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SEXTUS EMPIRICUS  
AND THE ATOMIST CRITERIA OF TRUTH

### 1. Introduction

The section of Sextus, *Adversus mathematicos*, vii, devoted to the history of theories on the criterion<sup>1</sup> divides up as follows:

46-7: views on the criterion: 1, there is no criterion; 2 (a), the criterion is in *logos*; (b) the criterion is in *enargeia*; (c) the criterion is in *logos* and *enargeia*.

(1) Those who say there is no criterion

49-52	Xenophanes
53-4	Xeniades
55-9	Anacharsis
60-4	Protagoras
64	Euthydemus and Dionysodorus
65-87	Gorgias
87-8	Metrodorus, Anaxarchus, Monimus

(2) Those who say there is a criterion...

...in *logos*

	“Physicists”
89-91	Anaxagoras
92-109	Pythagoreans

<sup>1</sup> My suggestions about this passage, which will constitute the bulk of the present paper, owe much to a seminar held in Cambridge in 1985, with Myles Burnyeat and others. I am also grateful to Margaret Atkins, Jonathan Barnes, Myles Burnyeat, Ian Kidd, John Procopé, and Harold Tarrant for their helpful written comments on an earlier draft.

110	Xenophanes (again!)
111-4	Parmenides
115-25	Empedocles
126-34	Heraclitus
135-40	Democritus
...in <i>enargeia</i> (with or without <i>logos</i> )	
	“Post-physicists”
141-4	Plato
145-6	Speusippus
147-9	Xenocrates
150-8	Arcesilaus
159-89	Carneades
190-200	Cyrenaics
201-2	[Asclepiades]
203-16	Epicurus
217-26	Peripatetics
227-60	Stoics
261-2	retrospect

Thus, in the event, 2 (b) and 2 (c) are conflated, and we end up with three principal divisions. It is instructive to note that the philosophers conventionally known to us as “atomists” are distributed between these three divisions: Metrodorus of Chios and Anaxarchus fall into the no-criterion group, Democritus into the *logos*-only group, and Epicurus into the *enargeia* group. This serves as a reminder, if one were needed, that atomism is to some extent a doxographical fiction, indeed one to which modern doxographers are more wedded than their ancient counterparts. Although the names of Democritus and Epicurus are often linked in the ancient sources with regard to their basic physical tenets — “atomism” in the strict sense — they are equally often contrasted with regard to their theories of knowledge and numerous other doctrines. Sextus himself is no exception to this pattern<sup>2</sup>. In most

<sup>2</sup> Linked: *PH* III 32, *M* IX 363, x 45, 181, 318. Juxtaposed: *PH* II 23-5, *M* VII 265-7, 321, VIII 139, IX 24-5, 42-3. Contrasted: *M* VII 369, VIII 6-9, 62-3, 184-5, 355. For discussions of Sextus’ treatment of atomism, see especially F. DECLEVA CAZZI, *Democrito e Sesto Empirico*, in *Democrito e l’atomismo antico*, Atti del Convegno internazionale, Catania, 18-21 apr. 1979, a c. di F. ROMANO, Catania 1980, pp. 393-410 and M. GIGANTE, *Scetticismo e epicureismo* (“Elenchos” IV), Napoli 1981, esp. pp. 109 ff. Among earlier treatments, P. NATORP, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des Erkenntnisproblems im Altertum*, Berlin 1884, pp. 256-85 is outstanding.

respects his treatment of the two principal atomist philosophers is rather conventional. There is little evident consciousness of the special relationship that you might expect a Pyrrhonist to feel with either the one school or the other — either with Democritus as a forerunner of Pyrrho’s scepticism, much revered by Pyrrho himself, or with Epicurus as an admirer of Pyrrho’s ethical outlook, who even shared the Pyrrhonist official moral goal of *ataraxia*, tranquillity.

With regard to Democriteanism, the furthest Sextus goes is at *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, I 213-4, where it appears among the philosophies he deems close enough to Pyrrhonism for the difference to need underlining. And he maintains, sensibly enough, that although the *ou mallon* dictum is superficially common ground between the two movements, the Democriteans (a) use it in order to *deny* the reality of sensible properties, and (b) positively assert the existence of atoms and void, while the Pyrrhonists retain an open mind on the existence of both. As for Epicureanism, he alludes to its kinship with Pyrrhonism only once, at the opening of *Adversus grammaticos*. There Epicurus is described as a disciple of Pyrrho’s pupil Nausiphanes. But Sextus proceeds to make the sharpest possible contrast between the Epicureans and Pyrrhonists as regards their grounds for opposition to the *mathemata*<sup>3</sup>.

A question which would reward close examination — on some other occasion — is how far Sextus’ perception of Democritus has been shaped by the Epicureans<sup>4</sup>. One likely symptom of such mediation is the total absence of the name Leucippus from Sextus’ works. This may reflect the studied silence about him in Epicurean texts generally, stemming from Epicurus’ well-known denial of his existence<sup>5</sup>.

But by far the most intriguing passage in Sextus bearing on the

<sup>3</sup> *M* I 1-6. The attack on Epicurus here stems from Timocrates, his renegade pupil; see my *Epicurus and his professional rivals*, in *Etudes sur l’épicurisme antique*, ed. by J. BOLLACK, A. LAKS (“Cahiers de Philologie” 1), Lille 1976, pp. 119-59. At *M* I 272, 281-5 the contrast between Epicurus and Pyrrho is less pronounced.

<sup>4</sup> For a possible example, F. DECLEVA CAZZI, *art. cit.*, p. 402.

<sup>5</sup> DIOG. LAERT. x 13. Cfr. *M.X.G.*, argued to be a Pyrrhonist work by J. MAN-SFELD, ‘De Melisso Xenophane Gorgia’: *Pyrrhonising Aristotelianism*, «Rheinisches Museum», CXXXI (1988) pp. 239-76, which speaks of the «so-called *logoi* of Leucippus» (1980 a 8-9).

atomist tradition is the one I mentioned at the outset: the history of theories of the criterion at *M* VII 46-262<sup>6</sup>. For both Democritus and Epicurus it contains what are arguably the richest treasuries of surviving data on their attitudes to empirical cognition. Yet when it comes to evaluating those data we may seem to know little of what kind of source we are dealing with, and what kinds of filters or distorting media they have been passed through.

The section on Democritus is our primary source of his sceptical utterances. It would be easy to jump to the conclusion, as some have done<sup>7</sup>, that this massive emphasis on his cognitive pessimism is to be explained by the fact that Sextus is himself a sceptic, anxious to maximise his indirect forerunner's endorsement of his own school's philosophical outlook. This, we will see, radically misrepresents the character of the passage.

In the long doxographical passage on the criterion, Sextus is himself an entirely transparent figure. Whenever you try to focus on him, you find yourself looking straight through him, and what you see instead is the early first century B.C. You find yourself in the hands of first-century B.C. interpreters like Posidonius and Antiochus. The reason for this is not very far to seek. Sextus will be repeating here, as often, material from the writings of his principal forerunner and authority, Aenesidemus, the founder of the neo-Pyrrhonist movement in the mid first century B.C. And Aenesidemus himself, we may speculate, compiled his own account of the dogmatist theories of the criterion largely by consult-

<sup>6</sup> I shall not be considering the concept of a "criterion" as such, on which see G. STRIKER, *Κριτήριον τῆς ἀληθείας*, Göttingen 1974; A. A. LONG, *Sextus Empiricus on the criterion of truth*, «Bulletin of the Inst. of Class. Studies of Univ. of London», xxv (1978) pp. 35-49; J. BRUNSCHWIG, *Sextus Empiricus on the "Kritêrion": the Sceptic as conceptual legatee*, in *The Question of Eclecticism*, ed. by J. M. DILLON, A. A. LONG, Berkeley 1988, pp. 145-75.

<sup>7</sup> Thus e.g. R. MCKIM, *Democritus against skepticism: all sense-impressions are true*, Proceedings of the First International Congress on Democritus, ed. by L. G. BENAKIS, Xanthi 1984, pp. 281-90. Cf. C. FARRAR, *The Origins of Democratic Thinking*, Cambridge 1988, pp. 205, 207. The latter book contains (pp. 197-215) a particularly powerful and coherent defence of a non-sceptical interpretation of Democritus. My own aim as regards Democritus will be limited to showing how Sextus' evidence should be read, without prejudice to the interpretation of any overall position he may be thought to have adopted. But for the record, I am not fully convinced that there was any such position.

ing recent historical or critical textbooks. Hence we find ourselves, in this passage, more in Aenesidemus' philosophical world than in Sextus'.

This practice of relying on the latest available studies is not particularly shocking or surprising. If we want to know the position of Kant or Aquinas on some specific issue, we often cannot afford the luxury of turning to their works for enlightenment: even if we happen to have their collected works on our shelves, we may not have the least idea which of them to turn to, or which ones are deemed the most reliable guide to their views. How much easier to browse through a convenient encyclopedia article, a pre-digested masterpiece of synthesis by someone much better informed (we hope) than ourselves, or through the latest critical study to appear in the bookshops. The absence of indexes in ancient books made such shortcuts even more irresistible. To arrive at the principles of Hellenistic epistemology by checking through the 300 books of Epicurus, the 700 of Chrysippus, and thousands more, would have been a massive and perhaps a foolhardy undertaking. We can hardly condemn Aenesidemus if he preferred to rely on the very latest surveys, some of them written by the most eminent philosophers of the day.

The trouble is that such surveys are not always an innocent guide to history. The philosopher who plays historian of his subject will probably find it difficult not to impose his own prejudices on the material he reports. He may even be writing the history for that very purpose.

## 2. Metrodorus and Anaxarchus

Aenesidemus might have appreciated this, if only because himself was a practitioner of just such creative reporting. For there is every reason to believe that the first section, on those alleged to deny that there is any criterion (*M* VII 49-88), is the work of Aenesidemus himself. This can be inferred especially from the treatments of Anacharsis and Gorgias, both of whom are recast in the rigorously dilemmatic form of argument characteristic of Aenesidemian scepticism<sup>8</sup>, and from that of Protagoras,

<sup>8</sup> I go along with, but cannot here argue for, the view (see e.g. G. CALOGERO, *Studi sull'Eleatismo*, Roma 1932, Firenze 1972<sup>2</sup>) that the *M.X.G.* version of Gorgias'

which assimilates his relativism to the style and content of Aenesidemus' own fourth Mode<sup>9</sup>. The presence, in the same list, of acknowledged forerunners of Pyrrhonism, like Xenophanes, Metrodorus of Chios, and Anaxarchus, points the same way<sup>10</sup>.

In theory, the same features would be compatible with the author's being not Aenesidemus but some follower of his, even Sextus himself<sup>11</sup>. But as I have already suggested, it is Aenesidemus' direct involvement that best explains the reliance on first-century sources in the following sections, and, if so, it becomes more plausible as well as more economical to imagine him as the compiler of the entire doxography.

