήσει τῇ περὶ τὰ ξύλα μῶν ἄλλο τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἀπεργαζόμενον ὀρθῶς χρῆσθαι ἢ ἐπιστήμη ἢ τεκτονική; - Οὐ δῆτα, ἔφη. - Ἀλλὰ μὴν που καὶ ἐν τῇ περὶ τὰ σκευή ἐργασίᾳ τὸ ὀρθῶς ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶν ἢ ἀπεργαζομένη. - Συνέφη. - Ἄρ' οὖν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ περὶ τὴν χρεῖαν ὧν ἐλέγομεν τὸ πρῶτον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, πλούτου τε καὶ ὑγείας καὶ κάλλους, τὸ ὀρθῶς πᾶσι τοῖς τοιούτοις χρῆσθαι ἐπιστήμη ἢν ἡγουμένη καὶ κατορθοῦσα τὴν πρᾶξιν, ἢ ἄλλο τι; - Ἐπιστήμη, ἦ δ' ὅς. - Οὐ μόνον ἄρα εὐτυχίαν ἀλλὰ καὶ εὐπραγίαν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἢ ἐπιστήμη παρέχει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐν πάσῃ κτήσει τε καὶ πράξει. - Ὡμολόγει. - Ἄρ' οὖν ὦ πρὸς Διὸς, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὄφελός τι τῶν ἄλλων κτημάτων ἀνευ φρονήσεως καὶ σοφίας; ἀρά γε ἂν ὄναιτο ἄνθρωπος πολλὰ κεκτημένος καὶ πολλὰ πράττων νοῦν μὴ ἔχων, ἢ μᾶλλον ὀλίγα νοῦν ἔχων; ὦδε δὲ σκοπεῖ οὐκ ἐλάττω πράττων ἐλάττω ἂν ἐξαμαρτάνοι, ἐλάττω δὲ ἀμαρτάνων ἦττον ἂν κακῶς πράττοι, ἦττον δὲ κακῶς πράττων ἄθλιος ἦττον ἂν εἴη; - Πάνυ γ', ἔφη. - Πότερον οὖν ἂν μᾶλλον ἐλάττω τις πράττοι πένης ὢν ἢ πλούσιος; - Πένης, ἔφη. - Πότερον δὲ ἀσθενῆς ἢ ἰσχυρός; - Ἀσθενῆς. - Πότερον δὲ ἔντιμος ἢ ἄτιμος; - Ἄτιμος. - Πότερον δὲ ἀνδρείος ὢν [καὶ σώφρων] ἐλάττω ἂν πράττοι ἢ δειλός; - Δειλός. - Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἀργὸς μᾶλλον ἢ ἐργάτης; - Συνεχώρει. - Καὶ βραδύς μᾶλλον ἢ ταχύς, καὶ ἀμβλὺν ὁρῶν καὶ ἀκούων μᾶλλον ἢ ὀξύ; - Πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα συνεχωροῦμεν ἀλλήλοισι. ["What then? Is it something else than the craft of carpentry (the joiner's art and knowledge) which produces right use in the work and employment relating to timber? - Certainly not, he said. - And truly, rectitude is produced by knowledge in the manufacture of implements, as well. - He consented. - And hence, said I, with regard to the use of the goods we were talking about in the first place [v. supra, n. [15]], of wealth and of health and of formosity, knowledge was that which leads to the right use, and brings to a successful issue the action, in all these and suchlike things, or is it something else which does this? - Knowledge, he*



said. - Knowledge then, as it appears, bestows on men, in every acquisition and action, not only good luck, but also faring well (good doing). - He agreed. - And indeed, by Jove, said I, is there any benefit from the other possessions without practical wisdom and knowledge? Would a man profit from many possessions and many activities if he did not have sound intellectual power, or rather with few possessions but endowed with a strong mind? Consider the subject this way: is it not the case that such an (ignorant) man, by doing less (by being engaged in less activity), would the less err; and erring less he would fare badly in a lesser degree; and faring badly in a lesser degree he would be less miserable? - Very much so, he said. - Whether, then, of the two, would one do less (engage in less activity) if he is poor or wealthy? - Poor, he said. - And whether of the two, if he is impotent or mighty? - Impotent. - And whether, if he is held in honour or if he goes unhonoured? - Unhonoured. - And whether of the two would he do less, if he is manly [and temperate], or if he is cowardly? - Cowardly. - And slow rather than quickwitted, and obtuse in seeing and hearing rather than sharp? - We consented in all such particulars”].

- [19] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 8-9 (This follows immediately the passage quoted *supra*, n. [6], 2): *Κἂν ἄρα γέ τις ἵππον πριάμενος μὴ ἐπίσθηται αὐτῷ χρῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ καταπίπτων ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ κακὰ λαμβάνη, οὐ χρήματα αὐτῷ ἐστὶν ὁ ἵππος; Οὐκ, εἴπερ τὰ χρήματά γ’ ἐστὶν ἀγαθόν. Οὐδ’ ἄρα γε ἡ γῆ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐστὶ χρήματα, ὅστις οὕτως ἐργάζεται αὐτὴν ὥστε ζημιοῦσθαι ἐργαζόμενος. Οὐδὲ ἡ γῆ μέντοι χρήματά ἐστιν, εἴπερ ἀντὶ τοῦ τρέφειν πεινῆν παρασκευάζει. Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰ πρόβατα ὡσαύτως, εἴ τις διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐπίστασθαι προβάτοις χρῆσθαι ζημιόιτο, οὐδὲ τὰ πρόβατα χρήματα τούτῳ εἶη ἄν; Οὐκοῦν ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ. Σὺ ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικε, τὰ μὲν ὠφελούντα χρήματα ἡ γῆ, τὰ δὲ βλάπτοντα οὐ χρήματα* [“And so if someone has bought a horse and does not know how to use it, but keeps falling off and is injured, the horse doesn’t count as goods (wealth) for him, I suppose? - Not on the assumption that goods (wealth) are good (= beneficial). - Similarly, land is not goods (wealth) for a man who cultivates it in such a way that by its cultivation he incurs loss. - No, not even land is goods (wealth), then, if instead of nourishment it produces hunger. - Isn’t the principle the same with sheep if someone incurred loss through not knowing how to tend sheep, the sheep wouldn’t be goods (wealth) for him? - Certainly not, in my opinion. - Therefore, it

seems, you consider what is beneficial as goods (wealth) and what is harmful as not goods (wealth). - Exactly”].

The example of horse-ownership rendered inutile by lack of the appropriate knowledge (the equestrian art) capable of utilising correctly and, thus, profitably the possession of horses, recurs in *Eryxias* with further elaboration; v. *infra* n. [38]. It must have been genuine and standard Socratic illustration. (The chronological sequence *Oeconomicus* → *Eryxias* fits well with the facts of this particular case of reproducing the master’s words and meaning).

Democritus coupled honour to riches as being assets *unreliable* if not commanded by pragmatic knowledge; B77 DK: δόξα καὶ πλοῦτος ἄνευ ξυνέσιος οὐκ ἀσφαλέα κτήματα [“renown and wealth without knowledgeable thoughtfulness are no safe possessions”]. They can prove a burden, turn to harm or simply melt away; Democritus (B185 DK) opposed existing wealth in ignorant hands (ὁ τῶν ἀμαθῶν πλοῦτος), to hopes of improving asset-holding entertained by men of wisdom, i.e. of integrated knowledge (αἱ τῶν πεπαιδευμένων ἐλπίδες). Despite the classical aversion to hope (as being normally empty and often deceitfully harmful), it is better, when existing in the calculations of a wise man, than even tangible wealth possessed by the mindless.

- [20] Plato, *Euthydemus*, 281d2-e5 (following immediately the passage quoted in n. [18]): Ἐν κεφαλαίῳ δ’, ἔφην, ὦ Κλεινία, κινδυνεύει σύμπαντα ἢ τὸ πρῶτον ἔφαμεν ἀγαθὰ εἶναι, οὐ περὶ τούτου ὁ λόγος αὐτοῖς εἶναι, ὅπως αὐτὰ γε καθ’ αὐτὰ πέφυκεν ἀγαθὰ [εἶναι], ἀλλ’ ὡς ἔοικεν ὡδ’ ἔχει· ἐὰν μὲν αὐτῶν ἡγήται ἀμαθία, μείζω κακὰ εἶναι τῶν ἐναντίων, ὅσῳ δυνατώτερα ὑπηρετεῖν τῷ ἡγουμένῳ κακῷ ὄντι, ἐὰν δὲ φρόνησις τε καὶ σοφία μείζω ἀγαθὰ, αὐτὰ δὲ καθ’ αὐτὰ οὐδέτερα αὐτῶν οὐδενὸς ἄξια εἶναι. -Φαίνεται, ἔφη, ὡς ἔοικεν, οὕτως, ὡς σὺ λέγεις. -Τί οὖν ἡμῖν συμβαίνει ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων; ἄλλο τι ἢ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων οὐδὲν ὄν οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὔτε κακόν, τούτοις δὲ δυσὶν ὄντοις ἢ μὲν σοφία ἀγαθόν, ἢ δὲ ἀμαθία κακόν; -Ὁμολόγει. [“To sum up, then, I said, Cleinias, it turns out to be very likely that concerning all the things which in the beginning of the argument we reckoned as goods [v. the quote in n. [15]], the real explanation of their nature is not that they in themselves are by nature goods, but, as it appears, this is the way it is: if ignorance rules them, they are greater evils than their opposites to the extent that they are more powerful in subserving the ruler (him who commands them), who is bad; but if practical wisdom and knowledge lead, they are so much greater

goods; but they in themselves, none of these contraries, are of any value. - It appears, he said, as it seems, to be as you say. - And what then follows from what has been said? Anything else than that of all other things none is either good (utility) or bad (disutility), but of this binary division (into utilities and disutilities) knowledge is utility (good), whereas ignorance is disutility (bad)”].

The same point is made by Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 10: *Ταῦτ' ἄρα ὄντα τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ χρῆσθαι αὐτῶν ἐκάστοις χρήματά ἐστι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ οὐ χρήματα· ὥσπερ γε αὐλοὶ τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ ἀξίως λόγου αὐλεῖν χρήματά εἰσι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἢ ἄχρηστοι λίθοι.* [“The same things, then, can be goods (utilities) for the person who knows how to use each of them, but not goods (but disutilities) for one who does not know. Just as on the same principle, flutes are goods (utilities) for the person who knows how to play the flute reasonably well, but not more of goods (utilities) than stones for one who does not know how to play”].

