The Origins and Development of the Notion of Isostheneia in Greek Scepticism

A Collection of Texts

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Abstract

The research collected texts in which ancient authors wrote of issues having to do with the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. The collection finds its' beginnings under the auspices of Calliope, the muse of fine speaking, and in the tendencey to produce accounts in antithetical terms or in opposition to one another. In the Classical period *anticipations* of the development of the notion are found in the thinking of the physicists and the speculation of the physicians. Most significant for the development of the notion seems to have been the emergence of some of the differences between rhetoric and dialectic, the one elaborated under the pressure of the practice of the Sophists and Isocrates, the other isolated by Socrates and detailed by Plato as a philosophical method. The medical communities seem to have produced a paradigm of balance between opposed elements as the foundation of vitality and health. At the end of the Classical period, Aristotle appears to have provided some model for the sceptical notion in his practice of arguing *in utramque partem*, and to have *anticipated* it in his description of perplexity. Both Plato and Aristotle were familiar with some of the modes which were later collected by Aenesidemus. In the Hellenistic period it appears to have been in the *ad hominem* argument of Arcesilaus that the sceptical notion first became *articulate* as the basis of suspension of judgment. With Carneades the practice of arguing both for and against any proposition and relying heavily on rhetoric appears to have been the model on which the sceptical way was being fashioned. A controversy between Epicureans and Stoics over how to decide between acts of assent founded on equally reliable sense perceptions is suspected to be at the basis of the *articulation* of the notion of *isostheneia*. In the Hellenistic period the development of the notion seems also to have been assisted by the requirement within the medical tradition to bridge the gap between a general account of disease based on theoretical physiology and the unique problem of the individual patient's requirement for some therapeutical intervention by means of which health might be restored. With the Imperial period the sceptical notion first became *apparent* in the literature: Greek words from the root ἰσοσθεν- which would be later used to name it seem to have begun to find their way into texts from its' beginning. Some evidence is introduced to indicate that Philo Judaeus had knowledge of the subject of this study. By the time that Plutarch wrote *Adversus Colotem* the notion had become fully articulate. Later in the second century authors of the second sophistic also appear to have been comfortable with the notion at the basis of the sceptical way. Galen used the word on many occasions to describe anatomical and physiological details and a passage is included to indicate that he had knowledge of the notion. Sextus Empiricus compiled the arguments of the Pyrrhonians sometime around the end of the second century, and used words from the root ἰσοσθεν- to identify the notion. Late in the Imperial period and reflecting what was to occur in the Medieval Latin west, Augustine seems to have been unaware that the equal persuasiveness of incompatible accounts was the basis for withholding assent. In the Greek east the notion continued to *appear* in some literature produced after the end of the texts known as ancient philosophy.

Acknowledgements

Early on an uncle and physician, Édouard Desjardins, talked carefully about old books, Seneca and Voltaire, Aquinas and Molière; *pour séparer deux coeurs, l'un à l'autre unis, il faut qu'on les déchire...* After it became clear that I wouldn't be taking a place in his Hull office of chrome instruments and pharmaceuticals, he confided that if he had been able to return to university he would have studied philosophy. May he know that there is a place for him here at my table.

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The daughter of an east coast fisherman has in some sense been urging that this project be undertaken from a time when perhaps neither of us would have understood how the words she was using contained this message. This work is dedicated to her, to my mother Bernice Turner. And it is dedicated to the memory of my father Arthur Desjardins. His courage and generosity sheltered those closest to him, and his embattled isolation filled his days with stormy weather. After all, may there be a sun-filled coffee shop and some laughter where you are.

In the pages which follow my debt to these above, to Alice Cutway, Marcel Deshaies, Basil Finn, Angus Scott, and others not named here nor yet forgotten, is so extensive that it is only by some kind of masquerade that my name appears on the title page. I cannot properly say where their influence ends and my meagre contribution begins.

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Introduction

Τῇ δὲ πρεσβυτάτῃ Καλλιόπῃ καὶ τῇ μετ' αὐτὴν Οὐρανίᾳ τοὺς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διάγοντάς τε καὶ τιμῶντας τὴν ἐκείνων μουσικὴν ἀγγέλουσιν, αἳ δὴ μάλιστα τῶν Μουσῶν, περί τε οὐρανὸν καὶ λόγους οὔσαι θείους τε καὶ ἀνθρωπίνους, ἰᾶσι καλλίστην φωνήν. (Plato, *Phaedrus* 259d)

To the eldest, Calliope, and to her next sister, Urania, they tell of those who live a life of philosophy and so do honour to the music of those twain whose theme is the heavens and all the story of gods and men, and whose song is the noblest of them all. (R. Hackforth)