The atomists Metrodorus and Anaxarchus earn just a brief mention at the end, along with the Cynic Monimus (87-8): Metrodorus for saying «We know nothing, and we do not even know this very thing, that we know nothing», Anaxarchus and Monimus for comparing existing things

*On not being* is closer to the original than Sextus'. But one aspect which remains constant in both versions is the concessive structure of the overall argument: *p*, and even if not *p*, *q*, and even if not *q*, *r*. This device is a direct legacy of Gorgias to Aenesideman scepticism, which uses it widely (I know of no serious philosophical use of it between Gorgias and Aenesidemus, other than in Plato's *Charmides*). Aenesidemus' authorship of this section would thus help explain the massively disproportionate space allotted to Gorgias in it (65-87).

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. SEXT. EMP. *PH* I 100-13. I find this more believable than the suggestion of J. ANNAS and J. BARNES, *The Modes of Scepticism*, Cambridge 1985, p. 85 that the material is originally Protagorean and has been borrowed by the Pyrrhonists: the ancient tradition on Protagoras' theory of truth stems almost entirely from Plato's *Theaetetus*, and it would be remarkable if Sextus or his source had alone had access to substantial textual material of independent origin. Cfr. the immediately following account of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus (64), which recasts along similar Pyrrhonist lines their portrayal in Plato's *Euthydemus*.

<sup>10</sup> For Xenophanes as forerunner of Pyrrhonism, see *M* VIII 325-6 (itself very like VII 52), *DIOG. LAERT. IX* 72, etc. For Metrodorus and Anaxarchus, see *PYRRH. fr.* 1 A, 23-7 Caizzi.

<sup>11</sup> However, one reason for doubting that Sextus is the compiler is that he is much less keen than Aenesidemus to acknowledge forerunners of Pyrrho as genuine sceptics: *PH* I 210-25. Whether those who rejected all criteria could be Sceptics, rather than negative dogmatists, was debatable. At *PH* II 18 and *M* VII 443-4 Sextus suggests not. But at *M* VII 26 and VIII 1 he implies that they can: hence Mutschmann may be unjustified in excising the Sceptics from the list of those who deny all criteria at *M* VII 49.

to a stage-painting and holding them to be the objects of delusion. I do not want to dwell on this passage here<sup>12</sup>, beyond one remark. The words attributed to Metrodorus clearly correspond to the opening of his book reported rather differently by Cicero (*ac. II* 73): «I say that we do not know whether we know something or nothing, nor do we know that very thing, knowing or not knowing, nor in general whether anything exists or nothing». Should we regard this, or the Sextan version, as more authentic? Given Aenesidemus' practice in the preceding chapters, especially those on Gorgias, I have little doubt that it is he who is guilty of adjusting Metrodorus' words<sup>13</sup>, to make them neater, more schematic, and more Pyrrhonian<sup>14</sup>.

### 3. Democritus

I now turn to the long section (89-140) on the "natural philosophers" (*φυσικοί*), who are said to place the criterion in *logos*. This has certain recurrent features which distinguish it from the other two divisions. First, while the other divisions discuss their respective lists of philosophers in roughly chronological order<sup>15</sup>, this one makes virtually no effort to do

<sup>12</sup> The stage-painting motif is the subject of a revolutionary forthcoming paper by Myles Burnyeat, too complex to summarise here.

<sup>13</sup> In saying this, I correct my own previous preference for the Sextan version, *The protagonists*, in *Doubt and Dogmatism*, ed. by M. SCHOFIELD *et al.*, Oxford 1980, pp. 1-17, at p. 10, and *The motivation of Greek scepticism*, in *The Sceptical Tradition*, ed. by M. BURNYEAT, Berkeley 1983, pp. 9-29, at p. 14.) Cicero's Latin, *ne id ipsum quidem, nescire aut scire, scire nos*, is clumsy, but would work well in Greek, thanks to the articular infinitive: οὐδὲ αὐτὸ τοῦτο, τὸ εἰδέναι ἢ μὴ, εἰδέναι ἡμᾶς. Eusebius' version (*praep. evang.* 14.19.9), οὐδεὶς ἡμῶν οὐδὲν οἶδεν, οὐδ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο, πότερον οἶδαμεν ἢ οὐκ οἶδαμεν, could easily have arisen as an alternative attempt to simplify the same original.

<sup>14</sup> Neater: simplification of the language. More schematic: phrased to define Metrodorus' relation to the supposed Socratic dictum «I know that I know nothing». More Pyrrhonian: the doubts about the world's existence, omitted in Sextus' version, are not part of the usual Pyrrhonist repertoire.

<sup>15</sup> The *enargeia* division may appear non-chronological at first glance, but I shall try to show below that it in fact takes three separate traditions, each in chronological order.

so, but adopts the chaotic-looking sequence: Anaxagoras, the Pythagoreans, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Democritus. Here only Democritus' position at the end captures his chronological relation to the others. Nevertheless, I believe that there is an overall rationale to the order. Anaxagoras is placed first as the archetypal natural philosopher (φυσικώτατος, 90). Thereafter each of those listed is presented as selecting a different type of *logos* as criterion<sup>16</sup>, and the order is so constructed as to maximise the contrast between each philosopher and his neighbours in the list. Anaxagoras opted for *logos* "in general", the Pythagoreans for a specific type. The Pythagoreans' use of mathematical or scientific *logos* in turn contrasts with Xenophanes' reliance on merely "doxastic" *logos*, which is itself then counterposed to Parmenides' "epistemonical" *logos*. Empedocles invokes *orthos logos*, but this is primarily "human" *logos*, whereas Heraclitus' *logos* is "divine", as well as universal. After this series of careful antitheses, it is almost an anticlimax to come at the end to Democritus, whose criterion is simply said to be *logos*, with no further refinement.

One might try to read the series of antitheses as reflecting a sceptical perspective, the chosen order being aimed at highlighting the conflict (*diaphonia*) between the warring parties. Certainly that aspect of it will be more than welcome to Aenesidemus and to Sextus, since they do indeed call the entire catalogue of views on the criterion a case of *diaphonia* (261). But it is hardly how the passage comes across when taken in its own right. On the contrary, it repeatedly emphasises the continuity between these thinkers (as I shall try to show shortly). A more accurate reading would be that the series of antitheses is meant to bring out how each of these Presocratics focused on a different aspect of *logos*. Then Democritus, placed correctly at the end, may be viewed as standing above the series of antitheses, and as combining in his notion of *logos* all the

<sup>16</sup> H. TARRANT, *Scepticism or Platonism? The Philosophy of the Fourth Academy*, Cambridge 1985, p. 104, points out that two of these pairings — epistemonical/doxastic *logos* and divine/human *logos* — also surface in Middle Platonism (ALCIN. *Didaskalikos*, 4). I doubt if we know enough about the earlier history of these antitheses to help us identify Sextus' source. The former has obvious Platonic antecedents (cfr. *M VII* 145-8), but it must be remembered that the *doxa/episteme* contrast is Stoic too. Thus it cannot do much to strengthen Tarrant's preference for Antiochus over Posidonius as source (see *infra*, note 72).

aspects which his predecessors had isolated<sup>17</sup>. If this is the point of the passage's structure, it was (at least in its original context) designed to give Democritus an especially prominent place in the story.

A second distinguishing feature of this whole division is its extraordinarily high content of verbatim quotations, including (quite unusually for Sextus) substantial extracts of prose as well as verse. By contrast, the other divisions of the passage on the criterion, much in keeping with Sextus' usage elsewhere, rely mainly on paraphrase.

This itself goes hand in hand with a third feature. The attribution of the *logos* criterion to these thinkers is an undisguisedly creative piece of interpretation. Only for Heraclitus does the author claim to find any such doctrine expressly stated, and he distinguishes this case by telling us that Heraclitus says so «quite explicitly» (134, ἤρτότατα). His practice of regularly quoting the passages on which the interpretation is based serves him as a safeguard, making sure that his readers are not misled about its speculative status.

A fourth feature is the author's special interest in the theme that like is known by like, to which he recurs in the sections on the Pythagoreans (92-3), on Empedocles (116-21), and on Heraclitus (130), invoking the further support of Democritus (116-8) and Plato (119).

This kind of invocation — the establishment of alliances between disparate thinkers — itself constitutes a fifth distinguishing feature of the division as a whole<sup>18</sup>. Anaxagoras' strictures on the weakness of the senses are amplified by parallel remarks quoted from Asclepiades (91). On the Pythagorean like-by-like principle, Empedocles and Plato are cited for comparison (92-3), while for Empedocles' use of the same principle Democritus and Plato are invoked. And for the alternative interpretation of Democritus, taken from a certain Diotimus, which he appends at 140, parallel remarks are quoted from Anaxagoras and from Plato's *Phaedrus*<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> That Democritus should have acknowledged the "divine *logos*" which Heraclitus, according to 127-31, identified with air, may stretch credulity too far; but it might have been argued on the basis of DEMOCR. A 78, A 106 and B 30 D.-K.

<sup>18</sup> Not quite the same practice, but consonant with it, is the use of the *poets* to expound the thought of Heraclitus: 128.

<sup>19</sup> This may be a special case, to the extent that Democritus himself had reportedly already invoked Anaxagoras on the point. There is also the question whether the parallels had already been added by Diotimus rather than deriving from our principal author. Cfr. *infra*, note 63.

A sixth and final hallmark of this historian is his readiness to juxtapose alternative interpretations, without insisting on an exclusive choice between them. His message is, again and again, that you *can* read these philosophers as making *logos* the criterion, but that other readings are available. Xenophanes can be read as rejecting all criteria (as already at 49-52, the “Aenesideman” section, so omitted here), but on another interpretation (110, *κατὰ τοὺς ὡς ἑτέρως αὐτὸν ἐξηγουμένους*) he makes doxastic *logos* the criterion. Empedocles, on what appears to be the more straightforward interpretation (115, *κατὰ μὲν τοὺς ἀπλούστερον δοκοῦντας αὐτὸν ἐξηγεῖσθαι*), has six criteria of truth, namely the four elements plus Love and Strife, but according to others (122) he makes *orthos logos* the criterion. Likewise Democritus can be seen as abolishing all cognition, or as making *logos* alone the criterion (135-9), and there is also Diotimus’ interpretation of him, according to which there are three criteria (140). In none of these cases is it insisted that the *logos*-only interpretation is mandatory. The pluralistic style of history-writing makes an interesting contrast with the monistic reporting in the other sections of the passage.

Then who is our historian? He cannot be dated before the late second century B.C., since he quotes Asclepiades<sup>20</sup>; nor much later than the mid first century B.C., if he was himself used as a source by Aenesidemus. His readiness to create alliances between diverse philosophers is itself suggestive of the syncretistic tendencies so characteristic of the early first century B.C. And there is one outstanding candidate: the Stoic Posidonius. That he may be the source of this entire passage (89-140) has been suggested before<sup>21</sup>, but never, as far as I know, worked out in detail.

It is, at least, a matter of virtual consensus that he is the source of the long Pythagorean part of the passage (92-109)<sup>22</sup>. The grounds

<sup>20</sup> For Asclepiades’ dates, see E. RAWSON, *The life and death of Asclepiades of Bithynia*, «Classical Quarterly», xxxii (1982) pp. 358-70.