In a piece transmitted as a Socratic Epistle (no. VI = 1F6 Giannantoni) - which has been included as a fragment of Aeschines' *Callias* by Dittmar (Fr. 35) on very inconclusive and indeed rather flimsy reasons - there is a passage exactly paralleling the above analysed position. The context is that of the sterner aspect of Socratism, Antisthenic principally, but also Aeschinean: emphasis is laid on self-sufficiency at the lower limit of human wants. The justification given is Socratic, but with Socrates making one of his more metaphysical and Pythagorean sorties. Divinity's overwhelming superiority is manifested nowhere more clearly than in its being in need of nothing. Man cannot imitate the divine perfection and attain such condition by wealth, only through excellence (§4). The argument, however, so far is defective: for it may be a psychological constraint that makes wealth tending to increase, rather than eradicate, the sense of insatiety, but this is not logically necessary in the nature of things. So the further argument is adduced to the effect that wealth without knowledge is not even wealth and thus is deprived of its capability to satisfy needs: hence the *insatiety-syndrom of wealth*. We read (§5): *μίαν ἀρχὴν εὐδαιμονίας ἐγὼ νομίζω φρονεῖν εἶ, τὸν δὲ νοῦ μὲν μὴ μετελιφότα, χρυσίῳ δὲ πιστεύοντα καὶ ἀργυρίῳ, πρῶτον μὲν ὅπερ οἴεται κεκτηῖσθαι ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἔχειν· ἔπειτα τοσοῦτον ὑπάρχειν ἀθλιώτερον τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσον ὁ μὲν ἀναγκασθεὶς ὑπὸ πενίας, εἰ καὶ μὴ νῦν, αὐθις ποτε φρονήσει, ὁ δὲ τὰ μὲν ὑπ' οἰήσεως τοῦ εἶναι μακάριος τῆς ἀληθινῆς ὠφελείας ἀμελῶν, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ χορηγίας διαφθειρόμενος,*

πρὸς οἷς ἡπόρει ἤδη καὶ τῶν ὄντως ἀνθρωπίνων ἀγαθῶν προσασπείρηται τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν μελλόντων χρηστὴν ἐλπίδα. (§6) οὐδὲ γὰρ σωθῆναι οἷόν τέ ἐστι τῷ τοιούτῳ πρὸς ἀρετὴν, κατεχομένῳ μὲν ὑπὸ κολακείας ἀνθρώπων ὀμιλῆσαι δεινῶν, κατεχομένῳ δὲ ὑπὸ γοητείας ἡδονῶν, αἱ κατὰ πᾶν αἰσθητήριον προσβάλλουσαι τῇ ψυχῇ πᾶν ὅ,τι καλὸν ἢ σωφρονικὸν ἐν αὐτῇ ἡρέμα ἐξελαύνουσι. [“(§5) I recognize one single principle of well-being (happiness), namely to think well (have pragmatic knowledge). As to him who is unpartaking of intelligence, while he puts all his trust to gold and silver money, first of all he does not really possess the good he considers to possess; and then he is so much more wretched than the rest of mankind, as is the difference between these two cases: he who has been debarred from an intelligent outlook on things by penury, even though in the present frustrated, has before him the possibility of a future enlightenment; but the man we supposed, on the one hand paying no heed to his true advantage because of his vainglory that he is felicitous and happy, and on the other being corrupted by the superabundance of means - on top of his ill-condition is deprived and of the last, and truly human, good, hope, namely, for the future. (§6) For he cannot be preserved for excellence he who is fettered by the flatteries of men formidable in persuasion, and spell-bound by pleasures, which attacking the mind through every sense, quietly drive out everything well-formed and well-thought in it”].

The man envisaged is one possessing many goods but no intelligence. He is deprived of the single most important good, the absolute utility. The argument employs the scientific technique of isolating influences in order to reach the true nature and causality in things. If without knowledge goods are useless, then their utility resides ultimately in the thing which is utility itself, and this is proven to be knowledge. Socrates shared the utilitarianism of Sophistics, expressing it even more sharply and usually more pragmatically. He had harsh words for those who thought learning is irrelevant for success and renown, and that wealth is sufficient to ensure having one's way and gaining repute among men. This is how Xenophon (a more faithful presentator of Socrates the pragmatist than Plato) reports the Socratic position in these matters; *Memorabilia*, IV, 1, 5: τοὺς δ' ἐπὶ πλούτῳ μέγα φρονούντας καὶ νομίζοντας οὐδὲν προσδεῖσθαι παιδείας, ἐξαρκέσειν δὲ σφίσι τὸν πλοῦτον οἰομένους πρὸς τὸ διαπράττεσθαι τε ὅ,τι ἂν βούλωνται καὶ τιμᾶσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐφρένου λέγων, ὅτι μῶρος μὲν εἶη, εἴ τις οἶεται μὴ μαθῶν τὰ τε ὠφέλιμα καὶ τὰ βλαβερά τῶν πραγμάτων διαγνώσεσθαι,

μῶρος δ', εἴ τις μὴ διαγιγνώσκων μὲν ταῦτα, διὰ δὲ τὸν πλοῦτον ὅ,τι ἂν βούληται ποριζόμενος οἶεται δυνήσεσθαι τὰ συμφέροντα πράττειν, ἡλίθιος δ', εἴ τις μὴ δυνάμενος τὰ συμφέροντα πράττειν εὖ τε πράττειν οἶεται καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὸν βίον αὐτῷ [ἢ]καλῶς ἢ ἱκανῶς παρεσκευάσθαι, ἡλίθιος δὲ καὶ εἴ τις οἶεται διὰ τὸν πλοῦτον, μηδὲν ἐπιστάμενος, δόξειεν τι ἀγαθὸς εἶναι ἢ, μηδὲν ἀγαθὸς εἶναι δοκῶν, εὐδοκμήσειεν. [“And he (sc. Socrates) was bringing to their right minds those who entertained inflated thoughts about wealth, believing that they have no need of learning on top of it, and thinking that wealth will suffice for doing what they willed and for acquiring fame among men - (he corrected their presumption) saying that one is stupid if he thinks that without learning he will be able to descry what is beneficial, what is harmful in things; and stupid is he, if he thinks that he will be able to act in his own interest, without proper discernment in things beneficial and harmful, solely by providing himself with whatever he may want by virtue of his wealth; and one is fool, if, without being able to act (consistently) to his advantage, he thinks that he is doing well and that he is well equipped for life; and he is fool, who, immersed in ignorance, believes that he will earn the reputation of being capable and efficient, or that with, a name for incompetence, he will carry the day”]. *Noteworthy is the extreme pragmatism of Socrates' cognitivism. Knowledge is the only key to success.*

- [21] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 11-12 (the passage follows immediately that quoted in n. [20], which concluded with the observation that, to him who does not know how to use correctly them, things are not goods (utilities), not being really useful for the satisfaction of his wants. Flutes, e.g., are so much utilities and useful to him who is not a flute-player, as useless stones are): εἰ μὴ ἀποδίδοιτό γε αὐτούς. τοῦτ' αὖ φαίνεται ἡμῖν, ἀποδιδόμενοι μὲν οἱ αὐλοὶ χρήματα, μὴ ἀποδιδόμενοι δὲ ἀλλὰ κεκτημένοι οὗ, τοῖς μὴ ἐπισταμένοις αὐτοῖς χρῆσθαι. Καὶ ὁμολογουμένως γε, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν χωρεῖ, ἐπεὶ περ εἴρηται τὰ ὠφελούνητα χρήματα εἶναι. μὴ πωλούμενοι μὲν γὰρ οὐ χρήματ' εἰσιν οἱ αὐλοί· οὐδὲν γὰρ χρήσιμοί εἰσι· πωλούμενοι δὲ χρήματα. πρὸς ταῦτα δ' ὁ Σωκράτης εἶπεν· Ἐὰν ἐπίστηταί γε πωλεῖν. εἰ δὲ πωλοῖη αὐτὸς πρὸς τοῦτο ᾧ μὴ ἐπίσταιτο χρῆσθαι, οὐδὲ πωλούμενοί εἰσι χρήματα κατὰ γε τὸν σὸν λόγον. [“Yes (common utilities are disutilities to the ignorant individual), unless he sells them. This again is how it appears to us; for those who do not know how to use them, flutes are goods (utilities) if they sell them,

but not goods (utilities) if they do not sell them but keep them. And indeed our argument is progressing consistently, Socrates, because we have said that *what is beneficial is goods (utility)*. For if flutes are not sold they are not goods (utilities), for they are not useful; but when they are being sold, they become goods (utilities). To these Socrates replied: Yes, if, that is, an individual knows how to sell them. But then again, if he should sell them in exchange for something he does not know how to use, even when sold they do not constitute goods (utilities), according in fact to your own argument”].

- [22] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 12-14 (immediately following the passage quoted in n. [21]): *Λέγειν ἔοικας, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὅτι οὐδὲ τὸ ἀργύριον ἔστι χρήματα, εἰ μὴ τις ἐπίσταιτο χρῆσθαι αὐτῷ. Καὶ σὺ δέ μοι δοκεῖς οὕτω συνομολογεῖν, ἀφ’ ὧν τις ὠφελείσθαι δύναται, χρήματα εἶναι. εἰ γοῦν τις χρῶτο τῷ ἀργυρίῳ ὥστε πριάμενος οἶον ἑταίραν διὰ ταύτην κάκιον μὲν τὸ σῶμα ἔχει, κάκιον δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν, κάκιον δὲ τὸν οἶκον, πῶς ἂν ἔτι τὸ ἀργύριον αὐτῷ ὠφέλιμον εἴη; Οὐδαμῶς, εἰ μὴ πέρ γε καὶ τὸν ὑοσκύαμον καλούμενον χρήματα εἶναι φήσομεν, ὅφ’ οὐ οἱ φαγόντες παραπλήγες γίνονται. Τὸ μὲν δὴ ἀργύριον, εἰ μὴ τις ἐπίσταιτο αὐτῷ χρῆσθαι, οὕτω πόρρω ἀπωθείσθω, ὡ Κριτόβουλε, ὥστε μηδὲ χρήματα εἶναι. [“You appear to be saying, Socrates, that even money is not goods (utility) unless an individual knows how to use it. - And you seem to agree with me on this point, that what an individual can derive benefits (profits) from is goods (utility). If, then, someone were to use money to buy, for example, a hetaira (a courtesan), and because of her he becomes worse in body, worse in soul and worse in regard to his household, how can money be beneficial to him in that case? - In no way at all, unless we go so far as to say that the weed called henbane, which drives people mad if they eat it, is goods (utility). - So if someone does not know how to use money, he should thrust it so far away, Critobulus, that it does not even count as goods (utility) any more”].*

That even money cannot be a real utility (true goods) if unaccompanied by the appropriate knowledge of how to use it, is repeated in *Eryxias*, 403b. V. the argument in that dialogue analysed *infra* n. [38].