Opening Remarks

Greek scepticism has been thought to be a philosophical movement which was *anticipated* in some of the texts of Classical authors, began to *articulate* its own identity in the Hellenistic Academy, and later more explicitly *appeared* in the thought of Pyrrhoneans in the first centuries of the Imperial period. Scholars have traditionally seen it to be of two forms, Academic or mitigated, and Pyrrhonean or extreme. The most noticeable difference between the two is that Academic thinkers made place for some kind of ethical (and possibly epistemological) criterion, while the followers of Pyrrho (c.365-c.275 B.C.) were prepared to accept appearances and custom alone. Later Sceptics found thinkers in the Classical period with whom they felt a certain affinity. Sceptical arguments are to be found in the Presocratics[1] and Sophists,[2] and are transmitted in the texts of Plato[3] (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle[4] (384-322 B.C.).

The ancient sceptical thinkers were distinguished from others by their willingness to avoid the attempt to support claims which

[1] Phillip DeLacy, "οὐ μᾶλλον and the antecedents of ancient scepticism", James H. Lesher, "Xenophanes' Scepticism".

[2] F. Caujolle-Zaslawsky, "Sophistique et scepticisme. L'image de Protagoras dans l'oeuvre de Sextus Empiricus"; and George Briscoe Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*.

[3] Julia Annas, "Plato the Sceptic"; and Paul Woodruff, "The Skeptical Side of Plato's Method".

[4] Jonathan Barnes, "An Aristotelian Way with Scepticism"; and Anthony A. Long, "Aristotle and the History of Greek Scepticism".

seemed uncertain, and to continue their investigations. This position emerged as the result of being able to oppose one equally attractive claim against another. Out of this strategy arose the most characteristic feature of the Greek Sceptics: they became known as those who suspend judgment about everything. At the heart of the strategy is the notion of *isostheneia* which is the object of this study.

During the Medieval period some of the texts of these ancient inquirers attracted attention in the Greek East,[5] and were preserved in the libraries of Constantinople. In the Latin West, while there is evidence that a Greek manuscript of Sextus Empiricus (late second-early third century A.D.) is dated to the tenth century,[6] the way of the Greek Sceptics does not seem to have been attractive.

The interest in the writing of Sextus Empiricus during the Renaissance was originally as a source for material on his opponents. Scholars in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries read his text for the most part from historical interest.

> Certainly, the main concern shared by Italian humanists like Poliziano or Filelfo, when dealing with information about Sextus Empiricus, was part of their more general policy of attempting to recover the classical past. ...the Pyrrhonist philosopher could be read for purposes other than criticism of man's intellectual faculties,

[5] D.M. Nicol, "The Byzantine Church and Hellenistic Learning in the Fourteenth Century".

[6] See *Appendix C: Manuscripts of Sextus Empiricus,* and especially (C28) Paris suppl. 133.

and specifically as a philological document...'

Later the manuscripts attracted attention for the epistemological challenge they presented, and they are thought to have been instrumental in the change of focus which is marked by the beginning of Modern philosophy. But in this period as well, the way of the ancient Sceptics does not seem to have been employed.

The writings of the sceptical thinkers from the period extending between the sixth century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. have attracted increased interest of researchers in recent decades. There have been numerous book-length treatments of ancient scepticism,[8] and several collections of articles which have focused on themes drawn from research on aspects of sceptical texts.[9] In addition the journal literature has included many papers devoted to an examination of aspects of this kind of thought as it emerges

[7] Luciano Floridi, "The Diffusion of Sextus Empiricus's Works in the Renaissance", page 81.

[8] Of note among these are Jean-Paul Dumont's *Le scepticisme et le phénomène: essai sur la signification et les origines de Pyrrhonisme;* Marcel Conche's *Pyrrhon ou l'apparence: La mort et l'apparence;* Karel Janácek's *Sextus Empiricus' Sceptical Methods;* Mario dal Pra's *Lo scetticismo greco;* Harold Tarrant's *Scepticism or Platonism? The Philosophy of the Fourth Academy;* Julia Annas' and Jonathan Barnes' *The Modes of Scepticism: Ancient Texts and Modern Interpretations;* Leo Groarke's *Greek Scepticism: Anti-Realist Trends in Ancient Thought;* and Jonathan Barnes' *The Toils of Scepticism.*

[9] See *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology,* edited by Malcolm Schofield, Myles Burnyeat, and Jonathan Barnes; *Lo Scetticismo Antico,* edited by Gabriele Giannantoni, *The Skeptical Tradition,* edited by Myles Burnyeat, and *Le scepticisme antique,* edited by André-Jean Voelke.

from the unfolding records of ancient philosophy.[10]

This study has arisen from an interest in the nature of the strategy of these thinkers as it is found in the surviving texts. It seeks to make a contribution to the contemporary investigation of the subject by collecting some of the texts which seem to have to do with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism.*

What is the Sceptical Notion of Isostheneia?