<sup>21</sup> It is mentioned in passing as a possibility by I. KIDD, *Posidonius*, Cambridge 1988, II, p. 342, and as an unpalatable idea by H. TARRANT, *Agreement and the self-evident in Philo of Larissa*, «Dionysius», v (1981) pp. 66-97, at p. 80. Prior to them, it seems to have occurred only in A. E. TAYLOR, *A Commentary on Plato’s ‘Timaeus’*, Oxford 1928, pp. 35-6 note. But it was, in addition, the unanimous verdict of the 1985 Cambridge seminar mentioned in note 1 above.

<sup>22</sup> See especially W. BURKERT, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, Engl. tr. Cambridge (Mass.) 1972, pp. 54 ff.; J. MANSFELD, *The Pseudo-Hippocratic Tract. Περὶ ἐβδομάδων*, Assen 1971, p. 156 note.

include the following: Posidonius’ interpretation of Plato’s *Timaeus*, as relying on a like-by-like principle, is cited explicitly (93)<sup>23</sup>; the section includes a story (107-8), otherwise not recorded, about the Colossus of Rhodes, the island where Posidonius lived and taught; and it uses Stoic doctrine in expounding the Pythagoreans<sup>24</sup>.

If that attribution is correct, it need not necessarily follow that the rest of the passage is Posidonian<sup>25</sup>: its author could be himself drawing on Posidonius merely for the Pythagoreans. But any such possibility recedes when we bear in mind the many distinguishing features which the Pythagorean section shares with other parts of the passage, especially the syncretistic tendency and the fascination with the like-by-like principle<sup>26</sup>. Moreover, Stoic doctrine surfaces occasionally elsewhere in the passage<sup>27</sup>, especially in the emphatic reading of *logos* in Heraclitus as

<sup>23</sup> If the whole passage is from Posidonius, why name him specifically only here? Presumably because the original said something like ‘On my interpretation of the *Timaeus*...’.

<sup>24</sup> Especially 102 on *συναπτόμενα, ἡνωμένα* and *διεστῶτα*, cfr. *S.V.F.* II 366-8, and *M* IX 78 ff., a very Posidonian passage, where this conceptual scheme is the basis for cosmic *sumpatheia*.

<sup>25</sup> I have only noticed one detail which could be suspected to reflect Aenesidemus’ own mediation. The antithesis *ἀνέξοιστον/ἐξοιστόν* attributed to Empedocles at 122 might be thought to reflect Aenesidemus’ preoccupation with Gorgias (65 ff.). But even here a likelier explanation is that it represents some dogmatists’ interpreter’s attempt to synthesise Empedocles with his pupil Gorgias.

<sup>26</sup> The Democritean application of this principle to the stratification of pebbles on a beach (117) itself finds an echo in POSIDON. fr. 229 E.-K.: see F. DECLEVA CAIZZI, *art. cit.*, p. 398.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. 119, where the *Timaeus* (67 A-C) definition of sound as a blow caused by air is rewritten in Stoic terms as *ἀέρα πεπληγμένον* (cfr. *S.V.F.* II 139-41, etc.). 129-30 also has a strong Stoic ring to it (cfr. *S.V.F.* I 141) — stronger, at any rate, than the Aenesideman echoes which led Diels (*Dox.*, pp. 209 ff.) to assign the Heraclitus doxography to Aenesidemus himself. J. MANSFELD too, *Doxography and dialectic: the Sitz im Leben of the ‘Placita’* (“Aufstieg und Niedergang der röm. Welt”, II 36.4), Berlin 1990, pp. 3056-229, at pp. 3066-7, 3164, sees in it the Aenesideman interpretation of Heraclitus recorded at *M* VII 349. But there is no need to infer that Aenesidemus is the ultimate source of the Heraclitean section, rather than its transmitter. As Mansfeld notes, Aenesidemus’ interpretation of Heraclitus is already strongly mediated by a Stoic source, and the hypothesis that this whole passage came to Aenesidemus from Posidonius may help unmask the latter as that

divine universal *logos* — an interpretation of Heraclitus with no pre-Stoic antecedents but for obvious doctrinal reasons beloved of the Stoics<sup>28</sup>.

And that is not all. There is an even more distinctive Posidonian fingerprint on the passage. For as it happens there is one case in which we know something about the kind of motive which led Posidonius to rewrite philosophical history. This concerns his decision to adopt Plato's tripartite psychology, even borrowing from the *Phaedrus* the comparison of the soul's two irrational parts to a pair of horses driven by a human charioteer<sup>29</sup>. Now in appropriating this theory he was not declaring himself a Platonist. Rather, his ultimate authority was Pythagoras, and he set out to show that it was from none other than Pythagoras that the Platonic theory was itself derived. According to Galen, he did this by tracing the theory back to the master *via* Pythagoras' own pupils<sup>30</sup>. How striking then that our passage, in commenting on Parmenides' proem, interprets the horses drawing his chariot as representing «the irrational impulses and desires of the soul»<sup>31</sup>. Parmenides was himself regarded as a follower of Pythagoras<sup>32</sup>, and it is hard to resist the

source — as was already argued by K. REINHARDT, *Kosmos und Sympathie*, München 1926, pp. 192 ff., and by U. BURKHARDT, *Das Angebliche Heraclit-Nachfolge des Skeptikers Aenesidem*, Bonn 1973, pp. 81 ff. One critic has pointed out, as an objection to my thesis, that τὸ περιέχον (129-30), used of the atmosphere, looks Aristotelian rather than Stoic. Maybe so, but it is certainly Posidonian: see fr. 49.71, 49.331, 169.92 E.-K.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. MARC. AUREL. IV 46 = 22 B 72 D.-K., ᾧ μάλιστα διηνεκῶς ὁμιλοῦσι [λόγῳ τῷ τὰ ὅλα διοικουντι] τούτῳ διαφέρονται, where the bracketed words are now recognised as Marcus' gloss — see e.g. C. H. KAHN, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, Cambridge 1979, p. 30. For the thesis that the Heraclitean doctrine of *logos* as a governing cosmic principle is in its entirety a Stoic invention, see M. L. WEST, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*, Oxford 1971, pp. 124-9, endorsed by J. BARNES, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, London 1979, I, p. 59. If that is right, as I believe it is, our passage is the main source for transmission of the fiction to modern scholarship, and Posidonius has much to answer for. For instance, without his testimony, who would have thought of introducing *logos* into 22 B 50 D.-K. by way of emendation?

<sup>29</sup> FR. 31.16-31 E.-K.

<sup>30</sup> GAL. *PHP* v 6.43. No doubt Plato's *Timaeus*, with its supposedly Pythagorean spokesman Timaeus, was one item of evidence he exploited.

<sup>31</sup> *M* VII 112.

<sup>32</sup> Although formally regarded as a pupil of Xenophanes (cf. *M* VII 111), Parmenides was said (DIOG. LAERT. IX 21) to have been more influenced by Ameinias

conclusion that we have here caught Posidonius in the act (if only *en passant*) of bolstering the Platonic theory's Pythagorean pedigree by finding it, in the form of the *Phaedrus* charioteer simile, already present in Parmenides' poetic imagery.

Cumulatively, these clues seem ample to confirm the hypothesis that the original author was Posidonius. If so, what was the context? Fortunately the old view of Schmekel, that the Pythagorean section, at least, came from a commentary by Posidonius on Plato's *Timaeus*, is now widely rejected, and I need not repeat here the arguments of Mansfeld, Kidd and others<sup>33</sup>. There is, it seems to me, a much better candidate: Posidonius' work *On the criterion* (Περὶ κριτηρίου). Not only is this the most apposite possible title, but the conjecture sheds instant light on a much puzzled-over sentence from Diogenes Laertius' Stoic doxography: «Some of the older Stoics allow *orthos logos* as criterion, as Posidonius says in his *On the criterion*» (VII 74). This is so out of step with the remaining doxography on Stoic criteria that modern interpreters have been compelled either to ignore it or to let it substantially affect their interpretation of Stoic epistemology<sup>34</sup>. But if the Sextus passage derives from the same work by Posidonius, we can see exactly what has happened. When Posidonius, as source of *M* VII 122-5, attributes to Empedocles the criterion of *orthos logos*, there is no pretence that this is a straight doxographical report: it is, quite openly, a speculative reinterpretation of certain remarks made by Empedocles. It is surely in that same spirit, and not by way of formal report, that Posidonius attributed *orthos logos* as a criterion to some of the early Stoics<sup>35</sup>.

the Pythagorean. One tradition even made Xenophanes himself the pupil of a pupil of Pythagoras (DIOG. LAERT. I 15).

<sup>33</sup> A. SCHMEKEL, *Die Philosophie der mittleren Stoa in ihrem geschichtlichen Zusammenhange dargestellt*, Berlin 1892, pp. 405 ff., followed by Taylor (*supra*, note 21) and others. *Contra*, see Mansfeld, Kidd (*supra*, notes 21-2).

<sup>34</sup> For a judicious discussion, see I. KIDD, "Orthos logos" as criterion in the *Stoa*, in *The Criterion of Truth*, ed. by P. HUBY, G. NEAL, Liverpool 1989, pp. 137-50.

<sup>35</sup> Consequently, for Diog. Laert. or his source to append the ascription to a list of formal doxographical reports was highly misleading. It can be safely discounted as evidence. I thus arrive at a similar conclusion to Kidd's (*art. cit.*, previous note), though by a different route.

We should note that our Posidonian section in Sextus is explicitly limited to the early “physicists” (89, 140-1) — a standard designation of the Presocratics. It must represent only one part of Posidonius’ original work *On the criterion*, which clearly included similar analyses of his forerunners in the Stoa and, we may be sure, of Plato, among others.

My own guess would be as follows. Posidonius’ contemporary Antiochus had published a work, the *Canonica*, which *inter alia* classed the Stoics among those who make *enargeia* the criterion and deny *logos* any independent criterial status (I shall supply the grounds for this supposition in section 4). Posidonius, I suggest, published his *On the criterion* as a reply to Antiochus, arguing that it was in fact common ground between the founding Stoics and all their most illustrious forerunners, right back to Pythagoras and Heraclitus<sup>36</sup>, to assign independent criterial status to some kind of *logos*<sup>37</sup>.

Having identified Posidonius as our source, we can now turn to his account of Democritus (135-40). It may seem surprising that Posidonius, a Stoic, should give Democritus the special prominence which, as already noted, attaches to the final position in the list. It can hardly signify special doctrinal authority. On the other hand, Posidonius was only too likely to approve of Democritus’ exceptional intellectual range, so similar

<sup>36</sup> Through the *Timaeus*, Empedocles, the Pythagoreans and Parmenides, at least, he no doubt wanted to trace the *logos* theory back to his ultimate authority, Pythagoras. Xenophanes and Democritus could have been used for the same purpose (cfr. *DIOG. LAERT.* I 15, IX 38). Heraclitus could not be regarded as a follower of Pythagoras, but was revered by the Stoics in his own right. Of those on Posidonius’ list, only Anaxagoras seems hard to explain along these lines; conceivably he was, on the strength of *PLAT. Phaed.* 96-9, judged an ancestor of the “Socratic” and Stoic doctrine of cosmic intelligence. (At *M VII* 89 the Presocratics are called οἱ ἀπὸ Θάλεω φυσικοί; this is a standard designation, and need not imply the inclusion of Thales himself in the list.)