- [23] Note the argument in *Eryxias*, 395e-397b. The question posed is whether wealth and being wealthy is good (a utility) or bad (a disutility), 395d6-7. *Eryxias* affirms that possessing wealth (τὸ πλουτεῖν) is good (beneficial, a utility), 395e5. Critias objects, and the dialectical discourse

proceeds as follows. 395e6-396a2: "Ἐτι δ' αὐτοῦ τι βουλομένου λέγειν, ὑποκρούσας ὁ Κριτίας, Σὺ γὰρ εἶπέ μοι, ὦ Ἐρυξία, ἀγαθὸν ἡγή τὸ πλουτεῖν; - "Ἐγωγε νῆ Δία· ἦ γὰρ ἂν μαινοίμην. καὶ οὐδένα γε οἶμαι εἶναι ὅστις ἂν οὐχ ὁμολογήσειεν ταῦτα. - Καὶ μήν, ἔφη ὁ ἕτερος, καὶ ἐγὼ οἶμαι οὐδένα ὄντιν' οὐκ ἂν ποιῆσαι ὁμολογεῖν ἐμοὶ ἐνίοις ἀνθρώποις κακὸν εἶναι τὸ πλουτεῖν. οὐκ ἂν οὖν, εἴπερ ἀγαθὸν ἦν, κακὸν ἡμῶν ἐνίοις ἐφαίνετο. ["And while he (sc. Eryxias) wanted to add something more, Critias interrupted: Now, you tell me, Eryxias, do you believe that being wealthy is good? - For sure I do by Jove; for I would be deranged if I did not. And I think there is noone who would not agree in this. - And yet, said the other, I, on my side, think there is nobody whom I would not make to agree with me that to some people possessing wealth is bad (harmful, a disutility). But, then, if it were good (beneficial, a utility), it would not have made its presence bad (harmful, a disutility) to some of us"]. Socrates now intervenes emphasising the supreme importance of the issue and bids Critias to make good his claim (396a-e). Critias, then, resumes his dialectical argument with Eryxias; 396e3 - 397b7: 'Ἄλλ' ἔφη, ἐγὼ μὲν, ὡς περ ἠρξόμην, Ἐρυξίαν τοῦτον ἠδέως ἐροίμην ἂν εἰ δοκοῦσιν αὐτῷ εἶναι ἄνθρωποι ἄδικοι καὶ δίκαιοι. - Νῆ Δία, ἔφη ἐκείνος, καὶ σφόδρα μέντοι. - Τί δέ; τὸ ἀδικεῖν πότερον κακὸν σοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἢ ἀγαθόν; - Κακὸν ἔμοιγε. - Δοκεῖ δ' ἂν σοι ἄνθρωπος, εἰ μοιχεύει τὰς τῶν πέλας γυναῖκας ἐπ' ἀργυρίῳ, ἀδικεῖν ἂν ἦ οὐ; καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι καὶ τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῶν νόμων κωλύοντων; - Ἄδικεῖν ἂν ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ. - Οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, εἰ μὲν πλούσιος τυγχάνοι ὢν καὶ ἀργύριον δυνατὸς ἀναλώσει ὁ ἄδικός τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ βουλόμενος, ἕξαμαρτάνοι ἂν· εἰ δέ γε μὴ ὑπάρχοι πλουσίῳ εἶναι τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, οὐκ ἔχων ὀπόθεν ἀναλίσκεοι, οὐδ' ἂν διαπράττεσθαι δύναιτο ἢ βούλεται, ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ ἕξαμαρτάνοι, διὸ καὶ λυσιτελεῖ ἂν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ μᾶλλον μὴ εἶναι πλουσίῳ, εἴπερ ἦττον διαπράττεται ἢ βούλεται, βούλεται δὲ μοιχηρὰ. καὶ πάλιν αὖ τὸ νοσεῖν πότερον ἂν φαίης κακὸν ἢ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι; - Κακὸν ἔγωγε. - Τί δέ; δοκοῦσί τινές σοι ἀκρατεῖς εἶναι ἄνθρωποι; - Ἐμοιγε. - Οὐκοῦν εἰ βέλτιον εἶη πρὸς ὑγιείαν τούτῳ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἀπέχεσθαι σίτων καὶ ποτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἠδέων δοκούντων εἶναι, ὁ δὲ μὴ οἶός τ' εἶη δι' ἀκράτειαν, βέλτιον ἂν εἶη τούτῳ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ὀπόθεν ἐκποριεῖται ταῦτα, μᾶλλον ἢ πολλὴν περιουσίαν εἶναι τῶν ἐπιτηδείων; οὕτω γὰρ ἂν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐξουσία εἶη ἕξαμαρτάνειν, οὐδ' εἰ σφόδρα βούλοιο. ["All right, he said, I would go on, as I have started, to gladly ask Eryxias here whether it appears to him that there are men unjust and just. - By Jove, he said, very much so indeed. - What then? Committing

injustice, does it appear to you to be bad or good? - Bad, to me at any rate. - If a man debauches his neighbours' wives on money, do you think that he commits injustice or not, taking also into account that such conduct is prohibited by the State and the laws? - It seems to me that he commits injustice. - Therefore, he said, if a man unjust and willing to commit the injustice happens to be wealthy and capable of spending strong sums of money, he will do wrong; but if possessions of capital do not belong to this man, he would not be able to accomplish what he wills, having not the stores from which to spend, so that he would not do wrong either. For which reason it does profit this man rather not to be wealthy, given that in such condition he will the less accomplish what he wills, while he wills wicked. And again, once more, being ill, whether would you say that it is good or bad? - Bad, I at any rate. - What then? Do not some men appear to you incontinent? - They do. - Therefore, if it is better for such an individual with regard to his health that he should abstain from food and drink and the rest of what seem to be pleasurable, while he is incapable of doing so because of his incontinence, then, does it not follow, that it is better for this man not to be endowed with possessions from which he will provide for those pleasures, rather than to command a superabundance of things requisite? For in that manner, he would not have the power to do wrong, even if wills it vehemently”].

- [24] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, I, 14-15 (Following immediately after the conclusion reached that even money, without knowledge to command it, is a disutility), v. *supra*, n. [22]: οἱ δὲ φίλοι, ἂν τις ἐπίστηται αὐτοῖς χρῆσθαι ὥστε ὠφελεῖσθαι ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, τί φήσομεν αὐτοὺς εἶναι; Χρήματα νῆ Δί’, ἔφη ὁ Κριτόβουλος, καὶ πολὺ γε μᾶλλον ἢ τοὺς βοῦς, ἂν ὠφελιμώτεροί γε ὦσι τῶν βοῶν. Καὶ οἱ ἐχθροὶ γε ἄρα κατὰ γε τὸν σὸν λόγον χρήματά εἰσι τῷ δυναμένῳ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν ὠφελεῖσθαι. Ἐμοὶ γοῦν δοκεῖ. Οἰκονόμου ἄρα ἐστὶν ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἐπίστασθαι χρῆσθαι ὥστε ὠφελεῖσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν. Ἰσχυρότατά γε. Καὶ γὰρ δὴ ὀρθῶς, ἔφη, ὦ Κριτόβουλε, ὅσοι μὲν δὴ οἰκοὶ ἰδιωτῶν ἠὲ ξημενοὶ εἰσὶν ἀπὸ πολέμου, ὅσοι δὲ τυράννων. [“Now, as for friends, if someone knows how to use them so as to benefit from them, what shall we say they are? - Utilities (goods), by Zeus, Critobulus said, and much more so than cattle, if they actually are more beneficial than cattle. - And enemies in fact, according to your argument, are goods (utilities) to anyone who can benefit from enemies. - That is my opinion. - Consequently, knowing how to use enemies so as to derive benefit from them is a characteristic of



a good manager. - Most definitely. - In fact, he said, Critobulus, you see how many estates (house-firms) of private individuals have been increased by war, and how many of autocratic rulers.”].

Plutarch’s extant work *Πῶς ἂν τις ἀπ’ ἐχθρῶν ὠφελοῖτο* (*How to Profit from One’s Enemies*) professes to be a methodical inquiry into the matter broached by Xenophon’s remark in the above quoted passage; v. 88C and E.

[25] V. my study (referred to *supra*, Chapter 5, n. [19]) esp. pp. 368-373.

[26] *Eryxias*, 397e3-10: Ἡρώτα γὰρ αὐτὸν (sc. τὸν Πρόδικον) τὸ μείρακιον πῶς οἶεται κακὸν εἶναι τὸ πλουτεῖν, καὶ ὅπως ἀγαθόν, ὃ δ’ ὑπολαβὼν, ὥσπερ καὶ σὺ νυνδὴ, ἔφη, τοῖς μὲν καλοῖς κἀγαθοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀγαθὸν καὶ τοῖς ἐπισταμένοις ὅπου δεῖ χρῆσθαι τοῖς χρήμασι, τούτοις μὲν ἀγαθόν, τοῖς δὲ μοχθηροῖς καὶ ἀνεπιστήμοισιν κακόν. ἔχει δ’, ἔφη, καὶ τἄλλα πράγματα οὕτω πάντα· ὅποιοι γὰρ ἂν τινες ὦσιν οἱ χρώμενοι, τοιαῦτα καὶ τὰ πράγματα αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκη εἶναι. [“For the youth was pressing Prodicus to explain in what sense he considers wealth to be a disutility and in what a utility. And he, taking up the point, said, just as you (sc. Critias) did now, It is good (a utility) for the well-constituted and good people, to those that know where one must use the capital (the goods); but it is bad (a disutility) for people vile and ignorant. And, in fact, this is the case with all other things: *such as they happen to be the users, such are of necessity the things to them*”].

Socrates reports an old incident which must have become notorious. Prodicus, the eminent Sophist, was reputedly making an exhibition of his wisdom in Lyceion - something very common as an effective self-advertising of one’s eminence as a teacher; one displayed his knowledge and skill in analysis and thought. *Lyceion* was one of the best gymnasia at Athens. Instructors in sciences and teachers of wisdom frequented the place in order to make an impression and attract pupils among the youth who were exercising themselves in gymnastics and the athletic games there. It was a loved resort of Socrates and, afterwards, Aristotle. The famed episode related in *Eryxias* involved *Prodicus* and his contention that things are as the people who use them are. The general doctrine was applied to the case of wealth (capital, goods). Prodicus disgracefully failed in his exhibition: his view did not succeed to command the assent of the people present in Lyceion on that memorable occasion. (And taking into account the fame and illustrious reputation of Prodicus, we must assume

that a considerable croud, besides the youths exerting themselves there in gymnastic training, had been drawn to hear the famous Sophist discoursing on such subject of capital importance - the significance of wealth). In fact, he was taken up, scoffed and derided by a talkative juvenile, a veritable chatterbox, who insisted on applying to the Prodician position dialectical reasoning. The whole affair turned out very humiliating for the Sophist: he was asked by the head of the Gymnasium to leave the place, as he was accused of expounding inappropriate things to the young (397c-399a). *Eryxias* refers in the present connexion to the supporting testimony of Archilochus Fr. 132 West: *καὶ φρονέουσι τοῖ' ὀκόλοις ἐγκυρέωσιν ἔργμασιν* ["and have a mind like the events they fell in with"]. Heraclitus gave an opposite twist to the view (22B17 DK): men on the contrary fail to follow the objective logic and form of things; their thinking moves in a world of their own. But this "their own", determines the way things are to them as utilities (*χρήματα*), use-values.

- [27] The testimony of *Eryxias* is incontrovertible. V. previous note. It is, without foundation, relegated to the dubious category by Diels-Kranz (84B8). The spuriousness of a work is one thing; its veracity is an altogether different thing. It seems, in this connexion, significant that the long development in the Platonic *Euthydemus* on the foundations of Economics is introduced by a passage where *Prodicus* is appealed to, albeit with regard to another characteristic of his thought, his minute attention to the exact sense of words and to their correct usage (*περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος*); *Euthydemus*, 277e (Cf. Plato, *Cratylus*, 384b = 84A11 DK; for an example of Prodician distinctions in meaning, v. Plato, *Protagoras*, 337a-c = 84A13DK; 340a = A14; 341a7 sqq.; 358a6 sqq.; Plato, *Laches*, 197d = A17; Plato, *Meno*, 75e = A15; Plato, *Charmides*, 163d=A18; Aristotle, *Topica*, 112b22 = A19; Hermeias, *In Phaedrum*, p. 238 Couvreur).