This particular notion, equality of persuasiveness between opposed accounts, appears in Sextus Empiricus as the basis of scepticism.[1] In the texts which survive, Sextus is thought to have been a compiler of previously articulated arguments, contributing very little of his own. So it is likely that the notion did not originate with him.

Sextus Empiricus said that some men, disturbed by the irregularities in things, and seeking to be calm, were led to inquire into what is true in things and what false. The outcome

[10] Among these are Carlos Lévy, "Scepticisme et dogmatisme dans l'Académie: 'l'ésotérisme' d'Arcésilas"; F. Desbordes, "Le langage sceptique. Notes sur le Contre les grammariens de Sextus Empiricus"; David Glidden, "Skeptic Semiotics"; Charlotte Stough, "Sextus Empiricus on Non-Assertion"; Richard Bett, "Carneades' *Pithanon:* a Reappraisal of its Role and Status"; Fernanda Decleva Caizzi, "Aenesidemus and the Academy"; and Anna Maria Ioppolo "The Academic position of Favorinus of Arelate".

[1] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* I: 12.

of their inquiry was to find that disagreement abounded in the accounts constructed about things sensed and things thought. As a result of always having been able to find some account to oppose to another, both of which were of equal strength, these inquirers were led again and again to suspend judgement on the issues under consideration. And out of this experience unexpectedly came the relief they had originally sought to achieve by inquiring into what was true in things.[2]

On the model of their experience, Sextus said that scepticism rested on the ability to find accounts of things, which were equal in terms of their credibility and incredibility, to oppose to each other. The name which Sextus gave to this equality of persuasiveness was ἰσοσθένεια.[3] The equal strength of opposed accounts was the occasion of suspension of judgment, and suspension of judgement was the source of relief from disturbance.[4] *Isostheneia* became the basis of the sceptical way.

One of the commonly offered examples of the equality of persuasiveness between accounts consists of the two incompatible claims 'the stars are even in number' and 'the stars are odd in number'. Here it seems obvious that it would be difficult to claim that one account had more support than the other. This example appears in Cicero[5] (106-43 B.C.) and Epictetus[6] (c.55-c.135

[2] *P* I: 29.
[3] *P* I: 10.
[4] *P* I: 26.
[5] Cicero, *Academica* II: 32, 110.
[6] Epictetus, *Dissertations* I: 28.3.

A.D.) and several times in Sextus.[7]

There are several aspects to the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*, not all of which are to be found in the texts which detail the notion in earlier phases of its origins and development. In its fully mature form, this notion which is at the basis of the sceptical way is a kind of opposition, more specifically equal opposition, which is produced by equally convincing but opposing arguments or points of view (*logoi*) of any kind. This opposition of equally convincing arguments produces suspension of judgment (*epoche*), and peace of mind (*ataraxia*) follows closely. The notion is first found designated *isostheneia* or some cognate in the writing of Sextus Empiricus.

Discussion of Method

The selection of a method for producing an account of the way that people came to accept the viability of the sceptical way was determined by the nature of the project, and the project became conceived of as the tracing of the development of a particular notion as it was articulated over a long period in the history of ancient thought. It sought to collect as many pieces of the surviving texts as could be located in which ancient authors spoke of issues which seem to have to do with the development of the notion of equal persuasiveness between opposed accounts.

[7] *P* II: 90, 97; *Against the Logicians* I: 243, 393; II: 147, 317; *Against the Ethicists* 59.

Included in what might be called the historical method, and conceived of as the most primitive value for success were three criteria for the selection and presentation of texts. The first criterion demands comprehensiveness in the examination of textual resources: this was thought to be the foundation of the method. A second criterion required that the collection should be achieved with scrupulous attention to detail coupled with an unwillingness to ignore what might be called contraindications. The third criterion stipulated that the anthology ought to require that presentation of the pieces of text be effected in what was the idiom of their authors.

With respect to the first criterion: in the examination of textual sources some measure of comprehensiveness was the supposed requirement of a collection procedure which intended to be fashioned after the historical method. And this criterion was to be justified by the perceived complexity of the development of any topic in the history of ideas. Many cultural influences combine to shape the development of a particular way of thinking. Since materials from areas of thought other than the narrowly philosophical make substantial contributions to such a process, in order to provide for the adequacy of an account of a notion like *isostheneia* the collected passages must include influences from what might be called subsidiary disciplines. As a consequence of the requirement of the criterion of comprehensiveness, the anthology includes interdisciplinary passages from philosophers

and physicians of different persuasions, orators, and historians. It collects texts over a period beginning with a passage in the Homeric *Iliad* (before 700 B.C.) to which Diogenes Laertius (middle of the third century A.D) directed attention, and ending with the appearance of Augustine's (354-430 A.D.) *Contra Academicos*.