<sup>37</sup> That only “some” early Stoics invoked *orthos logos* would be perfectly compatible with others, including even Zeno, having invoked other kinds of *logos*: cfr. the diversity of *logoi* invoked in *M VII* 89-140. For the suggestion that Posidonius’ *On the criterion* was an appeal to ancient authority, see already, I. KIDD, *art. cit.* However, I prefer to reserve judgement on his further hypothesis that Posidonius had an anti-Chrysippean motive, and that the whole criterion doxography at *DIOG. LAERT.* VII 54 comes from him.

to his own — including physics, mathematics, ethics, geography, astronomy, meteorology, and that general concern for aetiology which is so strongly associated with both philosophers<sup>38</sup>. It may be this special affinity that underlies Posidonius’ preferential treatment of Democritus.

I shall divide the passage into six parts, labelling the citations with the letters *a-i*:

I. «Democritus at times (ὅτε μὲν Usener, ὅτι μὲν codd.) eliminates sensory appearances, and says that none of these appears truly but only in opinion (δόξα), and that the truth in the things that there are is that atoms and void exist. For, he says, (a) “By convention sweet and by convention bitter, by convention hot, by convention cold, by convention colour. In reality atoms and void (νόμῳ γλυκὺ καὶ νόμῳ πικρὸν, νόμῳ θερμόν, νόμῳ ψυχρόν, νόμῳ χροίη· ἐτεῆ δὲ ἄτομα καὶ κενόν)”. That is, perceptibles are objects of belief and opinion, and they do not exist truly, but only atoms and void do» (135).

II. «In his *Kratunteria*, despite (b) having professed to ascribe command over evidence to the senses ὑπεσχημένος ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι τὸ κράτος τῆς πίστεως ἀναθεῖναι, he none the less is found condemning them. For he says: (c) “We in reality have no reliable understanding, but one which changes in accordance with the state of the body and of the things which penetrate and collide with us (ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ μὲν ἔοντι οὐδὲν ἀτρεκέες συνίμεν, μεταπίπτον δὲ κατὰ τε σώματος διαθήκην καὶ τῶν ἐπεισιόντων καὶ τῶν ἀντιστηρίζοντων)». And again he says: (d) “That in reality we do not understand what each thing is or is not like, has been shown in many ways (ἐτεῆ μὲν νυν ὅτι οἶον ἕκαστον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐ συνίμεν, πολλαχῆ δεδήλωται)» (136).

III. «And in his *Peri ideon*: (e) “Man must know by this yardstick: that he is cut off from reality (γινώσκειν τε χρὴ ἀνθρωπον τῷδε τῷ κανόνι, ὅτι ἐτεῆς ἀπήλλακται)”, and again (f) “This argument too shows that in reality we know nothing about anything, but seeming for each of us is an influx [or ‘reshaping’] (δηλοῖ μὲν δὴ καὶ οὗτος ὁ λόγος ὅτι ἐτεῆ οὐδὲν ἴσμεν περὶ οὐδενός, ἀλλ’ ἐπιρυσμὶ ἐκάστοισιν ἢ δόξῃς)”, and also (g) “And yet it will be clear that to know in reality what each thing is like is beyond us” (καίτοι δῆλον ἔσται ὅτι ἐτεῆ οἶον ἕκαστον γινώσκειν ἐν ἀπόρῳ ἔστι)» (137).

IV. «Now in these [i.e. (c)-(g)?] he is virtually (σχεδόν) rejecting all cognition, even though it is only the senses that he attacks specifically» (137 fin.).

<sup>38</sup> *DEMOCR.* B 118 D.-K., cfr. *POSIDON.* t. 85, fr. 176 E.-K.

V. «But in his *Canons* he says that there are two kinds of knowledge (γνώσεις), the one through the senses, the other through the mind. Of these, he calls the one through the mind “genuine” (γνησίην), ascribing to it reliability for judging the truth, while the one through the senses he names “bastard” (σκοτίην), depriving it of infallibility for the discernment of truth. His precise words are: (b) “Of knowing there are two forms, the one genuine, the other bastard. And of the bastard kind this is the complete list: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch. The other is genuine, but separated from this one (γνώμης δὲ δύο εἰσὶν ἰδέαι, ἡ μὲν γνησίη, ἡ δὲ σκοτίη: καὶ σκοτίης μὲν τὰδε σύμπαντα, ὅφισι ἀκοῇ ὁδμῇ γεῦσις φαῦσις, ἡ δὲ γνησίη, ἀποκεκριμένη δὲ ταύτης)”. Then, by way of judging the genuine one superior to the bastard one, he adds these words (εἶτα προκρίνων τῆς σκοτίης τὴν γνησίην, ἐπιφέρει λέγων): (i) “When the bastard one is no longer able either to see smaller, nor to hear nor to smell nor to taste nor to sense by touch, but finer (ὅταν ἡ σκοτίη μηκέτι δύνηται μήτε ὁρῆν ἐπ’ ἔλαττον μήτε ἀκούειν μήτε ὁδμασθαι μήτε γεύεσθαι μήτε ἐν τῇ φαύσει αἰσθάνεσθαι, ἀλλ’ ἐπίλεπτότερον)”. Therefore according to Democritus too reason is the criterion: he calls it “genuine knowing” (γνησίη γνώμη)» (138-9).

VI. «Diotimus used to say that according to Democritus there are three criteria. The criterion for the cognition of things non-evident is appearances; for “Appearances are a sight of things non-evident”, in the words of Anaxagoras, whom Democritus praises for this. That for inquiry is the concept (τῆν ἔννοιαν); for “Concerning every topic, my boy, there is but one starting-point, to know what the inquiry is about” [paraphrasing Plato, *Phaedr.* 237 B]. And that for choice and avoidance is the feelings; for what we have an affinity for is to be chosen, what we are alienated from is to be avoided» (140).

Step I seeks to establish the significance of passage (a), Democritus’ best-known statement about the metaphysics of cognition. It is presented as evidence, not for his acceptance of *logos* as a criterion, but for his firm rejection of the senses. Sextus might be thought open to criticism for failing to add B 125<sup>39</sup>, the ensuing reply of the senses, attested by Galen: «Poor mind, you get your evidence (πίστεις) from us, then you demolish us. Our fall is your demolition». But it seems much more likely

<sup>39</sup> E.g. G. S. KIRK, J. E. RAVEN, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Cambridge 1957, p. 424, «It is odd that Sextus did not quote it», with the possible further implication that this casts doubt on its authenticity.

that B 125 is the very remark that he is summarising as citation (b) at the start of Π. This is always translated as telling us that in his *Kratunteria*, despite having “promised” to ascribe τὸ κράτος τῆς πίστεως to the senses, he none the less is found condemning them. I doubt if this notion of an unfulfilled promise can be sustained by the Greek. Ὑπισχεῖσθαι plus *future* infinitive is “promise”, but that sense seems virtually unattested with any other tense of the infinitive<sup>40</sup>. The rule is observed elsewhere, incidentally, not only by Sextus, but also by Posidonius<sup>41</sup>. Here, used with an aorist infinitive, it surely means “profess”, “claim”<sup>42</sup>. If so, in his work the *Kratunteria*, Democritus, *claimed* (not *promised*) to ascribe command<sup>43</sup> of *pistis* to the senses, but none the less condemned them. Surely this “claim” is the very one implied in the reply of the senses (B 125): the mind depends on the senses for its *pisteis*, so is in no position to condemn them. If that is right<sup>44</sup>, we can infer that the famous reply of the senses occurred in the *Kratunteria*, and that Sextus, or rather Posidonius, has not after all suppressed it, even if he has chosen not to quote it verbatim.

Moreover, although the expression τὸ κράτος τῆς πίστεως does not occur in the reply of the senses itself, we can with reasonable confidence

<sup>40</sup> See L.-S.-J. *s.v.*; K.-G. 1 195-7.

<sup>41</sup> “Claim”, with present infinitive: *PH* II 148, *M* VIII 283. “Promise” with future infinitive: *Posidon.* fr. 60 E.-K.

<sup>42</sup> Admittedly Ὑπισχεῖσθαι + aorist infinitive is quite hard to parallel at all, the “profess” sense usually taking the present infinitive, since it describes a regular or continuing action, as in *PLAT. Prot.* 319 A, where Protagoras professes «to make men good citizens». The force of the aorist will be that Democritus’ claim to prove (or to have proved) the point referred to a single completed act.

<sup>43</sup> Τὸ κράτος τῆς πίστεως is most commonly translated «the power of persuasion», *vel sim.*, meaning “the power to persuade”. A *T.L.G.* search on the most directly comparable prose authors — Herodotus, Thucydides and the *Corpus Hippocraticum* — has turned up no parallel for this construction after κράτος, with which an accompanying genitive is usually objective (“power over...”: 11 occurrences), and failing that, subjective (“power exercised by...”: 2 occurrences).

<sup>44</sup> Since writing the above, I have found the same suggestion made by H. LANGERBECK, *ΔΟΞΙΑΣ ΕΠΙΡΥΣΜΙΗ*, Berlin 1935, p. 117, although without discussion of the meaning of ὕπεσχημένος. So too perhaps E. ASMIS, *Epicurus’ Scientific Method*, Ithaca/London 1984, p. 345.

attribute it to Democritus himself, not to Posidonius or Sextus. For *κράτος* clearly picks up the theme of the *Kratunteria*, which seems to have been a work devoted to adjudicating the struggle for “command” between intellect and senses<sup>45</sup>. As for *πίστις*, although this is the term used, along with its cognates, throughout *M VII* 89-140 for evidential reliability<sup>46</sup>, it also features in the reply of the senses with the weaker meaning “evidence” or “assurance”, without any obvious connotation of ultimate reliability. In the power struggle, it seems, the senses arrogated evidential supremacy to themselves (*b*), but were then nevertheless condemned as untrustworthy (*c*)-(g).

No contradiction need be involved: Democritus could quite consistently hold *both* that the senses do indeed command the evidence available to the mind, *and* that we know nothing for certain, because the senses are themselves unreliable<sup>47</sup>. Posidonius’ point is not that Democritus contradicted himself within a single work (let alone that he broke a promise), but that his remark about the priority of the senses was not, in its context, an attempt to make perception an acceptable criterion.

Posidonius’ overall strategy in the passage is clear enough. In *I* he quotes Democritus’ best-known condemnation of the senses. In *v* he will go on to present him, in accordance with this, as elevating reason above perception as a criterion. He could if he had wished have restricted himself to those two moves. But in between he chooses to mention a possible obstacle: Democritus’ restoration to the senses of control over evidence in his *Kratunteria*. To accommodate the obstacle, he points out, first, that this restoration was not enough to prevent Democritus, in the very same work (*II*), as well as elsewhere (*III*), from numerous pessimistic utterances about the possibility of *any* knowledge (texts (*c*)-(g)). He thus succeeds in showing that, even if Democritus in a way privileged perception over reason, it was not as a *criterion*.

But the price of the achievement is to have drawn attention to passages (*c*)-(g), in which Democritus appeared to deny *any* route to know-

<sup>45</sup> DIOG. LAERT. IX 46-7.