The similarity of reasoning and conclusion regarding the *capital* importance of *knowing how to use things* (*ἐπίστασθαι χρῆσθαι*) in the Xenophontian *Oeconomicus* and the *Eryxias*, has already been correctly ascribed to *Prodicus*; v. W. Nestle, *Die Horen des Prodicos*, Hermes, 71 (1936), pp. 158-60; cf. K. Gaiser, *Protrepik und Paranes bei Platon*, 1959, p. 62. The *Euthydemus* passage should also be drawn to the same original source, as also the *Menonian* one.

Prodicus' engagement with matters economic must have been systematic and extensive, to judge from the extant remnants and

indicators. An isolated dictum ascribed to him (Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, 10, 34) is pregnant with significance: *δός τι καὶ λάβοις τι* [“give something and you will receive something”]. For one, it undercuts all modern talk of a supposed gift-exchange system operating in antiquity and contrasted to open market. The law of reciprocity in human action and counteraction requires a balance being struck between the complicated moments, and, thus, a common measure of weighting their magnitude. It is of little consequence whether the exchanged items are being viewed (esp. by external observers) as gifts or barter (or sale for that matter), so long as there is a common measure of value and equivalence of value involved in the transaction, under at least normal conditions. The fact that in a gift-exchange the balance can be radically distorted is of *no economic* importance, since it is due to noneconomic factors. Similar anomalies can well happen in barter and sale, and for analogous reasons indeed. *Secondly*, the Prodician saying expresses an early formulation of the fundamental point of supply-side economics. The exchange-equivalence has in reality one member *accented*, and this is its supply side. The emphasis lies on production and *offer*. Once a commodity or service is available, it finds its own market, provided it caters to some real but either till then unattended human need, want or desire, or to one poorly attended, or it satisfies in a novel way some requirement even well taken care of before. *Supply creates its own demand*.

To such supply-side emphasis fits well Prodicus’ ethics of intensity, effort and achievement (explicitly contrasted to an ethics of voluptuous abandon, relaxation and enervation), as illustrated by his famous parable of Virtue and Vice (the two personified competitors for Hercules’ favour). The fable is extensively reproduced by no less Socratic than Xenophon, who on this count, also, shows the wonted partiality to the Great Sophist on the part of most Socratics.

[28] It was stated at the very beginning of Protagoras’ main work, *Οἱ Καταβάλλοντες* (*The Overthrowing sc. Arguments, Reasoning*) or *Ἀλήθεια* (*Truth*). V. in this connection *supra*, Chapter 5, n. [37]. The fragment is 80B1 DK.

[29] Sextus Empiricus, in his account of the Protagorean basic theory, explicitly identifies *χρήματα* with *πράγματα*, utilities with things; *Pyrrhonian Outlines* (*Πυρρώνειοι Ὑποτυπώσεις*) I, 216. He goes on to analyse things into beings and phenomena, giving a metaphysical

interpretation of Protagoras which is fundamentally sound, but fails to capture the direct connexion between utilities and phenomena. For the truth of a utility lies ultimately and principally in the satisfaction of a human want. And just as satisfaction is as it appears (at least on the first level of its contrual), so the reality of a utility coincides with its phenomenon to the individual or generic man. *The measure of a utility is clearly man*. Generalising from this insight, we may view things according to the appearance they are making to man (again individual or generic). The impression of a thing upon the perceptive faculties of man, so to speak, i.e. its phenomenon, is like the filling up of a void, the occupation of a vacancy, in some sense, the replenishing of a want. As, therefore, with utilities, so with things: their being is basically their appearance (to man). In this sense, Sextus' identification of *χρήματα* with *πράγματα* will hold good: *χρήματα* in the Protagorean statement are utilities but also things generally, since things, as well, are "measured" and judged in relation to man. See the precise formulation in Plato's *Cratylus*, 385e-386a, where the *χρήματα = πράγματα* equivalence is assumed and affirmed.

- [30] For the full articulation of Antiphon's economical theory see *Appendix G*. There can be no doubt (despite endless controversy) that this Antiphon of the economic theory, is Antiphon the important sophist (some extant fragments of his works testifying to his originality), the same with Antiphon the prominent Athenian who was implicated in the affair of the oligarchy of the Four Hundred as its *eminence grise* (cf. the Thucydidean eulogy bestowed on him, VIII, 68).

The emphasis on use as constitutive of wealth, if this is to be beneficial and profitable, was a common place in fifth century dynamism, most markedly in the *New-Thinking* Sophistical movement. In Gorgias' *Apology on Behalf of Palamedes* (*Ἐπὶ Πάλαμῆδους Ἀπολογία*), Palamedes is arguing that he did not receive a large amount of money to betray his country, as he was accused. Among other reasons, he observes (§10, 82B11a DK, II p. 296.26 - 297.1): *χρώμενος δ' ἂν φανερός ἐγενόμην, μὴ χρώμενος δὲ τί ἂν ὠφελομένην ἀπ' αὐτῶν* ["using (sc. the money), I would have exposed myself; not using them, what would be my profit from them?"].

Not the things, nor their possession or lack of it, benefit or harm us - but it is their use or misuse which does it. *The (apt) use of things*, therefore, contributes to human well-being and happiness. And such use depends on the condition of the mind in the user. Democritus put the

point succinctly (68B 171 DK): *εὐδαιμονίη οὐκ ἐν βοσκήμασιν οἰκεῖ οὐδὲ ἐν χρυσῷ· ψυχὴ οἰκητήριον δαίμονος* [“Well-being resides not in cattle nor in gold: soul is the dwelling-place of one’s lot (literally, of the power that encompasses individual destiny)”]. Bad things, *Democritus* explains, are no different from the goods: they are the same with the goods, but they turn bad if one does not know to use them correctly. One should not impute their capacity for ill, then, on the things themselves. *All evil is just misuse*. In fact, one may, further, use, if he will, good things effectively to derail untoward situations (68B 173 DK): *ἀνθρώποισι κακὰ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν φύεται, ἐπὶν τις τὰγαθὰ μὴ πιστῆται ποδηγετεῖν μηδὲ ὀχεῖν εὐπόρως. οὐ δίκαιον ἐν κακοῖσι τὰ τοιάδε κρίνειν, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀγαθοῖσιν ὦν· τοῖς τε ἀγαθοῖσιν οἶόν τε χρῆσθαι καὶ πρὸς τὰ κακὰ, εἴ τιτι βουλομένω, ἀλκῆ.* [“To men evil grows out of goodness (bad things or disutilities grow out of goods or utilities), when one does not know readily to guide, nor indeed to ride, the goods. It is not just to reckon these cases as belonging to the category of badness, but surely among the goods. And one may, if one will, in fact use the goods to avert evil”].

The complexity of the relationship between good and bad (utility and disutility) as focused on right use (which means intelligent use based on knowledge of the relevant state of reality), is illustrated by still another Democritean fragment, evidently belonging to the same analysis (68B 172 DK): *ἀφ’ ὧν ἡμῖν τὰγαθὰ γίννεται, ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων καὶ τὰ κακὰ ἐπαυρισκοίμεθ’ ἄν, τῶν δὲ κακῶν ἐκτὸς εἴημεν. αὐτίκα ὕδωρ βαθὺ εἰς πολλὰ χρήσιμον καὶ δαῦτε κακόν· κίνδυνος γὰρ ἀποπνιγῆναι. μηχανὴ οὖν εὐρέθη, νήχεσθαι διδάσκειν.* [“From the same things from which good (utility) comes to us, from these very things we would reap our share of badness and ill (disutility), but yet again find ourselves outside the evil (disutility, harm). For example, deep water is manifoldly useful, and yet also it is bad; for there is the danger to be drowned in it. But then a contrivance has been invented (to remove the disutility from the utility): instruction of swimming”]. It is always knowledge which provides the key of turning to benefit anything whatsoever, a presumed utility as well as a presumed disutility.

- [31] This twin point (that the nature of goodness / badness is fixed and definite, while which things are good / bad depends on the object in relation to which the goodness / badness of these things is considered), and its resolutely affirmed coherence, is well brought out in Protagoras’ excited and angry reply to close Socratic questioning in Plato’s *Protagoras*,

333d-334c. Protagoras is made to emphatically assert that things are good(s), provided they are useful (beneficial) to some being or other (or part of state of being), not necessarily to man. The introductory dialectics of question and answer has thus (333d8-e2): *Λέγεις οὖν ἀγαθὰ ἅττα εἶναι; -Λέγω. - Ἐρ' οὖν, ἣν δ' ἐγώ, ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ἀγαθὰ ἃ ἐστὶν ὠφέλιμα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις; - Καὶ ναὶ μὰ Δί, ἔφη, κἂν μὴ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὠφέλιμα ᾗ, ἔγωγε καλῶ ἀγαθὰ* [(Socrates is questioning) Do you hold that some things are goods? - I do. - Is it then, I said, that those things are good(s), which are beneficial to men? - But by Jove, he exclaimed, even if they are not beneficial to *men* (but are beneficial to other beings), I on my part certainly call them good(s)]. He goes on to give examples involving other species than man, and different parts of other species or of man (334a-c). The good, it is concluded, is something eminently *varied* and *manifold* (334b6-7): *οὕτω δὲ ποικίλον τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ παντοδαπόν. Ποικίλον* in fact, carries, further, the connotation of deceptive multiformity.

The Protagorean passage finds its significant counterpart in the first section of the famous *Δισσοὶ Λόγοι* (*Double or Opposite Reasonings, i.e. Pro and Contra Disputations*) - the contentious piece of work in the Sophistical tradition, written shortly after the end of the Peloponnesian War (c. 400 B.C.; v. 90.1 §8, DK, II p. 406.14). The title of the anonymous tract repeats its *incipit*, the two words which also recur regularly in many of the sections of the work. The notion that the wise man (i.e. the sophist), as expert in reason and reasoning, is able to argue *pro* and *contra* anything, was widespread in the age of High Classicism. So Euripides, *Antiope*, Fr. 189 (Nauck p. 416):

*ἐκ παντὸς ἄν τις πράγματος δισσῶν λόγων  
ἀγῶνα θεῖτ' ἄν, εἰ λέγειν εἴη σοφὸς.*

["For concerning anything whatever,  
one might institute a contest of opposing reasonings,  
if he happens to be wise in reasoning"].