The second criterion of historical method, attention to detail coupled with an unwillingness to ignore contraindications, is called for by the nature of this collection of testimonies on *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism*. This criterion was justified in as much as the notion itself seemed to have been assembled from a variety of phases of intellectual experience. Each piece of text collected must be valued for what it appears to tell us about the notion of *isostheneia* developing within Greek scepticism, and each detail in the textual resource should be examined carefully for information which it might contribute. On the subject of willingness to ignore contraindications, conceived of as pieces of evidence which appear out of character with other elements collected from the same period or within the same area of professional concern, the second criterion was understood to require that this be avoided. Instances in which parts of a passage seem to be at variance with others are often found to present opportunities for an expanded view of the subject matter.

Finally with respect to the third criterion having to do with the presentation of the pieces of text collected: it demanded that the

anthology be constituted by evidence on the development of the notion at the basis of the sceptical way be given in the idiom of the author's own emerging conception of it. The justification for this third criterion arose from the observation that it is occasionally the case that unanticipated features of development are indicated in changes of language. A method which intended to fashion itself after the historical ought to include the pieces of text as independent elements, and to render the text as literally as possible and without paraphrase.

The method was determined by the nature of the project, and the project is essentially the tracing of the history of a particular idea as it elaborated itself over a period of many centuries and in what Lovejoy called "the collective thought of large groups of persons".[1]

The project has demanded a kind of empirical objectivity in which such speculative excursions as might introduce themselves would be clearly separated off as a kind of detour, while the main thoroughfare itself would be constituted by the path that the notion of *isostheneia* took in the course of it's development. The previous work of an anthological nature on which this project draws for models include *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker,*[2] and *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta.*[3] In a more contemporary motif, and

[1] Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, page 19.
[2] Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker.*
[3] Hans von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta.*

equally attractive as a model for the pursuit of this project are *The Presocratic Philosophers*,[4] and *The Hellenistic Philosophers*.[5] The research is conceived of as belonging more properly in the domain of history of philosophy, and to have avoided a philosophical treatment of the theme which is more speculative in nature.

While it has been the intention to present an collection of texts and to limit interpretative comment to a minimum, it has not seemed possible to follow Lafrance in his view that "l'histoire de la philosophie est un renoncement à la philosophie".[6] Yet the method has turned out to be in most respects a reflection of his neo-positivist prescription of rules and principles for the practice of research in a truly scientific history of philosophy, such as he has reaffirmed in his recent publications on the subject.[7]

Kinds of Text Collected

The three criteria of a method which sought to be historical, including comprehensiveness in collection of texts, attention to

[4] Geoffrey S. Kirk, John E. Raven, and Malcolm Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts*.

[5] Anthony A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*.

[6] Yvon Lafrance, *Méthode et exégèse en histoire de la philosophie*, page 25.

[7] Yvon Lafrance, "Pour une histoire non philosophique de la philosophie", see particularly the section *3. L'historiographie comme activité scientifique* on pages 66-79.

detail respecting contraindications, and the identification of the authors' emerging conceptions of the notion at the basis of the sceptical way, required three kinds of textual elements which would constitute the exploration of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism.*

One kind of element included passages from ancient texts which have been in some way involved in the development of the notion which is the subject of this study. Elements of the first kind have been introduced and identified with a passage number, like this:

> **37** Καὶ πρῶτος ἔφη δύο λόγους εἶναι περὶ παντὸς πράγματος ἀντικειμένους ἀλλήλοις· οἷς καὶ συνηρώτα, πρῶτος τοῦτο πράξας.[1]
>
> **37** Protagoras was the first to maintain that there are two sides to every question, opposed to each other and he even argued in this fashion, being the first to do so.[2]

Subsequent references to this piece of text are done by means of the passage number. For example: Diogenes maintained in **37** that Protagoras (c.485-c.420 B.C.) originated the practice of opposing one argument to another. Passages quoted from an ancient text are identified in the footnotes on the first occasion of their appearance. Subsequent quotations from the ancient text are identified with an abbreviation.

Under the passage an English translation has been included identified with the number assigned to the passage. The more

[1] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum* IX: 51.
[2] R.D. Hicks, *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers,* page 463.

literal translation has usually been preferred to one that relies on some paraphrasing to interpret the Greek.[3] The original citation of the source of a translation will be identified in a footnote. Subsequent citations of this particular source for a translation will be made with the translators name, a number in square brackets referring to an entry in the *Bibliography*, and the location in the text for the passage as below.[4] Where the sources of the translation have not been identified in a footnote, that passage has been rendered by the researcher.