<sup>46</sup> *M VII* 89-90, 111, 124, 126, 131, 134, 138.

<sup>47</sup> The observation that the two assertions can be consistent I owe to remarks by Myles Burnyeat.

ledge, i.e. any criterion at all. How then is Posidonius to rescue the *logos* criterion? In *IV* he concedes that passages (*c*)-(g) amount virtually<sup>48</sup> to a complete denial of cognition — although, he adds significantly, Democritus’ only *specific* attacks are on the senses. Clearly it is part of Posidonius’ damage-limitation exercise that (*c*)-(g) should be seen as primarily directed at the senses, and not at the powers of reason as such. This in fact fits (*c*) well, and is at least compatible with the general disavowals of knowledge in (*d*), (*e*) and (*g*). The only serious doubt concerns (*f*), in which the expression *ἐπιρροσμή ἐκάστοισιν ἢ δόξιν* can with some plausibility be read as questioning the validity of all “belief”, on the ground that it is nothing more than a mechanical realignment (*ἐπιρροσμή*) of the soul atoms<sup>49</sup>. But the alternative reading, which ties it solely to sense-perception («seeming for each person is an influx») has had more than enough supporters over the years (starting with Hesychius<sup>50</sup>) to make Posidonius’ assertion a perfectly defensible one.

Thus Posidonius insists, in support of his interpretation, that Democritus’ primary attack is *always* on the senses. He concedes that in some works the dependence of the mind on the senses allows it to be dragged down with them. His final move, in *v*, is to draw attention to an important exception: that in one work, the *Canons*, reason was permitted to be *independent* of the senses, and was granted the status of a criterion. Once more we are witnessing Posidonius’ pluralistic approach. He is quite happy to leave intact the “no criterion” interpretation of Democritus, which we know was current in his day<sup>51</sup>. He even supplies us with the evidence for it. As with Empedocles, so too with Democritus, what matters most is that *somewhere* in his writings the identification of *logos* as criterion can be found.

The crucial text from the *Canons* comes in two parts. The first, (*b*), establishes Democritus’ separation of the two forms of knowledge. The

<sup>48</sup> I here take *σχεδόν* to modify the whole clause. If it were taken to modify *πᾶσαν* alone (“nearly all”), the sentence would have more relevance to (*a*) than to (*c*)-(g).

<sup>49</sup> Thus e.g. J. BARNES, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, cit., II, pp. 258-9.

<sup>50</sup> Hesychius *s.v.* glosses *ἐπιρροσμή* as *ἐπιρρέον*.

<sup>51</sup> It was held by Antiochus (Cic. *ac.* I 44), to whom I have already suggested Posidonius may be reacting, and by the contemporary New Academy (*ibid.* II 73).

second, (i), supplies the further evidence needed to show that he prefers “genuine” knowledge to “bastard” knowledge. Notoriously, (i) presents a crux by apparently breaking off in mid sentence ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ λεπτότερον. I shall not recount the numerous ingenious emendations that have been proposed, but shall try instead a new approach.

We have already identified Posidonius as the source of the entire passage, 89-140, and noted his predilection for verbatim quotation. What can we learn from the rest of the passage about his *methods* of quotation? Two points in particular. First, like many ancient collectors of quotations, he is prepared to break up a continuous passage in order to interject glosses of his own. A clear case is his citation of Empedocles at 123-4. The two excerpts are metrically continuous, the interruption having occurred in the middle of a line, and editors have no hesitation in reattaching them. Posidonius interrupts merely in order to point out the lesson to be learnt in the next bit. He introduces the first excerpt by saying (123): «Concerning the fact that the discrimination of truth does not lie in the senses, he says the following». Then comes the first excerpt, after which he introduces the second by saying (124): «And concerning the fact that the truth is not totally unattainable, but attainable as far as human *logos* can reach, he makes this clear by adding to the previous words (τοῖς προκειμένοις ἐπιφέρειν)» — whereupon the quotation continues.

Second, note that in the passage just quoted the regular verb for “add” in citations, ἐπιφέρειν, is used to indicate a *directly adjacent* addition. When there is a gap, as between the two Heraclitean quotations at 132-3, he scrupulously indicates this with the expression (133) ὀλίγα προσδιελθὼν ἐπιφέρει, «a little later he adds»<sup>52</sup>.

If we apply these two lessons to the *Canons* quotations in v, we can see that there is a strong *prima facie* case for reading the two excerpts as continuous, since they are joined by a simple ἐπιφέρει, with no qualification to indicate a gap<sup>53</sup>. As with the Empedocles passage, Posidonius’

<sup>52</sup> What follows is textually disputed, but it seems to me that the correct punctuation must be ἐπιφέρει διὸ δεῖ ἔπεσθαι τῷ κοινῷ (ξυνὸς γὰρ ὁ κοινός): “τοῦ λόγου δὲ ἐόντος ξυνοῦ: «he adds why one should follow the common *logos* (because the common one is [what he calls] *xunos*): “Although the *logos* is *xunos*”».

<sup>53</sup> Εἶτα, “then”, has no such connotation. Cf. ATHEN. 188 B, where two directly adjacent portions of Homer are linked with εἶτα.

interjection signals not an interval in the text, but the need for a guiding gloss. The first excerpt establishes the existence of the two forms of knowledge, and pauses after ἀποκεκρυμμένη δὲ ταύτης<sup>54</sup>, since this is the firmest indication that the two forms are separate and independent. He then glosses the following excerpt: «Then, by way of judging the genuine one superior to the bastard one, he adds these words». And the second excerpt, which ensues, does indeed imply something about the superiority of γνησίη γνώμη to σκοτίη γνώμη, since it says that the former takes over where the latter can no longer cope.

I propose, therefore, that we should try our hardest to follow these clues, and read the two excerpts as continuous<sup>55</sup>. Suppose that we place nothing more than a comma between them. The sense at the join (starting at ἡ δὲ γνησίη in (b) can then run: «The one which is genuine, but separate from this one, (is) when the bastard one is no longer able either to see in the direction of greater smallness». The harsh ellipsis of the verb does at least fit the overall style of the passage, which has already suppressed it in the equally laconic μὲν clause with the words σκοτίης μὲν τάδε σύμπαντα<sup>56</sup>.

That Posidonius’ gloss should thus interrupt the grammar does not seem to me problematic. What I, like many others, do find incredible is that in the second excerpt he should have broken off the quotation half way through a subordinate clause, thus obliterating the grammar and coherence of the sentence as a whole. Scholarly discomfort on the point has given birth to many ingenious editorial supplements to the text of Sextus to complete the sentence. But an easier solution, I suggest, would

<sup>54</sup> In defence of this over the *v. l.* ἀποκεκρυμμένη, see M. M. SASSI, *Le teorie della percezione in Democrito*, Firenze 1978, p. 214 note.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213 does print them as continuous, although by placing a full stop between them, and not translating, she leaves it unclear how the grammar could work. I have not found other scholars committing themselves on the matter.

<sup>56</sup> Moreover, at least two clear advantages are won. (a) Unless the text continues in this way, we are forced to read ἡ δὲ γνησίη at the end of (b) as «The other is genuine» — a rather lame repetition of what we have already been told. With the text continuing, on the other hand, we can read it as resumptive, «The one which is genuine». (b) We avoid the problem of why the second excerpt should, in addition to breaking off in mid sentence (see below), also *start* in mid sentence.

be to leave the text intact, except for a tiny repunctuation and re-accentuation near the end<sup>57</sup>. That is, we should simply delete the comma after αἰσθάνεσθαι, and accentuate the next word ἄλλ', "other things". The whole saying could then read:

γνώμης δὲ δύο εἰσὶν ἰδέαι, ἡ μὲν γνησίη ἡ δὲ σκοτίη. καὶ σκοτίης μὲν τὰδε σύμπαντα, ὄψις ἀκοή ὀσμὴ γεῦσις φαῦσις. ἡ δὲ γνησίη, ἀποκεκριμένη δὲ ταύτης, ὅταν ἡ σκοτίη μηκέτι δύναται μήτε ὄρῃν ἐπ' ἔλαττον, μήτε ἀκούειν μήτε ὀσμᾶσθαι μήτε γεύεσθαι μήτε ἐν τῇ φαύσει αἰσθάνεσθαι ἄλλ' ἐπὶ λεπτότερον.

«Of knowing there are two forms, the one genuine, the other bastard. And of the bastard kind this is the complete list: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch. The one which is genuine, but separate from this one, is when the bastard one is no longer able either to see in the direction of greater smallness, nor to hear or smell or taste or sense by touch other things in the direction of greater fineness».

On this reading, our incapacity to see ἐπ' ἔλαττον in the first limb is balanced in the second<sup>58</sup> by our incapacity to hear, taste etc. "other things" (i.e. other sense objects than those of sight) ἐπὶ λεπτότερον. This distinction between smallness and fineness embodies a perfectly reasonable point about perceptual thresholds. For vision, the threshold below which perception fails is standardly one of size: hence ἐπ' ἔλαττον. For the other senses, the relevant threshold is not that of size. Rather, certain flavours, odours, sounds and textures are too "fine" or "subtle" to detect: hence ἐπὶ λεπτότερον.

I do not claim that this is an immaculate specimen of Greek prose style. But it is, I suggest, convincing enough to render emendation both unnecessary and risky<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> Neither punctuation nor accentuation in the mss. is likely to have ancient authority, so that changing them is not, except in a trivial sense, emendation at all.

<sup>58</sup> The construal involves an asymmetry between the first two occurrences of μήτε, which are co-ordinate, and the subsequent ones, which are subordinate to the second: "Neither *a*, nor *b* or *c* or *d* or *e*". For Ionic prose use of this subordinate μήτε, cfr. Hipp. *epid.* 5.1.14, v 214 L., οὔτε ἐφθέγγετο, οὔτε ἠσθάνετο οὔτε ἔργου οὔτε λόγου. Likewise at *prorrh.* 2.17, ix 42 L., and *diaet.* 9, ii 296 L.

<sup>59</sup> "Ἄλλ'" is the least satisfactory word. Perhaps at least read unelided ἄλλα. The accusative after αἰσθάνεσθαι is acceptable (cfr. e.g. CRITIAS 88 B 39 D.-K.). But the fragment would nevertheless read better with ἄλλ' deleted.

Encouraged, then, by confidence in our source Posidonius and in his meticulous methods of textual citation, we can perhaps, along these lines, see our way to vindicating the integrity of the text as he has reported it.

It now remains only to consider VI, where Posidonius adds from one Diotimus a quite different interpretation of Democritus. There is an old debate as to whether this is the Democritean Diotimus of Tyre, or the Stoic Diotimus. Of the Democritean, we know only that he had his own distinctive formula for the ethical *telos*<sup>60</sup>. Of the Stoic, we know that he was a detractor of Epicurus, on whom the Epicurean Zeno of Sidon was said to have taken lethal revenge<sup>61</sup> — an anecdote which places him in the late second or early first century B.C.