The first four chapters of the work figure arguments in favour and against the position that given basic opposites signify things different (or the same). The formulation is ambiguous and the arguments bring forth the double intention of its meaning. In one sense the question is whether a given fundamental conceptual polarity is exemplified in reality by two distinct and exclusive groups of concrete things. In another sense, the question is whether such polarities have a definite and stable meaning. In the first section, the polarity is good (beneficial) - bad (harmful): first (§§2-10), arguments are provided for the thesis that the same things are

good or bad depending on the man, time and, generally, circumstances in question, to whom, at which and in which (respectively) the goodness or badness of the thing is considered; then (§§11-17) follow the arguments to the effect that goodness and badness consist in a definite and stable character of being. The two theses are thus far from contradictory or inconsistent; in fact, they are complementary. It is the very definiteness and stability of the essential character of goodness and badness that make it possible to conclude that the same thing may be good or bad depending on the circumstances. Specifically speaking, it is because goodness is (defined as) utility and beneficiality, badness on the other hand as disutility and harmfulness, that things may be good or bad depending on the object, time, condition and other circumstances, *in relation* to which the goodness or badness of the thing concerned is considered and has significance. It is evident that this coherence of the double-faced reasoning is the intention of the work's argumentation, since the unknown author makes explicit his endorsement of both apparently contrary theses. In §2 he affirms: *ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς τοῖσδε ποτιτίθεμαι* ["As to me, I bring myself to those (who count the good and the bad as the same thing - i.e. as having the same reference -, being good and bad to different people, or to the same individual at different times)"]. But in §11, he also subscribes to the other view: *ἄλλος δὲ λόγος λέγεται, ὡς ἄλλο μὲν τἀγαθὸν εἶη, ἄλλο δὲ τὸ κακόν, διαφέρον ὡσπερ καὶ τῶννυμα, οὕτω καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦτον διαιρεῦμαι τὸν τρόπον· δοκῶ γὰρ οὐδὲ διάλαλόν <κ'> ἦμεν, ποῖον ἀγαθὸν καὶ ποῖον κακόν, αἱ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ μὴ ἄλλο ἐκότερον εἶη· καὶ γὰρ θαυμαστόν κ' εἶη* ["There is another reasoned statement made, that another thing is the good, another the bad, these being different in content as they are in name. And I myself divide the meaning of the terms in this manner. For I think it would have not been distinguishable what kind of thing is good and what kind bad, if they (the good and the bad) were the same and not each one of them other than the other: that situation would be a thing to wonder at"]. He would not define goodness and badness, but so much he asserts, that they are distinct, definite characters of being, §17: *καὶ οὐ λέγω τί ἐστι τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο πειρῶμαι διδάσκειν, ὡς οὐ τῶντὸν εἶη τὸ κακὸν καὶ τἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' ἄλλο ἐκότερον* ["And I do not state what is essentially the good, but this much I endeavour to teach, that the bad and the good are not the same (thing), but each one of them other (than the other)"].

In explicating the author's meaning I employed contemporary jargon ("conceptual", "meaning" versus "reference", "concept" versus "object

falling under the concept”, and the similar). In translating back into classical philosophical terminology one should bear in mind that *roughly* “conceptual” corresponds to “essential”, “meaning” to “definition of essence”, “object x falls under concept X” to “the essential character of x qua x is X”. This, to be noted, for example, will not apply unqualified to the Aristotelian articulations of the subject.

- [32] A stable concatenation of qualities by itself would not be sufficient to sustain a dynamic focus in the field of reality. It can be shown that the whole issue may be put in an equivalent formulation as follows: Is the distinction between essential and accidental properties of a thing inherent in the reality of being, or is it a subjective parameter expressing the degree of ignorance respecting the inner lawfulness of existence? *Contemporary conceptualism and modern subjectivism have this irremediable drawback as compared with classical essentialism, that they cannot even ask the right question concerning the fundamental structure of reality: is it “atomic” or is it that of a vibrant wave?* The ancient answer was a resounding affirmation of individualism: there are distinct centers of gravity, so to speak, creating the field of reality, not the other way round. And this holds good in every particular sphere of reality as well, in the human systems equally, something pregnant with the gravest implications for ethics and politics, too, as well as, obviously, for economics.

- [33] The entire Sophistic movement, and Socrates as a high representative of it, was pointing in this direction and arguing for it. Yet the idea was absoluticised and then given its full and technical formulation by Euclides of Megara, one of the main Socratics. V. Fr. 30 (in G. Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae*, vol. I p. 386): οὗτος (sc. *Εὐκλείδης*) ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἀπεφαίνετο πολλοῖς ὀνόμασιν καλούμενον· ὅτε μὲν γὰρ φρόνησιν, ὅτε δὲ θεόν, καὶ ἄλλοτε νοῦν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ. τὰ δ’ ἀντικείμενα τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἀνήρει, μὴ εἶναι φάσκων [“He (sc. Euclides) maintained that the good was one though called by many names: for sometimes it is called *pragmatic knowledge* (practical wisdom), sometimes god, at other times *mind* (*intelligence*), and so on. He furthermore did away with what is, on the other hand, opposite to the good, maintaining that it does not exist”]. We meet here the Parmenideanism in Ethics corresponding to the Parmenideanism in Ontology (cf. Fr. 31). But the question whether Euclides was committed to Ontological Monism must be left open here; cf. for a review of the issue



Giannantoni's *Nota 5*, op.cit. pp. 51-60). The Socratic goodness, defined as utility and beneficiality, and discovered to consist in knowledge, is presented as an ontological principle, the God-Mind. *What is not mind (and knowledge as intellecting reality) is not good at all.* This is the true meaning of the doxographical account, according to which Euclides denied the existence of what is opposite to the good. Euclides, so far as Fr. 30 goes, need not be committed to ontological Parmenideanism (Monism).

In the Megaric and Eretrian School, the unity of all goodness in mind and (pragmatic) knowledge was a characteristic tenet. V. also Menedemus Fr. 17 Giannantoni.

- [34] Aelius Aristides, *Against Plato, for the Defence of Rhetoric (Oratio 2)*, §408 Behr. The expression utilised is: *οἱ λόγοι τῷ χρόνῳ συμπροβαίνουσιν* ["reasons (reasonings) advance with the advance of time"] *Reason and Time accompany the development the same thing, namely reality - the one as inherent law, the other as mode of existence and framework.*
- [35] Cf. Antiphon's theory of the time-burden in *Appendix G*. The passage of time represents a *cost* because it fundamentally and normally works *against* the fruition of things. Should time follow essentially the *growth* of a thing, its passage would count as a *return* on it(s) availability. Such a thing is reason alone.
- [36] Aelius Aristides, op.cit. §409 Behr. The more intellectual excellence is exercised and its knowledge-treasures spent, the more it is perfected and enriched. Its giving away is like the overflow of superabundance from a source that cannot be emptied. The idea goes back to Sophistics and Socratism. Antisthenes elaborated it (although attaching it to his "cynical" ideal of minimal self-sufficiency); v. Xenophon, *Symposium*, II, 43.
- [37] Aelius Aristides, op.cit. §410 Behr.
- [38] The argument to this actually effect is presented in *Eryxias*. Following immediately upon the passage quoted above in n. [11], (where it has been concluded that goods (utilities) are things useful for the satisfaction of human wants), the dialogue continues as follows (401e13 - 402c4) with Socrates leading it: *Τί δὲ τὰ τοιάδε; πότερον ἂν φήσαιμεν οἶόν τε εἶναι*

ταῦτόν πρᾶγμα πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν ἐργασίαν τοτὲ μὲν χρήσιμον εἶναι, τοτὲ δὲ ἀχρεῖον; - Οὐκ ἔγωγ' ἂν φαίην, ἀλλ' εἴ τι δεοίμεθα τούτου πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν ἐργασίαν, καὶ χρήσιμόν μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι· εἰ δὲ μὴ, οὐ. - Οὐκοῦν εἰ ἄνευ πυρὸς οἰοῖ τε εἶμεν ἀνδριάντα χαλκοῦν ἐργάσασθαι, οὐδὲν ἂν δεοίμεθα πυρὸς πρὸς γε τὴν τούτου ἐργασίαν· εἰ δὲ μὴ δεοίμεθα, οὐδ' ἂν χρήσιμον ἡμῖν εἶη. ὁ αὐτὸς δὲ λόγος καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων. - Φαίνεται. - Οὐκοῦν ὅσων ἄνευ οἰόν τε γίγνεσθαι τι, οὐδὲν ἂν τούτων ἡμῖν οὐδὲ χρήσιμον φαίνοιτο πρὸς γε τοῦτο. - Οὐ γάρ. - Οὐκοῦν εἴ ποτε φαινοίμεθα οἰοῖ τε ὄντες ἄνευ ἀργυρίου καὶ χρυσίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν τοιούτων, οἷς μὴ αὐτοῖς χρώμεθα πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ὥσπερ σιτίοις καὶ ποτοῖς καὶ ἱματίοις καὶ στρώμασιν καὶ οἰκίαις, παύειν τὰς τοῦ σώματος ἐνδείας, ὥστε μηκέτι δεῖσθαι, οὐκ ἂν ἡμῖν οὐδὲ χρήσιμα φαίνοιτο πρὸς γε τοῦτο ἀργύριον τε καὶ χρυσίον καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ τοιαῦτα, εἴπερ ποτὲ καὶ ἄνευ τούτων οἰόν τε γίγνεσθαι. - Οὐ γάρ. - Οὐκ ἂν ἄρα οὐδὲ χρήματα ἡμῖν ταῦτα φανείη, εἰ μηδὲν χρήσιμα· ἀλλὰ ταῦτ' ἂν εἶη οἷς τὰ χρήσιμα οἰοῖ τ' ἐσμὲν ἐκπορίζεσθαι. [“And what about the following? Whether would we say that it is possible for the same thing, and in connection with the same activity and work, at times to be useful and at times useless? - I would not say so myself; if we stand in need of it in some respect in connection with the same activity and work, then it seems to me to be useful; but if we do not, then not. - You think then, do you not, that if we were capable of working up a bronze statue without fire, we would not stand in need of fire in connection actually with this activity and work; and if we would not stand in need (of it), it would not be useful to us. And the same reasoning will apply to all other cases. - So it seems. - Which means, generally, does it not, that of all things without which something may be accomplished, none of them would appear to be useful to us for the purpose in question. - Why, none. - Which again means that if we appeared sometime to be able to cease the bodily wants, so that we are not any more in need, and do this without silver and gold money and similar means, which we use not by applying them (directly) to the body, like food and drink and dress and bedclothes and houses; then neither would silver and gold money and similar means appear to us useful for that purpose at least, if this could be effected sometimes also without them. - Why, no. - And, therefore, nor would these appear goods (utilities) to us, if they are not at all useful; on the contrary, those things would be goods (utilities), by means of which we would be able to procure the (directly) useful things”].