Passages from an ancient text mentioned but not quoted, are identified in a footnote with the author's name, the name of the text and the passage location on the first occasion of their being mentioned. Subsequent instances in which the same ancient text is mentioned are identified with an abbreviation. The abbreviations used in the identification of quotations and passages mentioned are listed in *Abbreviations of the Titles of Ancient Texts*.

Notwithstanding the concerns about historical integrity reflected in the three criteria of method detailed in *Discussion of Method* above, the anthological dimension of the method has been somewhat mitigated by the inclusion in the collection of a second kind of element. The ancient passages on the notion have been enhanced by the inclusion of components of scholarly commentary apposed to the

[3] See R.J. Hankinson's note on translation on pages xi-xiii in *Galen: On the Therapeutic Method, Books I and II*, D.J. Furley's "Translation from Greek Philosophy", and the remarks of Jonathan Barnes on the same subject in "Editors Comments".

[4] Hicks [34] 48.

relevant texts of the ancient authors, which comments make a contribution to the collection of texts about the subject of this study.

Elements of this second kind have found their way into the collection identified with a passage comment number, like this:

> **37.1** par une conséquence directe de sa célèbre maxime, Protagoras déclare que sur tout sujet, on peut opposer deux assertions contraires: c'est la première forme de cette *isosthénie* des sceptiques, qui, opposant sur chaque question deux thèses contraires qui se font équilibre, se déclarent dans l'impossibilité de prononcer.[5]

Subsequent references to this passage have been identified by means of the passage comment number. For example: Brochard **37.1** finds in Diogenes grounds for the claim that the notion of *isostheneia* receives its first expression in Protagoras. After an initial citation of the author's work has been identified in the footnotes, the appropriate bibliographic entry number in square brackets is used for subsequent references to the work as below.[6]

There is a third kind of element collected in the exploration of the development of the sceptical notion. This kind of element includes observations which have arisen from consideration of the pieces of text from ancient authors, and fragments of scholarly commentary. It is accepted that the historical basis for including these elements in the project proposed is somewhat more tenuous than for elements of the first and second kind. Yet this

[5] Victor Brochard, *Les sceptiques grecs*, page 16.
[6] [150] 118.

element has made a significant contribution to a project which has endeavored to remain faithful to the historical method.

Preview of the Development of the Notion

In attempting to find a natural way of subdividing the project of collecting together the passages concerning *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism,* such as they might be found in the surviving texts of the ancient philosophers, a partition of the eight or nine centuries in which these were written has been made in the following way.

It has been more or less accepted among scholars, that during a particular span of three centuries in the ancient period, the nature of the philosophic product could be distinguished from what came before it, and from what followed it. This interval known as the Hellenistic period, was by convention supposed to have begun with the death of Alexander in 323 B.C., and to have ended with the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

In a kind of provisional way but not without some grounds it was decided to refer to the two or three centuries before the death of Alexander as the Classical period. And in a similar way it was decided that the four centuries after 31 B.C. and extending to the appearance of Augustine's *Contra Academicos* in 387 B.C., perhaps near the end of what has been thought of as the period of ancient

philosophy, were to be called the Imperial period. For in 31 B.C. Rome ceased to function as a republic.

This account of a Hellenistic period within ancient philosophy is especially appropriate because it rests not on the convenience of the dates of deaths or battles, but on a difference in the kind of thought produced.

> During these three centuries it is neither Platonism nor the Peripatetic tradition established by Aristotle which occupied the central place in ancient philosophy, but Stoicism, Scepticism and Epicureanism, all of which were post-Aristotelian developments.[1]

Almost all of the writing of the Hellenistic period has been lost. What we rely on for our information about the thought of this period are quotations and testimonia in other authors including Cicero, Plutarch (c.50-c.120 A.D.), Numenius (second century A.D.), and Aristocles (second century A.D.) in Eusebius' (c.260-c.340 A.D.) *Praeparatio Evangelica*, Sextus Empiricus, and Diogenes Laertius, the earliest of whom lived at the very end of the period. It was in the Academy of Arcesilaus (316-242 B.C.) and Carneades (214-129 B.C.), both of whom are thought to have written nothing, that some elements of what later became known as the sceptical way first were developed. The practice of suspension of judgment is attributed to Pyrrho of Elis from early in the third century, and our sources say that the notion of equal persuasiveness appeared in the thought of Arcesilaus. Later in the Hellenistic period Carneades was reputed to have made a

[1] Anthony A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, page 1.

practice of arguing both for and against a given thesis, and to have done so equally persuasively in both instances. The sceptical notion first became *articulate* during this period for which we have little of the original writing.