Majority opinion has long favoured the Democritean Diotimus as the source cited in our passage<sup>62</sup>. Who, after all, is likelier to have propounded an interpretation of Democritus than a Democritean? But the case for the Stoic is much strengthened by the identification of our source as Posidonius. As a Stoic contemporary of this Diotimus, he is almost bound to have known him personally. Moreover, in Diog. Laert. x 3-4 Posidonius is listed directly after Diotimus as a fellow detractor of Epicurus. One of the charges brought by the detractors listed there is that Epicurus plagiarised his doctrines from, among others, Democritus.

<sup>60</sup> 76 A 2 D.-K.

<sup>61</sup> DIOG. LAERT. x 3; ATHEN. 611 B = ZENO OF SIDON fr. 4 Angeli-Colaizzo («Cron. Erc.», ix (1979)). In the latter text, where the correction of "Theotimus" to "Diotimus" has met with general acceptance, he was arrested at Zeno's instigation, and condemned to death. It seems absurd to suppose that the actual charge was defamation of Epicurus — what legal basis could that have had? The text permits the less implausible guess that the defamation merely constituted the *motive* for Zeno's vendetta.

<sup>62</sup> His identification as the Democritean started with R. HIRZEL, *Der Demokriteer Diotimos*, «Hermes», xvii (1882) pp. 326-8. Since then it has regularly been presented as established fact, e.g. H. LANGERBECK, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-20. Most recently, it has been amplified by M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-5, bringing in evidence from the Herculaneum Papyri. In favour of the Stoic, however, see E. ZELLER-R. MONDOLFO, *La filosofia dei Greci nel suo sviluppo storico*, I, 5<sup>a</sup> parte, Firenze 1969, p. 318 note 86; P. NATORP, *op. cit.*, p. 190 note; H. TARRANT, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

And the interpretation of Democritus quoted from Diotimus itself betrays signs of a directly anti-Epicurean motive of just this kind. It looks like an attempt, on the flimsiest evidence, to show that Epicurus' three criteria of truth — *αἰσθήσεις*, *προλήψεις* and *πάθη* — were not original to him but anticipated by Democritus<sup>63</sup>. He even listed them in the same order as Epicurus<sup>64</sup>. What more likely, then, than that Posidonius knew the novel interpretation of Democritus from his fellow anti-Epicurean<sup>65</sup> Diotimus<sup>66</sup>, and added it for good measure. This weakness for citing contemporary sources is one which we have already noted in Aenesidemus, and which Posidonius shows himself to share when he quotes an obscure parallel from Asclepiades in exegesis of Anaxagoras (91).

#### 4. *Epicurus*

In dealing with the report of the Epicurean theory on the criterion, I shall try to be briefer<sup>67</sup>. It occurs in the final doxographical section, VII 141-260 (see table *supra*, p. 22), which covers first the entire Academy from Plato to Carneades, in chronological order, followed by the Cy-

<sup>63</sup> Cfr. P. NATORP, *ibid.*; F. DECLEVA CAZZI, *art. cit.*, p. 405. The loose citation of *Phaedr.* 237 B as a gloss on the *ἔννοια* criterion may be another characteristic Posidonian invocation of a parallel, *Phaedrus* being one of Posidonius' favourite two Platonic dialogues (cfr. fr. 31.16-30 E.-K.). But if its author is Diotimus, it perhaps represents an additional swipe: Plato too had hit on this criterion before Epicurus, as Epicurus himself conceded (*Cic. de fin.* II 3-4).

<sup>64</sup> For the order in Epicurus's *Canon*, see DIOG. LAERT. X 31. This in itself casts doubt on Diotimus' identification with the Democritean: we know of no "Democriteans" late enough to have responded to Epicurus.

<sup>65</sup> For Posidonius' virulent anti-Epicureanism, see I. KIDD, *Posidonius*, cit., II, 2, pp. 977-8, with fr. 22, 46-7, 149, 160, 187.

<sup>66</sup> Ἐλεγεῖν (140) slightly favours word of mouth over a written source — Diotimus «used to say». But that reading is not compulsory: ἔλεγε(ν) can be used in literary citations too, possibly including, in the present passage, 92 on Philolaus.

<sup>67</sup> For a highly positive evaluation of this passage, see M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-48, who judges it «un modello di acribia e di profondità» and «un raro esempio di precisione storiografica». I am much indebted to Gigante's observations, especially on the terminology of the passage, even though my own evaluation will be more negative.

renaics, Epicurus, the Peripatetics, and lastly the Stoics. Again, it has certain recurrent features which distinguish it, as a whole, from the preceding two divisions.

(1) Its author has a consuming interest in the notion of *enargeia*, which recurs numerous times and in connexion with every school discussed<sup>68</sup>, despite the slightness of the interest shown in it by Sextus in the subsequent critical section of the book.

(2) There are practically no verbatim quotations. In common with the Aenesideman section, and in contrast to the Posidonian section, the author's main resource is paraphrase. But he differs from the Aenesideman section too, in his very heavy reliance on technical terms as a key to interpretation<sup>69</sup>. Of course, to a large extent this difference reflects the fact that his philosophers are later in date and use a more obviously technical vocabulary. But it is instructive to see him applying the same method, quite inappropriately, even to Plato. In his sole verbatim quotation (142), he cites *Timaeus*, 27 D in order to extract from it the word *περιληπτόν* and to convert it, with little plausibility, into the technical term *περιληπτικόν*, "comprehensive", i.e. inclusive of both *enargeia* and truth, which he then reconverts into the Stoic technical term *καταληπτικόν* (144). This contrasts with Posidonius' way of exploiting the *Timaeus* (93, 116, 119), as a source of ideas, not terminology.

(3) The author is far more addicted than either Aenesidemus or Posidonius to illustrating a point by the use of examples<sup>70</sup> and analogies<sup>71</sup>.

Who is it this time? There are strong reasons for suspecting our source to be none other than Antiochus of Ascalon<sup>72</sup> — yet another

<sup>68</sup> Academy: 141, 143-4; cfr. 160-1. Cyrenaics: 200. Epicureans: 203, 211-2, 215-6. Peripatetics: 218-9. Stoics: 257.

<sup>69</sup> 158 on Arcesilaus and 169 on Carneades are particularly striking instances, but the feature is ubiquitous.

<sup>70</sup> 162, 170, 176-8, 180, 186-8, 192-3, 208-9, 212-4, 244-5, 249-50, 254 ff.

<sup>71</sup> 146, 163, 179, 182, 184, 220-1, 226, 239, 251-2, 259-60.

<sup>72</sup> I am not sure that the case has been argued before for precisely our division (141-260). R. HIRZEL, *Untersuchungen zu Ciceros philosophischen Schriften*, Leipzig 1883, III, pp. 493-524, argued at length for Antiochus as source of most of it, though not including the Cyrenaic or Epicurean parts. I have myself argued for Antiochus

contemporary of Aenesidemus. One initial clue is that Antiochus is twice cited by name in the passage. At 162 it is for his elucidation of Carneades on one particular point. At 201 Sextus quotes a cryptic passage from book II of Antiochus' *Canonica*, about an unnamed doctor who placed the criterion entirely in the senses, adding that Antiochus seems here to be hinting at Asclepiades. If Antiochus is the source of the entire passage 141-260, why should he be named just at these two points<sup>73</sup>? In the first passage, it would be because he had explicitly presented the elucidation of Carneades as his own addition. In the second, it looks as if Aenesidemus, who was clearly exceptionally interested in his contemporary Asclepiades<sup>74</sup>, was struck by a passing allusion<sup>75</sup> in Antiochus' book, and preserved it verbatim as evidence for his conjecture that Asclepiades was meant. The two named citations may not prove the hypothesis that Antiochus' *Canonica* was the source throughout, but they are fully consistent with it<sup>76</sup>.

as source of the Epicurean part (*On signs*, in *Science and Speculation*, ed. by J. BARNES, J. BRUNSCHWIG, Cambridge 1982, pp. 239-72, at pp. 263-72, summarised in A. A. LONG and D. N. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Cambridge 1987, section 18). H. TARRANT, *art. cit.*, developed in his *Scepticism or Platonism? cit.*, defends Antiochus as source of the "entire" doxography 89-260. (My reasons for dissenting from his view as regards 89-140 consist in the distinguishing features of the two passages, which I have listed above, plus incredulity that the readings of Plato at 119 and 141-2 could have come from the same source.) J. BARNES, *Antiochus of Ascalon*, in *Philosophia Togata, Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society*, ed. by M. GRIFFIN, J. BARNES, Oxford 1989, pp. 51-96, at pp. 64-5, is sceptical about attributing any significant part of the passage to Antiochus.

<sup>73</sup> This is an objection raised by J. BARNES, *ibid.*, I have already tried to anticipate a similar objection about Posidonius in note 23 above.

<sup>74</sup> Witness his decision to preserve from Posidonius the rather marginal passage of Asclepiades at 91, and more especially the frequent listing of Asclepiades' doctrines elsewhere in Sextus — a rare honour to accord to a thinker of so late a date, and barely matched in Sextus by the treatment of any other first-century B.C. or later thinker (except Pyrrhonists and medical schools).

<sup>75</sup> The text makes it clear that the doctor, whether or not he was Asclepiades, was mentioned briefly in passing, and hence cannot have had a formal place in the book's doxography.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. H. TARRANT, *op. cit.*, p. 95: «unless it is to be supposed that this unmemorable passage of Antiochus [about Asclepiades] had for some reason stuck in Sextus' memory, there is little alternative to supposing that the *Canonica* is the work he had been using, to a greater or lesser degree, in other parts of the doxography».

Although these mentions of Antiochus' name are a useful clue, and the title of his work, *Canonica*, is entirely apposite to a history of theories on the criterion, the strongest reasons for identifying him as the source are doctrinal. *Enargeia* (Latin *perspicuitas*) is a central notion in Antiochus' epistemology as we know it from Cicero's *Academica* (II 11-62)<sup>77</sup>. Some facts, he holds, are self-evident or self-certifying, not in need of rational proof — especially, though not exclusively<sup>78</sup>, those grasped by the senses. Reason is derived from these self-evident cognitions. It can in turn protect them from sceptical assault, but is assigned no independent criterial status. Such is the position which Antiochus adopted as the best available bulwark against the fallibilist epistemology from which he was setting out to rescue the contemporary Academy.

It is only too easy to see how the passage at *M* VII 141-260 could have been written to trace the historical evolution of just this concept from Plato, with whom it opens, to the Stoics, with whom it closes — a line of descent which Antiochus acknowledged as his own<sup>79</sup>. It shows Plato offering a complex criterion, in which reason and perceptual *enargeia* are interdependent. The Academy then develops this criterion inadequately. Plato's early followers, Speusippus and Xenocrates, separate the two criteria, even though they both acknowledge some kind of interaction between them too. And his later followers Arcesilaus and Carneades try to abolish criteria altogether (including an attack on *enargeia*, 160-3), but significantly they too are in the end «virtually compelled» by the prac-

<sup>77</sup> Even if (as maintained by H. TARRANT, *art. cit.*, p. 81 note 50, and *Scepticism or Platonism? cit.*, esp. pp. 89 ff.) the *Canonica* belonged to the phase in which Antiochus still professed allegiance to Philo of Larissa's fallibilism (see *Cic. ac.* II 69), *enargeia* will already have been a central epistemological concept for him, as it was for Philo (see Tarrant). But the association of Plato with *κατάληψις* convinces me that Antiochus was already disloyal to Philo at the time, even if this predates their formal schism in 87: Antiochus was already regarded as a virtual Stoic in the 90s (see my *The end of the Academy*, «Phronesis», XXVI (1981) pp. 67-75, at p. 70). I cannot agree with H. TARRANT, *op. cit.*, pp. 53 ff., that Philo ever accepted *κατάληψις*.

