

# Plato's Meno, the "Eristic Paradox," and the Epicurean Response

Post by "Cassius" of March 8, 2023 at 9:31 AM

And here is a section from [Diogenes of Oinoanda](#) that on its face seems to be directed more toward physics, but probably impacts the same question:

Fr. 4

... [as is supposed by] some of the philosophers and especially the Socratics. They say that pursuing natural science and busying oneself with investigation of [celestial phenomena] is superfluous and unprofitable, and they do [not even] deign [to concern themselves with such matters.]

Fr. 5

[Others do not] explicitly [stigmatise] natural science as unnecessary, being ashamed to acknowledge [this], but use another means of discarding it. For, when they assert that things are inapprehensible, what else are they saying than that there is no need for us to pursue natural science? After all, who will choose to seek what he can never find?

Now Aristotle and those who hold the same Peripatetic views as Aristotle say that nothing is scientifically knowable, because things are continually in flux and, on account of the rapidity of the flux, evade our apprehension. We on the other hand acknowledge their flux, but not its being so rapid that the nature of each thing [is] at no time apprehensible by sense-perception. And indeed [in no way would the upholders of] the view under discussion have been able to say (and this is just what they do [maintain] that [at one time] this is [white] and this black, while [at another time] neither this is [white nor] that black, [if] they had not had [previous] knowledge of the nature of both white and black.