We find here distinguished *final utilities*, i.e. goods directly applicable to the satisfaction of wants, and instrumental utilities, i.e. means for affording and procuring final utilities. The *utility*-status of the former group is not called into question by the argument. Of the latter, if they may *sometimes* be done without in procuring final utilities, the argument is aimed at showing that, then, they are not really utilities at all, since their usefulness may lapse in certain circumstances. We shall see in a moment what has the author in mind about the means available in such circumstances with the purpose of realising final utilities. But it should be emphasised that the argument is invalid. There may well be more than one category of means with the power to command final utilities. In this case, the fact that one kind of means may be left inoperative in procuring final utilities, means simply that it is (considered) more advantageous that another kind of means be applied for realising final utilities - not that they ceased to be (instrumental) utilities themselves. One need not employ always all means available to the realization of a given end in order to validate and confirm their instrumentality. Socrates' interlocutor is made to protest vehemently (402c4-d3): ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἄν ποτε δυναίμην τοῦτο πεισθῆναι, ὡς τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον καὶ τὰλλα τὰ τοιαῦτα οὐκ ἄρα χρήματα ἡμῖν ἐστίν. ἐκείνο μὲν γὰρ σφόδρα πέπεισμαι, ὡς τὰ γε ἀχρεῖα ἡμῖν ὄντα οὐδὲ χρήματά ἐστιν, καὶ ὅτι τῶν χρησιμωτάτων ἐστὶν πρὸς τοῦτο χρήματα τὰ χρήσιμα· οὐ μὲν τοῦτό γε, ὡς ταῦτα οὐ χρήσιμα ἡμῖν τυγχάνει ὄντα πρὸς τὸν βίον, εἴπερ γε τούτοις τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἐκποριζοίμεθα ["Come Socrates, I would never be able to be persuaded in this, that gold and silver money and similar means are not goods (utilities) to us. On the other hand I am strongly persuaded in this, that things which are useless to us are not goods (utilities), and that things useful for (the procurement of) those most useful ones are goods (utilities); certainly not in this, that those useful things (for obtaining the most useful) happen not to be useful to us for our life: for by means of them we procur the necessaries and requisites of life"]. I take the formulation τῶν χρησιμωτάτων ἐστὶν πρὸς τοῦτο χρήματα τὰ χρήσιμα as equivalent to πρὸς τὰ χρησιμωτάτα ἐστὶν χρήματα τὰ χρήσιμα. Χρησιμωτάτα (most useful) are the final utilities, things directly applied for the satisfaction of human needs. Things useful for the procurement of those most useful things, are still useful and thus goods (utilities). So that the interlocutor takes Socrates' preceding argument as *establishing a distinction between final and instrumental (or intermediate) utilities, not between utilities and non-utilities.*

But Socrates persists. He accepts the interlocutor's point, repeats preceding arguments in the new setting and gives another turn to the argument. The upshot of the discussion is once more the crucial point that (final and) intermediate utilities depend for their usefulness (and beneficiality) on the user's knowledge. 402d3 - 403c6:

Φέρε δῆ, πῶς ἂν τὰ τοιαῦτα φήσαιμεν; ἀρ' εἰσὶν τινες ἄνθρωποι οἵτινες μουσικὴν παιδεύουσιν ἢ γράμματα ἢ ἑτέραν τινὰ ἐπιστήμην, οἱ ἀντὶ τούτων σφίσι αὐτοῖς τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἐκπορίζονται, τούτων μισθὸν πραττόμενοι; -Εἰσὶ γάρ. -Οὐκοῦν οὗτοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ταύτῃ τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ ἂν ἐκπορίζοντο τὰ ἐπιτήδεια, ἀντὶ ταύτης ἀλλαττόμενοι, ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς ἀντὶ τοῦ χρυσίου καὶ ἀργυρίου. -Φημί.

- Οὐκοῦν εἴπερ τούτῳ ἐκπορίζονται οἷς πρὸς τὸν βίον χρῶνται, καὶ αὐτὸ χρήσιμον εἴη πρὸς τὸν βίον. καὶ γὰρ τὰργύριον τούτου ἕνεκα χρήσιμον ἔφαμεν εἶναι, ὅτι οἰοί τ' ἡμεῖς αὐτῷ τὰναγκαῖα πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ἐκπορίζεσθαι. - Οὕτως, ἔφη. -

Οὐκοῦν εἴπερ αὐταὶ αἱ ἐπιστήμαι τῶν χρησίμων πρὸς τοῦτο, φαίνονται ἡμῖν αἱ ἐπιστήμαι χρήματα οὐσα διὰ τὴν

[“Come now, what are we going to say about the following: are there not some people, who give instructions in music or grammar or some other cognitive discipline (science), and procure the requisites of life for themselves in exchange for those instructions, receiving pay (fees) for them? - They are, for sure. - Which means that these people procure the requisites by such science, exchanging against it for them, just as we do against gold and silver money. - I affirm as much. -

And you will agree that if by means of this they procure those things that they use in their life (sc. directly, i.e. procure final goods), then it itself also would be useful to life. For the reason why we maintained that money also is useful, is that we are enabled by it to procure the necessities for our corporeal existence. - So it is, he said. -

And so if the sciences we mentioned belong to the things which are useful for that purpose, these sciences appear as goods

αὐτὴν αἰτίαν δι' ἣν περ τὸ χρυσίον τε καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον. δῆλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ οἱ ταύτας κεκτημένοι πλουσιώτεροι. ὀλίγον δὲ πρότερον οὕτω χαλεπῶς ἀποδεχόμεθα τὸν λόγον, εἰ οὗτοι πλουσιώτεροι.

ἀναγκαῖον δ' ἂν εἶη καὶ ἐκ τοῦ νῦν ὠμολογημένου τοῦτο συμβαίνειν, ἐνίοτε τοὺς ἐπιστημονέστερους πλουσιωτέρους εἶναι. εἰ γάρ τις ἡμᾶς ἔροιτο ἄρα παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ οἴομεθα χρήσιμον εἶναι ἵππον, ἄρα φαίης ἂν; ἢ τοῖς μὲν ἐπιστήμοσιν ὅπως δεῖ ἵππῳ χρῆσθαι χρήσιμον ἂν εἶη, τοῖς ἀνεπιστήμοσι δ' οὐ; - Φαίην ἂν. - Οὐκοῦν, ἔφην, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον οὐδὲ φάρμακον παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ χρήσιμον εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τούτῳ ὅστις τυγχάνει εἰδῶς ὡς δεῖ χρῆσασθαι αὐτῷ; - Φημί. - Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰλλα πάντα ὁμοίως; - Ἐοικεν.

Χρυσίον ἄρα καὶ ἀργύριον καὶ τὰλλα τὰ δοκοῦντα χρήματα εἶναι τούτῳ ἂν μόνῳ χρήσιμα εἶη, ὅστις τυγχάνει ἐπιστάμενος ὡς χρηστέον αὐτοῖς. - Οὕτως. - Οὐκοῦν πρότερον ἐδόκει τοῦ καλοῦ κάγαθοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι εἰδέναι ὅπου τε καὶ ὅπως τούτων

(utilities) to us for the same reason for which gold and silver money appear so. And then it is evident that the people possessing them are wealthier (by their possession). Whereas a little while ago (395a-e) we experienced grave difficulty to consider whether they be wealthiest.

But it is necessary, also from what has been agreed just now, that the following should be the case, that sometimes the more knowledgeable are wealthier. For if someone were to ask us, Would you think that a horse is useful to all men, would you affirm it? Or, is it not rather the case that to these who know how to use a horse, it would be useful, but to those who do not, not? - This is what I would assert. - Which means, I said, by the same logic, that neither a drug is useful to all men, but rather to him only who happens to know how it should be used. - I affirm this. - And so with every other thing? - It seems so. -

Therefore, gold and silver money and all other things which are thought to be goods (utilities) would be useful to him alone who happens to have the knowledge how they should be used. - So it is. - But did it not appear before that it belongs to the man

ἐκάστους χρηστέον ἐστίν; - Φημί. -

Τοῖς ἄρα καλοῖς καὶ ἀγαθοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τούτοις ἂν μόνοις καὶ χρήσιμα ταῦτ' εἴη, εἴπερ γε οὗτοι ἐπιστήμονες ὡς χρηστέον. εἰ δὲ τούτοις μόνον χρήσιμον, τούτοις ἂν μόνοις καὶ χρήματα εἶναι ταῦτα φαίνοιτο. ἀτάρ, ὡς ἔοικε, καὶ τὸν ἀνεπιστήμονα ἵππικῆς, κεκτημένον δὲ ἵππους οἷ τυγχάνουσιν αὐτῷ ἀχρεῖοι ὄντες, εἴ τις τοῦτον ἵππικὸν ποιήσειεν, ἄρα ἂν ἅμα καὶ πλουσιώτερον πεποιηκῶς εἴη, εἴπερ γε αὐτῷ ἂ ἐτύγχανεν πρόσθεν ἀχρεῖα ὄντα, χρήσιμα πεποιήκεν· ἐπιστήμην γάρ τινα παραδιδούς τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἅμα καὶ πλούσιον αὐτὸν πεποιήκεν.

superior in perfection and in efficiency to know in which cases and how they (i.e. money and things thought to be goods) should be used with regard to each man? - I hold so. -

Consequently to those of men who are superior in perfection and efficiency, to those alone they would be useful, given that such are the men who have the knowledge (they are the experts) how they should be used. And if it is to them only that money and common assets are useful, it is to them alone that these would be goods (utilities). Besides, as it seems, supposing a man ignorant of horsemanship who happens to possess many horses, which are to him therefore useless, if someone were to impart on that man the equestrian art, he would *ipso facto* make him simultaneously wealthier as well (as more knowledgeable), since he would render useful to the man what was before useless; *for by transmitting some (systematic) knowledge to the man, one has made him simultaneously wealthy*”].

(For the case of horse-ownership being of no value for lack of equestrian knowledge, cf. also *supra* n. [19]. For not even money being a utility and real goods to those ignoring how to properly use it, cf. *supra*, n. [23]. *Eryxias* and Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* draw from the same source, veritable Socratic, and fundamental Sophistic, doctrine).

Socrates accepts that intermediate or instrumental utilities like, preeminently, money, are real utilities, since they are useful (although not always) for procuring final utilities. He now applies the same reasoning to arts and sciences. Knowledge can be employed to procure final utilities, and so, by the same logic, is a real utility, even if we restrict the claim to occasional applicability. So possession of knowledge makes the possessor *occasionally*, at least, wealthier. But it then is shown that this is *always* the case. For given anything whatsoever, its possession will result in some gain accruing to its possessor *only upon condition that he knows how to use it correctly (and, so, profitably)*. Two corollaries are drawn then from this. *First*, that the man of excellence, i.e. the man fittest in his nature, is wealthy in a self-sufficient and absolute sense. His excellence of mind implies wisdom and possession of the keys to universal pragmatic knowledge. Thus he knows how to use every thing in connection to any one and under any circumstances. It is of no great consequence the fact that he may be lacking in material wealth. This was objected to the first course of reasoning in the dialogue aiming to sustain the paradox that the wise man is the truly wealthy one (the argument, 393b-394a; the objection, 394a-b). But the point is that even so wanting in this respect, *he alone can bring into fruition the wealth of others. For he can transform a mere, valueless, accumulation of things into a pool of value, a sum of real utilities, an accumulation of capital. It is not the owner of things that is the true motor of capitalism, but the man of knowledge, the possessor of expertise, and pre-eminently of deepest insight into the reality and nature of things, of real and, thus, effective wisdom.*

[*Man of excellence is a natural rendering of καλὸς ἀγαθός, the man well-constituted, καλός and useful (beneficial), ἀγαθός. He is the individual whose nature has been brought to perfection and is thereby empowered to function optimally, with maximal efficiency. The καλός refers to perfection, the ἀγαθός to functionality. I also translate the expression by the formula most fit in his nature, or, superior in perfection and efficiency. The καλὸς ἀγαθός is the man fittest in mind and body, one whose excellence matches his achievements].*

*Second* corollary of the new Socratic argument in *Eryxias* is that by being taught, man becomes wealthier. *Learning are the true riches.* Possessing horses without the art of horsemanship is not being wealthy. Getting to know the equestrian art is to greatly increase the value of one's possession of horses, is to really augment one's wealth; whereas buying more horses without improvement on the cognitive side of oneself may

even decrease the amount of one's real wealth, for instance by the cost of keeping the horses without putting them into appropriate use. *An asset acquired may well turn to be a disutility if badly managed.*

Naturally, one may employ things not in their natural uses (the uses their nature as the things they are makes them apt to be put in), but as exchange means. We saw above pp.432-3 of the present Chapter how this gets us again back to the primacy of knowledge as asset of wealth.