<sup>78</sup> E.g. *Cic. ac.* II 24.

<sup>79</sup> Very probably Antiochus' book covered the Presocratics too, since Augustine, *Cic. ac.* II 15, tells us that he *veterum physicorum [...] implorabat fidem*. He was no doubt rebutting the sceptical interpretation of them current in the Academy, as Lucullus does at *Cic. ac.* II 14, when he asserts that their sceptical pronouncements are no more than occasional outbursts of frustration by committed dogmatists.

tical demands of life to accept one for themselves<sup>80</sup>. Meanwhile outside the Academy Plato's philosophical relatives the Cyrenaics are defending an over-condensed version of his position, in which *enargeia* is emphasised at the expense of *logos* (201); and that tendency is further developed by Epicurus. A third, and more respectable, line of development is then added. The Peripatetics offer an *enarges* complex criterion, whereby both perception and intellect directly grasp self-evident objects, emphasising that *logos*, although dominant, is itself derivative from perception. This third tendency is then seen through to its culmination by the Stoics, with their doctrine of sensory *phantasia kataleptike*, which, once they have finally resolved their internal quarrels about it, is recognised to be *enarges* to the point of irresistibility (257)<sup>81</sup>.

This is a typically Antiochean view of philosophical history. That Plato's own position had already gestured towards Stoic *katalepsis* is implied, as we have seen, by interpreting his *περιληπτόν* as embodying the Stoic concept of the *κατάληπτικόν*. And despite the wrong directions taken by his earlier followers within the Academy, the story seems to continue, the Peripatetics and Stoics did find the right path<sup>82</sup>: they eventually established a sound Platonist epistemology — very much like the one Antiochus' follower Lucullus is found defending in Cicero's *Academica*<sup>83</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> 166, cfr. 158. A characteristically Antiochean remark: cfr. Cic. *ac.* II 34, on Academics who, *convicio veritatis coacti*, allow that some things are *ἐναργῆ*. For the suggestion that the Carneadean arguments here served Antiochus in a more positive role, see H. TARRANT, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-94.

<sup>81</sup> For Antiochus' use of this same doctrine from the "Younger Stoics", see Cic. *ac.* II 38.

<sup>82</sup> Cfr. Varro's rather similar Antiochean history of epistemology in *Academica*, I: the early Academics put the criterion in the mind, not the senses (30-2); Zeno "corrected" the system (35, 40-3), making *κατάληψις* the sole basis of knowledge.

<sup>83</sup> At *ac.* II 142-3 Cicero echoes a (presumably) Philonian attack on Antiochus: regarding the criterion, Antiochus can hardly agree with Protagoras and the Cyrenaics and Epicurus and Plato and Xenocrates and Aristotle; he in fact follows Chrysippus alone. Apart from Protagoras, this list coincides entirely with *M* VII 141-260, and gains added point if these were all authorities invoked by Antiochus as more or less on the right side.

What will be thought surprising is his inclusion of the Cyrenaics and Epicureans, who were never regarded as belonging to the Platonist tradition. His wish to borrow them as honorary allies clearly arises not from any general philosophical approval but from his conviction that they had, if nothing else, recognised the supreme criterial power of *enargeia*. In the case of the Cyrenaics we are explicitly offered the justification that they are Plato's close philosophical relatives, fellow disciples of Socrates (190). In the case of the Epicureans, no such kinship could be invoked. But the fact that Epicurean hedonism was seen by Antiochus, as by others, as a revised version of Cyrenaic hedonism<sup>84</sup> may have been sufficient to justify the linking of the two schools here. And it is instructive to note that virulent anti-Epicureanism is not an apparent feature of Antiochus' outlook<sup>85</sup>, as it is for the Stoics and the New Academics. In Cicero's *Academica* his Antiochean spokesman not only invokes the Cyrenaics as allies (II 21), but also treats Epicurus with a relative lack of hostility: Epicurus rightly required the wise man to separate opinion from *enargeia* (II 45), even though he failed to see this aim through to completion (*ibid.*), and went too far in insisting that *all* perceptions are true (II 19, cfr. 101).

There is therefore no ground for doubt that even the Epicurean section, 203-16, originates from Antiochus' *Canonica*. There are, I believe, no positive reasons to prefer Natorp's derivation of it from the Epicurean Demetrius of Laconia<sup>86</sup>. And in fact there are very strong grounds for holding that the source cannot possibly be an Epicurean at all. Since I have argued this at length elsewhere<sup>87</sup>, I shall endeavour to be brief.

<sup>84</sup> E.g. Cic. *de fin.* II 35; Aristocles *ap. Eus. praep. evang.* XIV 18, 31 (= ARISTIP. IV A 173 S.S.R.).

<sup>85</sup> Luck's collection of Antiochus' fragments, G. LUCK, *Der Akademiker Antiochos*, Bern/Stuttgart 1953, and the supplemented collection by H. METTE, «Lustrum», xxviii-xxix (1986/7), offer no evidence of anti-Epicureanism half as strong as Cicero's or Plutarch's.

<sup>86</sup> I have argued against Natorp's grounds for the attribution in *On signs*, cit., p. 264 with note 60. Cfr. also *infra* note 91. But this does not preclude the possibility that Antiochus himself drew information from Demetrius' writings: see further, note 95.

<sup>87</sup> Cfr. *supra* note 72.

In the closing paragraphs of the Epicurean section, we are offered a summary of the twin Epicurean principles, *epimarturesis* and *ouk antimarturesis*, the object no doubt being to show how even in scientific discovery *enargeia* was the sole Epicurean criterion<sup>88</sup>. In the course of this, the latter principle, which I translate “non-contestation”, and its converse *antimarturesis* or “contestation”, are illustrated with the standard Epicurean example of the inference from motion to void. The description includes the following<sup>89</sup>:

«Non-contestation (*ouk antimarturesis*) is the following (*akolouthia*) from that which is apparent of the non-apparent thing posited and believed. For example, Epicurus, in saying that there is void, which is non-apparent, confirms this through the self-evident fact of motion. For if void does not exist there ought not to be motion either, since the moving body would lack a place to pass into, as a result of everything’s being full and solid. Therefore the non-apparent thing believed is uncontested by that which is apparent, since there is motion. Contestation (*antimarturesis*), on the other hand, is something which conflicts with non-contestation. For it is the elimination (*anaskeue*) of that which is apparent by the positing of the non-apparent thing. For example, the Stoic says that void does not exist, judging something non-apparent, but once this is posited about it, that which is apparent, namely motion, ought to be coeliminated (*sunanaskeuazesthai*) with it. For if void does not exist, necessarily motion does not occur either, according to the method already demonstrated».

It is well recognised that this *anaskeue* terminology does not go back to Epicurus, but belongs to the debate between Epicureans and their probably Stoic opponents reported in Philodemus, *De signis*<sup>90</sup> — a debate datable to the late second and early first centuries B.C. In that debate, most of the Epicureans accept that the “following” (*akolouthia*)

<sup>88</sup> Hence the closing remark, πάντων δὲ κρητὶς καὶ θεμέλιος ἡ ἐνάργεια (216).

<sup>89</sup> *M* VII 213-4.

<sup>90</sup> See the invaluable edition by P. and E. DE LACY, *Philodemus, On Methods of Inference*, Napoli 1978<sup>2</sup>; cfr. my discussion, in *On signs*, cit.; E. ASMIS, *Epicurus’ Scientific Method*, cit.; and most recently the outstanding study by J. BARNES, *Epicurean Signs*, «Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy», suppl. VI (1988) pp. 91-134, and comments by A. A. LONG, *ibid.*, pp. 135-44.

of something non-apparent from an apparent sign can be either by *anaskeue* or by “similarity”. “Similarity” sign-inferences rest on the supposed resemblance between two items, whether direct, as in inferences from the properties of human beings we know to human beings we do not know, or analogical, as in inferences from the properties of phenomenal bodies to those of atoms. But other purportedly cogent sign-inferences, which do not rely on resemblances, are attributed to *anaskeue*. The inference passes the *anaskeue* test if it is found that to deny (“eliminate”, *anaskeuazein*) the non-apparent thing signified is *ipso facto* to deny the existence of the sign. A standard example of *anaskeue* in the *De signis* is the inference from the existence of motion to that of void<sup>91</sup>: the inference is held to be sound, not because of any “similarity” between motion and void, but because of some kind of conceptual or physical dependence.

In the Sextus passage that very same motion-void inference is used twice, to illustrate first *ouk antimarturesis* and then *antimarturesis*. And at the second occurrence it is explicitly presented as an *anaskeue* inference. So far so good. But unfortunately our author has completely missed the point. The *De signis* Epicureans say<sup>92</sup>:

«That if there is motion there is void we apprehend in no other way than by the method of similarity, establishing that it cannot be that motion is accomplished in the absence of void. Thus having surveyed everything that accompanies moving objects in our experience, in the absence of which we see nothing moving, in this way we claim that everything which moves in any way moves similarly, and by this method we make a sign-inference that there cannot be motion without void. Hence if this method has no probative force, the elimination (*anaskeue*) method, which is wholly confirmed by and through it, has no cogency either».

Although the Epicureans are unable to call the motion-void inference one by “similarity”, they insist here, as elsewhere, that the real work of “confirmation” is done in a separate stage, in which the similarity between

<sup>91</sup> See especially *de sign.* XII 1-14. Since all the Epicureans reported in *De signis* use this inference as an example, Natorp (*op. cit.*) was on weak ground in using its occurrence in *M* VII 213-4 as evidence for Demetrius as source.

<sup>92</sup> *De sign.* VIII 26-IX 8, Barnes’ translation, adapted.

numerous observed cases of motion establishes that all motion requires empty space. The *anaskeue* inference, «Since there is motion, there is void», is a further *purely formal* step, applying the lessons learnt by the similarity method, with no independent probative force.

Our author, the putative Antiochus, has made the mistake of placing all the emphasis on the *anaskeue* inference itself, even saying that it is this inference from motion to void which “confirms” the existence of void. Philodemus’ Epicurean master Zeno of Sidon insists, on the contrary, that all the work of “confirmation” is done in the separate “similarity” inference. And although other contemporary Epicureans mentioned by Philodemus, including Demetrius of Laconia, differ among themselves about how to regard *anaskeue* — some affirming, others denying, that it is any kind of sign-inference at all — they are all agreed that it has no power to “confirm” anything<sup>93</sup>.

As for *ouk antimarturesis*, although the term itself is barely visible in the *De signis*, the concept of “no counterevidence” features prominently there, and it is consistently presented as a way of confirming inferences by “similarity”, not those by *anaskeue*<sup>94</sup>.