The sceptical notion of equal persuasiveness of opposed accounts is not conspicuous in other texts which have come down to us. Nor is its product, suspension of judgment, something which appears in the thought of the Classical period. But the opposition of principles or arguments to one another is found in presocratic fragments, and the notion of balance between opposed elements figures in the theoretical accounts of health and disease found in some of the Hippocratic books. The development of the sceptical notion seems in this way to have been *anticipated* in some of the texts of the Classical period.

The books of Sextus are almost completely concerned with cataloguing aguments which are thought to have been produced by the time the shift of concern marked by the beginning of the Imperial period got under way. But the language with which he describes the sceptical notion seems to have developed after the philosophical controversies between Academics and Stoics were laid to rest in the eclecticism of Antiochus (c.130-c.68 B.C.). Much of the influence of the sceptical way can be traced in the empirical and methodical medical communities during this period. In addition, it seems to have been Galen's (129-199 A.D.) discussions on equal and opposed physiological processes yielding

a rudimentary notion of what would be understood later as homeostasis, and his descriptions of balanced anatomical elements producing posture, that gave rise to the language for articulating the sceptical notion. In the Imperial period the notion *appears* in ways which have not been found in texts from either the Classical or Hellenistic periods.

Interest and Value of the Research

This research should be of interest to those looking into ancient scepticism for features which have not attracted a great deal of attention in the existing literature. *The origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism* does not appear to have been the subject of any detailed study, and so what follows may have value in this respect.

The research also looks at the notion as it emerges dynamically over a period of several centuries, rather than as a principle which is found appearing statically in the books of Sextus Empiricus. The approach to the subject in terms of the model of a history of an idea should be of interest to contemporary scholars for the ways in which it illuminates some of the resources of ancient scepticism. These are to be found in the Sophists of the Classical period, in the epistemology of the Epicureans and Stoics, in the growing emphasis placed on rhetoric in hellenistic education, and in the pressures exerted upon dogma by the concern

of medical practitioners to treat individual cases.

But perhaps the primary value this research may have for those doing research in ancient scepticism, is that it will identify and group together a comprehensive collection of textual passages describing the development of the notion that the arguments of the Dogmatists were of equal appeal. It was on this basis that those who suspended judgment about everything continued their inquiries.

Examining these texts assembled together in this way may induce some scholars interested in Greek scepticism to reappraise the role that opposing incompatible arguments of equal appeal served in the strategy of Pyrrhonists and their precursors. May it then be the case that this collection serve as a review of some of the sources and scope of the sceptical way, and as a *point de départ* for those who would pursue the research of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* into regions which this study has neglected.

Abbreviations of the Titles of Ancient Texts

Ac.	Cicero, *Academica*
Acad.	Augustine, *Contra Academicos*
Antiop.	Euripides, *Antiope*
Att.	Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum*
Aud. Poet.	Plutarch, *De Audiendis Poetis*
Bibl.	Photius, *Bibliotheca*
Cels.	Origen, *Contra Celsum*
Col.	Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem*
De An.	Aristotle, *De Anima*
De Med.	Celsus, *De Medicina*
De Orat.	Cicero, *De Oratore*

Div. Inst.	Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*
Diss.	Epictetus, *Dissertations*
Ecl.	Stobaeus, *Anthologium*
Ep.	Seneca, *Epistulae*
Euthd.	Plato, *Euthydemus*
Fin.	Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*
Flor.	Apuleius, *Florida*
Haer.	Hippolytus, *Refutatio Omnium Haeresium*
Hel.	Isocrates, *Helen*
Il.	Homer, *Iliad*
In Phys.	Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Physicorum Commentaria*
In Plat. Theaet.	Anonymous, *In Platonis Theaetetum*
In Sens.	Alexander Aphrodisiensis, *In librum de Sensu Commentarium*
Ineb.	Philo Judaeus, *De Inebriate*
Isid. et Osir.	Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*
Lucr.	Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*
M I	Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Grammarians*
M VII, VIII	Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*
M IX, X	Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Physicists*
M XI	Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Ethicists*
Metaph.	Aristotle, *Metaphysica*
Mot. Musc.	Galen, *De Motu Musculorum*
Nat. Hom.	Hippocratic Corpus, *De Natura Hominis*
N.D.	Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*
Or.	Cicero, *Orator*
P	Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*
Paed.	Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*
PE	Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*
PH	Apuleius, *Περὶ ἑρμηνείας*
Phd.	Plato, *Phaedo*
Phdr.	Plato, *Phaedrus*
Pol.	Aristotle, *Politica*
Prol. Plat.	Anonymous, *Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*
Prt.	Plato, *Protagoras*
R	Plato, *Republica*
Rh.	Aristotle, *Rhetorica*
Sens.	Theophrastus, *De Sensu et Sensibilibus*
Strom.	Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*
St. Rep.	Plutarch, *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis*
Symp.	Plutarch, *Symposiacs*
Tact.	Asclepiodotus, *Tactica*
Tht.	Plato, *Theaetetus*
Top.	Aristotle, *Topica*
Tusc.	Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*
Vet. Plac.	Aëtius, *Vetusta Placita*
Vict.	Hippocratic Corpus, *De Victibus*
Vit. Auctio	Lucian, *Vitarum Auctio*
Vit. Phil.	Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*