It is in such a setting as the above described that we may fully appreciate Aristotle's point in *Politica*, A, 13, 1259b18-21: *φανερὸν τοίνυν ὅτι πλείων ἢ σπουδῇ τῆς οἰκονομίας περὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἢ περὶ τῆν τῶν ἀψύχων κτήσιν, καὶ περὶ τῆν ἀρετὴν τούτων ἢ περὶ τῆν τῆς κτήσεως, ὃν καλοῦμεν πλοῦτον, καὶ τῶν ἐλευθέρων μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν δούλων* ["it is thus evident that economics (as the science of managing resources and assets) has more to do with men than with inanimate possessions, and more to do with human excellence (competence, ability) than with eminence in possessions, which we call wealth, and more to do with free men (i.e. enterprising agents) than with slaves (as instruments)].

The man of problem-solving wisdom, of real, and thus, pragmatic, knowledge is the man of success. Thales, scoffed at his speculative inquiries into the nature of things (cf. the anecdote in 11A1 §34 DK), and wanting to show that the man of wisdom may easily get wealth, secured to himself in advance by extensive leasing all the oil-pressing installations in a season which he estimated correctly to be one of extraordinary plenteousness in olive-bearing. The demonstration was effective (11A1§26, I p. 68.25-27 DK); cf. A11, I p. 76.16 for his reputed engagement in commerce.

- [39] See the argument in *Eryxias*, as explained in the previous n. [38].
- [40] V. *Appendix K*.
- [41] Knowledge is the *highest concrete value*, as money is *abstract value*, value as such and in itself. *Thus money is the formal measure of value, whereas knowledge sets the pace for the value of concrete utilities, being the cardinal among them.* We may say in Platonic parlance that money represents the idea of value, while knowledge is the best value existing. The argument for the latter thesis is set out in *Eryxias*, 393b7 - 394a5. On the occasion of the presence in Athens of a Syracusan embassy, and with reference to an ambassador, reckoned to be the wealthiest man in Magna



Graecia, but also one of eminently ill-repute (which in a Greek context meant a base man, one not excelling in the capabilities of human nature), the discussion opens as to the nature of wealth. Erasistratus, Socrates' interlocutor, has meanwhile already expressed the ordinary idea that the rich man is he who owns many goods (concrete and abstract).

Οἰηθεὶς δ' αὐτὸν ἐγὼ οὐ περὶ  
σμικρῶν τὸν λόγον ποιῆσθαι,  
ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων δοκού-  
ντων εἶναι, ἀρετῆς τε πέρι καὶ  
πλούτου, ἠρόμην πότερον ἂν  
φαίη πλουσιώτερον εἶναι ἀνθρω-  
πον ὅτῳ ὄν τυγχάνει τάλαντον  
ἀργυρίου, ἢ ὅτῳ ἀγρὸς ἄξιος  
δυσὶν ταλάντοις. - Οἶμαι μὲν  
ἐγὼ, ἔφη, ὅτῳ ἀγρὸς. - Οὐκοῦν,  
ἔφην ἐγὼ, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λό-  
γον, καὶ εἰ τυγχάνοι τῷ ἰμάτια  
ὄντα ἢ στρώματα ἢ τᾶλλα ἔτι  
πλέονος ἄξια ἢ ὅσου τῷ ξένῳ,  
οὗτος εἴη ἂν πλουσιώτερος. -  
Συνέφη καὶ ταῦτα. - Εἰ δέ τις  
σοι διδοίη αἵρεσιν τούτοις, πότε-  
ρον ἂν βούλοιο; - Ἐγὼ μὲν ἂν,  
ἔφη, τὸ πλείστου ἄξιον. - Ποτέ-  
ρως ἂν οἰόμενος πλουσιώτερος  
εἶναι; - Οὕτω. -

[“On my part [(Socrates is narrating in the first person)], thinking that the discourse will not be about things insignificant, but on the contrary about what are considered to be of the greatest consequence, namely about human excellence and wealth, I asked him [(sc. Erasistratus)] whether of the two, does he reckon to be the wealthier man he who happens to possess one talent of silver money, or he who owns land worth two talents. - Myself I believe, he said, he who owns the land. - Which means, I said, according to the same logic that if there happens to belong to someone dresses or mattresses or anything of the sort, worth more than the possessions of the Syracusan ambassador, that man would be the wealthier. - He consented to this as well. - And if one grants you the power of choice between the two conditions, which one of the two would you will? - As far as I am concerned, he replied, that which is worth most. - Thinking that you would (thus) be wealthier? - So it is. -

Νυνὶ μὲν ἄρα φαίνεται οὗτος ἡμῖν ὢν πλουσιώτατος, ὅστις πλείστου ἄξια κέκτηται; - *Ναί*, ἔφη. - Οὐκοῦν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, οἱ ὑγιαίνοντες τῶν καμνόντων πλουσιώτεροι ἂν εἴησαν, εἴπερ ἡ ὑγεία πλείονος ἄξιον κτῆμα ἢ τὰ τοῦ κάμνοντος χρήματα. οὐδεὶς γ' ἂν οὖν ὅστις οὐχὶ προτιμήσειεν ὑγιαίνειν ὀλίγον κεκτημένος ἀργύριον μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ βασιλέως τοῦ μεγάλου χρήματα κεκτημένος νοσεῖν, δῆλον ὅτι πλείονος ἄξιον οἴομενος εἶναι τὴν ὑγείαν. οὐ γὰρ ἂν ποτε προηρείτο, εἰ μὴ προτιμότερον ἡγήετο εἶναι τῶν χρημάτων. - *Οὐ γάρ*. -

Οὐκοῦν καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο φαίνοιτο πλείονος ἄξιον τῆς ὑγείας, ὁ τοῦτο κεκτημένος, οὗτος ἂν πλουσιώτατος εἴη. - *Ναί*. - *Εἰ δὲ δὴ τις ἡμᾶς νυνὶ προσελθὼν ἔροιτο, ὦ Σώκρατες καὶ Ἐρυξία καὶ Ἐρασίστρατε, ἔχοιτ' ἂν εἰπεῖν μοι τί ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπῳ πλείστου ἄξιον κτῆμα; ἄρα γε τοῦτο ὃ κτησάμενος ἄνθρωπος ἄριστα βουλευόιτο περὶ τούτου, ὅπως ἂν βέλτιστα διαπράττοιτο τὰ τε αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πράγματα καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων; τί ἂν εἶναι τοῦτο φήσαιμεν;* - *Ἐμοὶ μὲν δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες, εὐδαιμονία πλείστου ἄξιον ἀνθρώπῳ εἶναι.* -

Now, then, it appears to us that he is the richest man, who owns what is worth most. - Yes, he said. - But you then would agree, would you not, that the healthy men would be wealthier than the invalids, if health is worth more than the goods of a sick man. For there is no one who would not prefer to enjoy health possessing a modest amount of money rather than to possess the goods of the Great King in sickness, showing in practice with this choice that he considers health to be worth more: for he would never choose it over possessions, if he did not consider it preferable to goods. - Surely not. -

Which means that if something else appears worth more than health, the possessor of it, would be wealthiest. - Yes. - This having so, if someone were to come now to us and to question formally: Socrates and Eryxias and Erasistratus, are you in a position to tell me what is worth most to man? Is it not precisely that, which once a man possesses it, he deliberates optimally concerning the best state and disposition of his own condition and affairs, and of those of his friends? What would that be? - It seems to me, Socrates, that well-being (happiness) is worth most to man. -

Καὶ οὐ κακῶς γ', ἔφην ἐγὼ· ἀλλ' ἄρα γε τούτους ἂν τῶν ἀνθρώπων εὐδαιμονεστάτους ἡγήσασθε εἶναι, οἵτινες μάλιστα εὖ πράττειν; - Ἐμοὶ γοῦν δοκοῦσιν. - Οὐκοῦν ἂν οὗτοι ἄριστα πράττειν, ὅσοι περ καὶ ἐλάχιστα ἐξαμαρτάνοιεν περὶ σφᾶς αὐτοῦς καὶ περὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους, τὰ δὲ πλείστα κατορθοῖεν; - Πάνυ γε. - Οὐκοῦν οἱ ἐπιστάμενοι τὰ κακὰ καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ, καὶ ὅσα πρακτέα καὶ ὅσα μὴ, οὗτοι ἂν ὀρθότατα πράττειν καὶ ἐλάχιστα ἐξαμαρτάνοιεν; - Συνεδόκει καὶ ταῦτα. -

Νῦν ἄρα ἡμῖν φαίνονται οἱ αὐτοὶ ἄνδρες σοφώτατοί τε καὶ ἄριστα πράττοντες καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατοι καὶ πλουσιώτατοι, εἴπερ ἄρα ἡ σοφία τοῦ πλείστου ἄξιον κτῆμα φαίνεται.

Not bad, said I. But now would we not consider such men to be happiest, who fare exceedingly well? - To me they seem so. - And is it not that they fare best, who least err and fail in what concerns themselves and the other men, but on the contrary for the most part are proven successful? - Very much so. - Would you not now agree that those who have the knowledge of good (utility) and bad (disutility), and of what should be done and of what should not, they are who would act correctly and err the least? - He was of the same opinion in this, too. -

Therefore, it is the same men who now appear to us to be the wisest and those who fare best and the happiest and the wealthiest, given that wisdom (in-depth knowledge of reality) appears to be the most valuable possession”].

The germinal idea in the argument is that the rich man is he who owns what is worth most, *that capital consists in accumulated value*. It is immaterial, generally speaking, in what specific form the value is embodied. (Questions of pressing need, or of required cash balance for precautionary reasons, are kept out of view, as special cases. The issue of liquidity does not enter into the picture, as one assumes long term perspectives, where matters of principle play the dominant role). Moving from ordinary conceptions of wealth (land, cattle, slaves, money) to value and worth facilitates the acceptance of something not commonly considered to be capital as the ultimate asset of wealth. The transition from ordinary goods to knowledge is mediated by health. Considering and comparing possession of great material wealth on the one hand and a

condition of lusty health on the other, which is worth more? Appeal is made to the scale of priorities actually exhibited by individuals in choosing between alternatives. Consistent preference in one direction bespeaks of higher worth assigned to the object of choice. The alternatives here are considered as permanent states absolutely separated one from another, such, that is, as they cannot affect each other. So the choice is between lasting possession of a large amount of capital with minimal condition of health just compatible with the continuation of life on the one hand; and lasting state of vigorous health accompanied with minimal possession of goods just sufficient to sustain life. The condition of illness in the former alternative must be considered such as to make life perpetually painful and constantly disagreeable; while the possibility of effective remedy (amounting finally to the annulment of that condition), found and administered at the command of wealth, must be eliminated. For reasons of parity, we must also theoretically eliminate the possibility of improving the state of possessions by means of good health.

With carefully balanced options in the above described way, health emerges, by the universal verdict of man, as worth more than wealth. Were health a thing available to be bought in open market, its price would reflect these theoretical estimations. We should mean in this respect full, vibrant health: for what man normally buys when seriously ill is not robust health but some kind of more or less inadequate repair for the damage to his physical constitution accompanying his illness. And this is priced accordingly. But the possibility of restituting full health (in the sense of peak physical condition) would command (upon that counterfactual hypothesis) a price to be paid by entire fortunes. As organic processes of health equilibrium and disequilibrium are basically natural, there is no price attached to health (acquisition); besides, the condition of health is normal and normally given. What is humanly offered are various degrees of assistance to the natural processes, facilitating or expediting their progress. And this is priced for what it is worth.