The conclusion is irresistible that what we have in Sextus is the product of a faulty reading of one of the Epicurean works whose contents are reflected in Philodemus, *De signis*<sup>95</sup>. Our source knows that Epicurus has a scientific principle of *ouk antimarturesis*, and in order to find

<sup>93</sup> See J. BARNES, *Epicurean Signs*, cit., pp. 103, 133, for the evidence that some Epicureans accept *anaskeue* as a sound form of *semeiosis*. But note that these texts allow only that some things are “captured” (ἀλίσχεσθαι) by *anaskeue*: that term is in the Epicureans’ usage contrasted with “locking up” (κατακλείειν, xxxiii 8, cfr. xv 37), i.e. confirming, a task consistently assigned to the similarly method of inference.

<sup>94</sup> E.g. viii 1-13, xiii 1-8, xxi 12-6, xxxii 24-7, xxxv 20-2, xxxvi 7-17.

<sup>95</sup> My guess is that the source used was the work on sign-inferences by Demetrius of Laconia. Sextus’ citations of Demetrius show that the latter was an acknowledged source for Epicurean doctrine, and since his account of the Epicurean-Stoic debate on signs was very condensed (PHILODEM. *de sign.* xxviii 13-14) it could all the more easily have misled Antiochus. Philodemus’ *De signis* (even supposing it to have been a published work) was itself written well after Antiochus’ death in 68-7 B.C. probably in the early 30s B.C. (A.A. LONG-D.N. SEDLEY, *op. cit.*, II, p. 263). As for Zeno of Sidon, his discussion was apparently an oral one, reconstructed by his pupils Philodemus and Bromius (PHILODEM. *de sign.* xix 4 ff.).

out about it he has followed a procedure which should by now be becoming familiar: he has turned not to the writings of Epicurus, but to a contemporary Epicurean textbook. Failing to find in it the actual term *ouk antimarturesis*, he has mistakenly identified it with the *anaskeue* method, exemplified by the inference from motion to void.

Since our source turns out to be a non-Epicurean observer of this late second-century B.C. Epicurean theory of signs, the hypothesis that he is Antiochus is much strengthened. His explanation of *ouk antimarturesis* is the only formal one that we have, but, sadly, it must be discounted as almost completely wrong. Does this mean that we must also disregard the earlier part of his report, 203-10, on the truth of sense-impressions? Not necessarily. But we must at least treat it with all due caution, prepared to find not only misunderstandings, such as we have witnessed, but also distortions due to Antiochus’ own quasi-historical purposes. One likely case of this is his failure to mention the Epicurean criterion *prolepsis* — just as he subsequently omits any mention of *prolepsis* as a Stoic criterion. For anyone attuned to Stoic thought as Antiochus was, *prolepsis* will imply *logos*, which according to the Stoic definition is composed of them<sup>96</sup>. Hence I would guess that Antiochus’ reluctance to draw attention to their criterial status for either Epicurus or Chrysippus reflects his determination to discount *logos* as an independent criterion.

One worrying passage is the opening of the Epicurean section, 203-5. In outline, the argument attributed to the school is:

- (1) All *pathe* are true; e.g. what causes pleasure in us *eo ipso* really is pleasant.
- (2) *Phantasiai* are themselves *pathe*.
- (3) Therefore what causes a *phantasia* (the *phantaston*) must really be such as it appears<sup>97</sup>.
- (4) This result conforms to the definition of a true *phantasia* as one ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and κατ’ αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον.

<sup>96</sup> E.g. AETIUS IV 11, 4 (= S.V.F. II 83), and, for Antiochus himself, cfr. CIC. *ac.* II 30.

<sup>97</sup> For a plausible emendation of this difficult sentence (203 fin.), see M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, p. 122. However, I feel the transmitted reading (retaining ὑπάρχον for ὑπάρχειν, with most mss.) can be tolerated: «what is productive of each of them [the *phantasiai*] is completely a *phantaston*, which, being a *phantaston*, cannot be productive of a *phantasia* without being in reality such it appears».

The terminology of (4) is directly taken from the Stoic definition of *phantasia kataleptike*, suggesting that Antiochus is setting out to present Epicurean *enargeia* as pointing towards the Stoic criterion to which we know that he himself adhered<sup>98</sup>. This tendentious reporting leads on to a further worry. Do steps (1)-(3) really contain an authentic Epicurean argument? Their inference is from (1) the objective truth of *pathe*, to (3) the objective truth of *phantasiai*, by way of (2) the premise that *phantasiai* are themselves a kind of *pathe*. As Gigante has pointed out<sup>99</sup>, this premise is not attested Epicurean doctrine. *Pathe* are an independent criterion (another fundamental tenet altogether omitted by Antiochus!), with sensory *phantasiai* ranked alongside them, not subsumed under them<sup>100</sup>. But we should not seek to remedy the problem by emendation<sup>101</sup>. Rather, we should note that the definition of *phantasia* as a kind of *pathos* is an item of Stoic doctrine<sup>102</sup>, and suspect that Antiochus is supplying the premise himself.

<sup>98</sup> See VII 248 for the Stoic definition. Since (4) is attributed to “the Epicureans”, it might be suspected that these Epicureans are merely *adding* to Epicurus’ argument the observation that his account obeys Stoic requirements too. But the Stoicising tendency is being attributed to Epicurus himself too, since the same Stoic terminology is already built into (1) as well: 203, ἀπὸ ποιητικῶν τινῶν καὶ κατ’ αὐτὰ τὰ ποιητικά.

<sup>99</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>100</sup> Cfr. DIOG. LAERT. X 31, EPICUR. *ep. Her.* 63, R.S. XXIV, for αἰσθήσεις and πάθη as coordinate criteria. There is, of course, also a more intimate link than that between them: all πάθη are generically pleasure or pain (attributed to Epicurus not only in our present passage but also by Demetrius of Laconia quoted at *M* x 225); pleasure and pain are identical to good and bad respectively; and all good and bad are found in αἴσθησις (*ep. Men.* 124). It follows that all πάθος is found “in” αἴσθησις. But this in no way entails either that the two are identical or that one is a species of the other, just that all πάθος accompanies perception. It would be hard to maintain that the representational properties of φαντασῆαι are varieties of pleasure and pain.

<sup>101</sup> 203, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν φαντασιῶν, παθῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς οὐσῶν, «so too in the case of *phantasiai*, since these are *pathe* belonging to us». M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-3, 126, proposes to read καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν φαντασιῶν (τῶν) παθῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς οὐσῶν, «per quanto attiene alle rappresentazioni delle interne affezioni», which is syntactically unlikely and syllogistically weaker without even being any more orthodox doctrinally. Cfr. D. FOWLER’s review, *Sceptics and Epicureans*, «Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy», II (1984) pp. 237-67, at 247-8.

<sup>102</sup> AETIUS IV 12, 1-6 = *S.V.F.* II 54. Another Stoic intrusion into the passage is the term φανταστῶν: cfr. M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

What would Antiochus’ motive be? It is not hard to guess<sup>103</sup>. The Cyrenaics, as presented in the preceding text, had got as far as recognising that *pathe* are *enarge* in themselves, but had denied them any cognitive hold on external fact. To make the Cyrenaics into worthwhile allies, Antiochus needs someone to continue that process, first giving *pathe* cognitive access to the external world, then going on to attach the same objective *enargeia* to sensory *phantasiai*, thus pointing the way towards Stoic *phantasia kataleptike*. The Epicureans, it seems, were chosen for the job.

There seem to be grounds for pessimism. The Epicurean section starts with what may well be pure historical fabrication on Antiochus’ part, designed to suggest steady progress towards the truth as he conceives it. And it ends with a well-intentioned but hopelessly bungled attempt to explain Epicurean scientific principles of inference. Can we salvage anything? Miraculously, we can. The central section of the passage (206-10) is a brilliant, albeit incomplete<sup>104</sup>, defence of the Epicurean dictum that all sense-impressions are true. While its accuracy cannot be directly proved, it appears to contain no blunders, anachronisms or wilful misrepresentations. On the contrary, the terminology, the concepts and the examples are all authentically Epicurean<sup>105</sup>. Antiochus, it seems, did not *always* invent history or misread his sources.

## 5. Closing remarks

There are numerous further passages in which both Democritus and Epicurus are cited and criticised by Sextus. An adequate investigation would need to examine individual passages, themes and contexts in detail

<sup>103</sup> Here I owe to a remark by M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-8, the insight that this part of the Epicurean doxography is drawing on Cyrenaic themes. Note especially how, in (2), περὶ ἡμᾶς πάθη echoes 194 on the Cyrenaics.

<sup>104</sup> No mention of the incommensurability of the different senses (LUCR. IV 486-96, DIOG. LAERT. X 31-2, *PHerc.* 19/698; see further, A. A. LONG-D.N. SEDLEY, *op. cit.*, section 16).

<sup>105</sup> Especially the use of Epicurus’ term στερέμμιον for what has in the previous part of the passage been called by the Stoic name τὸ ὑπάρχον: see M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-7, for a careful survey of this and other authentic Epicurean details.

comparable to that in which I have treated the long survey of views on the criterion. And that would require not a single paper, but a book. I have little notion of what the results of such an investigation would be. Much would depend on general conclusions about the Pyrrhonists' handling of philosophical history when compiling *diaphoniai* and other refutations. But I am prepared to wager that in any such study the contemporaries and near-contemporaries of Aenesidemus will continue to loom as large as they have done already. It is, for example, well known that, apart from Epicurus himself, the one named Epicurean spokesman to whom Sextus pays attention is Demetrius of Laconia, yet again Aenesidemus' near-contemporary.

I am also conscious that I have said very little about Sextus himself. Of course, I do not mean to reduce him to a mere copyist of Aenesidemus. There is plenty of post-Aenesidemian Pyrrhonism in his works, and much of the medical input could well be his own<sup>106</sup>. But so far as concerns the reporting of doctrine, outside the medical and Pyrrhonist traditions the latest named thinkers and sources in Sextus' works are again and again writers of the first century B.C.<sup>107</sup>: Posidonius, Diotimus, Clitomachus, Antiochus, Philo of Larissa, Asclepiades, Charmadas, Aenesidemus himself, and Demetrius of Laconia<sup>108</sup>. When we read the history of atomism in Sextus, these are the people through whose eyes we must expect to be viewing it.

<sup>106</sup> In the passages I have been discussing, that includes possibly the medical analogy at *M* vii 179, and certainly the reference to his own work Ἱατρικὰ ὑπομνήματα at 202.

<sup>107</sup> The one possible exception I am aware of is the Stoic Basilides at *M* viii 258, who *may* be identical with the teacher of Marcus Aurelius.

<sup>108</sup> If Philodemus influenced Sextus in *M* vi, as maintained by M. GIGANTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-21, or in *M* ii, as argued by F. LONGO AURICCHIO, *Epicureismo e scetticismo sulla retorica*, in *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia* (Napoli, 19-26 maggio 1983), Napoli 1984, pp. 453-72, that too would surely be through his contemporary Aenesidemus.

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FASCICOLO 1-2

# ELENCHOS

Rivista di studi sul pensiero antico

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