VM Hippocratic Corpus, *De Veteri Medicina*

When possible the abbreviations of the titles of Greek texts were taken from "Section I: Authors and Works" of *A Greek-English Lexicon,* ninth edition 1940 with a supplement 1968, originally compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, revised and augmented by Henry Stuart Jones, on pages XVI-XXXVIII.

When possible the abbreviations of the titles of Latin texts were taken from "Section I: Authors and Works" of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary,* 1982, edited by P.G.W. Glare, on pages IX-XX.

A secondary source for abbreviations of the titles of Greek and Latin texts is the *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 1970, edited by N.G.L. Hammond and H.H. Scullard, which contains "Abbreviations used in the Present Work" on pages IX-XXII.

The abbreviations of the titles of texts by Galen were taken from "Appendix 2: A Guide to the Editions and Abbreviations of the Galenic Corpus" in *Galen on the Therapeutic Method,* by R.J. Hankinson. Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1991, pages 238-247.

Classical Period before 323 B.C.

τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λόγον ἔχει ἥ τε τοῦ λόγου δύναμις πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς τάξιν ἥ τε τῶν φαρμάκων τάξις πρὸς τὴ τῶν σωμάτων φύσιν. ὥσπερ γὰρ τῶν φαρμάκων ἄλλους ἄλλα χυμοὺς ἐκ τοῦ σώματος ἐξάγει, καὶ τὰ μὲν νόσου τὰ δὲ βίου παύει, οὕτω καὶ τῶν λόγων οἱ μὲν ἐλύπησαν, οἱ δὲ ἔτερψαν, οἱ δὲ ἐφόβησαν, οἱ δὲ εἰς θάρσος κατέστησαν τοὺς ἀκούοντας, οἱ δὲ πειθοῖ τινι κακῇ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐφαρμάκευσαν καὶ ἐξεγοήτευσαν. (Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen* 14)

The effect of speech upon the condition of the soul is comparable to the power of drugs over the nature of bodies. For just as different drugs dispel different secretions from the body, and some bring an end to disease and others to life, so also in the case of speeches, some distress, others delight, some cause fear, others make the hearers bold, and some drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil persuasion. (George Kennedy)

1. Texts from the Classical Period

Texts from the Classical period presented below as *anticipations* of *the origins of the notion of isostheneia* are included here as testimonies to the presence in the thought of this period of influences which would contribute to the *articulation* of the sceptical notion in the Hellenistic period, and finally *appear* fully developed in the Pyrrhonism of the Imperial period.

During the Classical period what is found as *origins of the notion* are passages in which doubt is entertained about a variety of positions which are commonly held with confidence, and the beginnings of the belief that naive certainty might not be supportable. There are passages from Xenophanes (c.570-c.500 B.C.), Parmenides (c.515-c.450 B.C.), and Plato in which the reliability of the senses as sources of knowledge is called into question.

In the same Classical period passages in which *the development of the notion of isostheneia* is *anticipated* are identified in the tendency among ancient thinkers to oppose one claim to another. These are found in the antitheses of early oral traditions, and in the historical and dramatic literature of the later fifth century. The use of opposing primitive elements one to another finds expression in the physical and medical treatises, and the practice

of the opposition of claims appears in the texts of the Sophists and in Aristotle. The principle of balance which later will become central in the fully *articulate* notion of *isostheneia*, is found prefigured in the Anaxagorean elemental oppositions, in the Empedoclean competing principles of Love and Strife, and in the Hippocratic thesis that a healthy condition is one in which humors are regulated to maintain some homeostasis within the organism.

All of the Classical figures find themselves comfortable with making claims of some kind or another, even if the claim is simply that no claim is possible. Here there are present in the texts which survive only some of *the origins of the notion*. The willingness to accept uncertainty in sense perception, habits of thought in which there is opposition of accounts, and the supposition of balance, are identified as *anticipations* of the notion of *isostheneia* which would become *articulate* only later in the disputes between Stoics, Epicureans and the inheritors of Plato's Academy.

One of the difficulties encountered with the selection of pieces of text from the Classical period, which are thought to be premature formulations of the sceptical notion, is the problem of justifying their citation as precursors of Greek scepticism. There should be an answer to the question: what are the grounds for including these passages here?