Once a non-ordinary asset of wealth (i.e. health) is recognised for what it is (a great value), the path to the end-game is opened. Since there is something more valuable than ordinary goods, the question is posed about the most valuable thing to man. The way Socrates puts the question is meant to determine its answer; (393e): "*If someone were to come now to us and to question formally: Socrates and Eryxias and Erasistratus, are you in a position to tell me what is worth most to man? Is it not precisely*

that, which once a man gets into possession of it, he deliberates optimally concerning the best state and disposition of his own condition and affairs, and of those of his friends? What would that be?”. *Worth most to man is that thing possessing which one is enabled to dispose things in the most advantageous way for him.* The Greek ὅπως ἂν βέλτιστα διαπράττοιτο τὰ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πράγματα bears much more emphatically the connotation of a *successful* course of events due to the *individual’s action*, than the English “so as to arrange best himself his own affairs”. *Διαπράττομαι* means *effect for oneself, gain one’s point, accomplish.* The reference to friends in this pregnant context is indicative of the strong classical conviction that excellence, ability, achievement and success radiate to the human environment of the blessed individual, and, in particular, are mirrored to the welfare of his friends. The friends benefit from his eminence and well-being, while he is strengthened through their recipience of his beneficence and their return of attachment to him and his cause.

Socrates does not in fact get the answer he means and wants from his interlocutor, but is able to reach the same goal after a few steps by utilising his reply. Erasistratus names well-being (happiness) as the thing possessing in common estimation the most-valuable status. But (exceptional) well-being implies faring (exceedingly) well in life, which means few errors and consequent failures, very many correct moves and consequent successes. Which brings us to the knowledge how to act correctly, dispose things efficiently, and gain most. *It is once more to be noticed the indissoluble link for the classical sentiment and mind of the nexus knowledge - correct steps, moves and arrangements - successes, achievement and advantage (and, correspondingly, ignorance - wrong steps, moves and arrangements - failures, miscarriage and harm).* This crucial point is made explicitly by the author of *Eryxias: (in - depth) knowledge and success (prosperity, welfare) and well-being (happiness) and wealth go together. The man of knowledge is the true capitalist.* (A theme that is adopted by Aristotle in a complex way, and provocatively proclaimed by the Stoics. For the Aristotelian articulation, v. A.L. Pierris *Ὅρος Πολιτείας and Τέλος Πόλεως: Political Constitution, Social Structure and End of Life in Aristotle’s Politics*, in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Aristotelian Political Philosophy*, 1995, vol. I, pp. 127-142, esp. p. 136).

*Knowledge is the highest value. Since it is knowledge that ultimately activates the utility of things (and, thus, renders their value manifest and active), knowledge sets the value of all things.* The more knowledge a

utility involves and requires for its efficacy, the more value it possesses. These valuations tend to be reflected (in the long run and in systems operating at equilibrium) on the structure of respective prices as well. Thus we find in *Eryxias* the presupposition of the theory (fully developed in Aristotle, v. *supra*, Chapter 4) according to which *values in things are determined by values in abilities, skills and expertises and so in cognitive values, in intellectual funds. The value of a utility is the value of knowledge contained in it, of knowledge required for its realisation as the utility that it is. We may in this sense speak of a classical Knowledge Theory of Value.*

[42] V. the analysis in Chapter 4.

[43] This presupposes a natural adaptation of means to ends obtaining *in rerum natura*, an objective harmonization of materials, forms and purposes. Matter is capable of assuming forms capable of realising ends. We need some such theory of reality as Aristotle's teleological metaphysics (v. A.L. Pierris, *op.cit.* in n. [41], Appendix: *Immanent and Transcendent Teleology*, pp. 136-142).

The distinction I have instituted between production - knowledge and use - knowledge is very different from the usual one, in the contemporary philosophical scene, between knowledge-that and knowledge-how, although they both construe the same field. (For an economical application of the modern philosophical distinction, cf. the World Bank publication *World Development Report 1998/89: Knowledge for Development*, 1998). The point is that, in fact, just as there is a theoretical knowledge (knowledge-that, what I called *knowledge of forms*) and a practical knowledge (knowledge-how, *skill in applying the knowledge of forms* to the construction of forms) involved in the production of goods, so there are correspondingly theoretical and practical knowledge involved in the use of goods (*knowledge of ends* and *skill in applying* this to the use of things respectively). *Knowledge is pragmatic*: one side of it is about how things are; but this very same knowledge bears on the other side of it the principle of its application. To truly know a fact, how things are (as expressed in a statement of fact, one describing a state of affairs at whatever level of generality and causation) involves knowing *what to do with the fact*, since it inherently includes knowledge how does it enter and affects all possible situations in reality, and, in general, what difference does it make to the world of existence.

And this knowledge of what to do with the fact involves the principle of its use as means for various ends: for the means-end relationship is as factual a fact as any other in *rerum natura*. Just as, further, is a question of (often hotly disputed) fact what is to the benefit of a given individual, what is good and a utility to him.

The important and significant fact is that every knowledge has a that-aspect and a how-aspect. And that the way it is applied tells a world of things about whether its theoretical conception is adequate to the really obtaining state of affairs. To repeat: one knows something if one knows what to do with it, how to apply it, i.e. connect it theoretically and practically with other things. The current distinction between knowledge-that and knowledge-how, by implying different types of truth, and corresponding reality, for the postulated kinds of knowledge, misses completely the important and significant point.

- [44] The question of profit and profit-making, as well as its philosophical Socratic defence against common obloquies based on confusion and misconceptions, are the subject of the dialogue *Hipparchus* included in the Platonic corpus. The ancient critics considered it genuine, but in modern circles its authenticity has been doubted on shaky grounds. The transmitted title of the little piece is *Ἰππαρχος ἢ Φιλοκερδῆς* (*Hipparchus or the Man Loving Gain*). After various unsuccessful attempts to define profit which catered to ordinary misconceptions and prejudices against it, one gets the main, and economical, definition of the term (231a): ἀρα κέρδος λέγεις πᾶν κτήμα ὃ ἂν τις κτήσῃται ἢ μηδὲν ἀναλώσας ἢ ἔλαττον ἀναλώσας πλέον λάβῃ ["hence you call gain any possession acquired at no outlay, or an outlay less than what one gets by means of it"]. It is made in the sequel analytically clear that the gain is an asset, something that has value, and that the relevant difference between the outlay and the asset acquired through it is one in value. One gains if one gets a greater value through a certain expenditure (231c-e). Now values (*things valuable, utilities*) are worth possessing, they are the natural object of the possessive drive and the natural content of possession (231e5). Again, worth possessing is the beneficial and beneficial are goods (231e-232a). Therefore profit and profit making are good (232a), and indeed everybody (good or bad) is a lover of gain (232b-c).

For profit in Aristotle and the general concept of gain cf. Chapter 3 n. [41].

[45] In fact this is precisely the essential difference between services and (material or immaterial) goods: a service consists in the *use* of a certain kind of (presumed) *knowledge*. To the extent that the knowledge is genuine, the service is, therefore, necessarily right. With no good this can be the case. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of human civilization at the turn of millennia now, is *the pervading shift from goods to services*. Consumers require (starting with the more important aspects of their lives) more and more *things to be done for them, rather than commodities being supplied that can be used in doing things*. One cause for this change is the heightened awareness of the burden and cost of time (v. *Appendix G*), both in itself and in relation to the increasing demand for maximal efficiency in man's activity. The individual has more and more things to accomplish in his strict line of business, with the result that a crowding out effect is created for matters than can be taken care of appropriately by other, more skilled in this respect, professionals. Thus both time is saved for the individual in question, and there is generally an improved quality of work performed all round, as things are being done better and more efficiently.

On the whole, the propensity is for the realisation of the Platonic ideal *one man - one function*, that, in fact, function for which the individual is by nature best adapted (*V. supra*, Chapter 1). Cultivating this precisely function, the individual may reach his optimal self-realisation, to his own ultimate satisfaction, as well as (to the extent that he is concerned) to the maximal efficiency of the societal integral, to everybody's interest as basis of everyone's own ultimate satisfaction. Still further back, the presupposition is of a truly agonistical ideal of life: *life as a contest of excellence for the prize of success. The world, in portentous and potent similarities to the age of High Classicism, may be indeed moving to the reality of that epoch's value-system, unless the American Hegemony lapses through a repetition of the Athenian stupendous strategic mistake.*

[46] I abstract here from the question whether the knowledge involved in, and required for the realisation of, a utility comprises the knowledge that comes into its production, or includes also the one needed for its meaningful use, since it is the actual use of a utility that makes it fully the utility that it is. But, of course, *proximately* only the former comes into the picture. For, besides, it is precisely because of this that one may possess a utility without possessing the (right) use of it. In a utility there is embodied the knowledge that went into its production. By possessing it,



one does not certainly, by this fact alone, even have the active knowledge to produce the utility in question, let alone the active knowledge to use it correctly. But the former is implicit in the product and can, in principle, be elicited from it at a few, relatively, steps. While the latter is not, unless as an *ultimate* congruence of it with knowledge entering into the utility's production. For ultimately the initial question collapses through the principle of identity of the two disjunctive alternatives (cf. *supra*, n. [43]).

[47] Cf. *supra*, Chapter 2, esp. n. [6], for pure operative type of work, i.e. *corporeal*, which for Aristotle is *servile*. Planning, organising, managing are intellectual and libertarian and liberal.

[48] It matters not for the purpose at hand whether this is absolutely true (as the classical man adamantly believed) or rather holds good only relatively to a given *cultural universe*. For within such a universe of understanding, the level of cognitive apprehension of reality attainable (in modern parlance we may call it degree of completeness in the interpretation of reality possible within the cultural world in question) is again definite and the degree of knowledge reachable finite. So that under the assumption of cultural relativism (say of the Spenglerian, purest, type), one has simply to understand what follows under the proviso of a given cultural universe.

It is the same with *human relativism* in place of the cultural one. Suppose there is a disparity between the intelligibility of being (in objective existence) and the capacity of man to "intellect" (comprehend, understand) it. Again his optimal apprehension of reality is definite and limited, even if not the full unravelling of reality's secret.

[49] Optimal self-realisation for the *classical man* meant complete harmonisation with the cosmic whole through a perfect understanding of reality. Human excellence, as I have repeatedly emphasised, is primarily cognitive, the perfection of man's essential rationality and, therefore, a matter of superior knowledge, of wisdom as the integral of knowledge.

Optimal self-realisation for the *human relativist* (cf. previous note) means, on the other hand, maximal intensification and integration of man's power capabilities, primarily, again, of his interpretative faculties which enable him to fashion his world of reality.

Optimal self-realisation for the *cultural relativist* signifies the attainment of full functioning for the parameters defining a given cultural universe in its specificity.

The statement in the main text holds good under any construal of optimal self-realization, since there is a corresponding absolutization or relativisation of value. But the classical understanding expresses a universal with diachronic validity as the normative median of historical oscillations, and thus as manifesting the essential type, according to the general law of cyclicity of cosmic existence in time (cf. *Appendix C*).