The answer to this question has features which are particular to

each piece of text included below. But there are also two more general considerations, which apply to most of the selections from the Classical period, in respect of which some answer is provided to the question: how can such pieces of text be considered to be *anticipations* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia?*

One part of an answer to the question which expands the range of passages which should be included here, can be found in the claims made about how notions develop by those scholars in the history of ideas who devote their attention to philosophical themes. It is their belief that studies such as this one of *isostheneia* have to be willing to gather a wide variety of materials in the preparation of an account of a notion before it becomes *articulate*. In his *Reconstruction in Philosophy* Dewey has made the following comment:

> The material out of which philosophy finally emerges is irrelevant to science and explanation. It is figurative, symbolic of hopes and fears, made of imagination and suggestion, not significant of a world of objective fact intellectually confronted. It is poetry and drama rather than science, and is apart from truth and falsity, rationality or absurdity of fact, in the same way that poetry is independent of these things.[1]

In this regard scholars in the history of ideas claim that materials from many disciplines, which at first glance seem to be unrelated to a particular subject, are on further consideration seen to have played a role in the development of the components which would later emerge as the notion sought in the darkness of the pre-articulate. And the search makes place for the persuasive

[1] John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, page 33.

alongside the rational, as Kelley maintains:

> This means... attending not only to concepts and rational arguments but also to the other layers of linguistic meaning--and indeed this is the justification for applying to the rhetorical as well as to philosophical traditions in historical interpretation, since rhetoric, and its extensions in modern literary criticism, reveals the resources, structures, and perhaps cultural memories preserved by language (topoi, tropes, metaphors, constructions, analogies, connections, etc.), popular as well as literary, beyond, or beneath, the reaches of logical formulation, or at least of narrowly rational argument and "reasoned history."[2]

It is often the case that among these preconscious notions partially hidden from view in the early phases of their development, are those very strategies constructed as manifestations of rationality for the purposes of the production of adequate accounts. In his *The Great Chain of Being* Lovejoy writes:

> These endemic assumptions, these intellectual habits, are often of so general and so vague a sort that it is possible for them to influence the course of man's reflections on almost any subject. A class of ideas which is of a kindred type may be termed dialectical motives. You may, namely, find much of the thinking of an individual, a school, or even a generation, dominated and determined by one or another turn of reasoning, trick of logic, methodological assumption, which if explicit would amount to a large and important and perhaps highly debatable proposition in logic or metaphysics.[3]

A first part of an answer to the question is found here in the broadening of the criteria (to include passages which exhibit the

[2] Donald R. Kelley, "What is Happening to the History of Ideas?", page 20.

[3] [237] 10.

various forms of opposing one account to another) in respect of which these pieces of text are to count as *anticipations* of the notion of *isostheneia*.

A second part of an answer to such a question might be that the study here is obliged to examine the development of the notion of *isostheneia* in a limited sense. The collection of passages taken to be *anticipations* of the notion then do not necessarily require that suspension of judgment *(epoche)* or relief from disturbance *(ataraxia)* be associated with it. Studies of these notions have been made which show that they were not present in the early Hellenistic thinkers, later thought to be Sceptics. Couissin observed that the origins of the association of opposed accounts of equal force with suspension of judgment are to be found in the Hellenistic period:

> Il est possible que ce soient les Stoïciens qui, les premiers, aient répondu ἐπέχω aux difficultés présentées par leur adversaire. ...Cependant il nous reste aucun texte où ἐποχή et ἐπέχειν soient employés par les premiers stoïciens, en dehors de leurs discussions avec les académiciens. Il se peut donc que le mot soit d'Arcésilas, mais la chose est stoïcienne.[4]

The connection of opposed accounts of equal strength and suspension of judgment, with relief from disturbance seems to have originated in the Imperial period. On this subject McPherran has written:

> earlier Academic Skeptics such as Arcesilaus had posited the τέλος of Skeptical practice as simply suspension (ἐποχή) of judgment and showed little interest in the

[4] Pierre Couissin, "L'origine et l'évolution de l'ἐποχή", pages 391-392.

idea that suspension might lead to ἀταραξία.[5]

It is enough here in the Classical period, to find instances of authors whose writing provides examples of accounts in opposition one with another. The passage in question should not be expected to overtly connect the experience of being confronted by opposed and incompatible accounts with the consequences *(epoche* and *ataraxia)* which later Sceptics embraced. The passages collected from the Classical period which are included below, are subliminal and not fully formed expectations of what was only later to become *articulate* in the Hellenistic period.

A second part of the answer to the question is addressed here by narrowing the criteria (to exclude *isostheneia's* connection with suspension of judgment and relief from disturbance) in respect of which these passages are to count as *anticipations* of the sceptical notion.

An answer to the question (what is the ground for including such passages here?) which simultaneously balances the expansion and restriction of the criteria used for selecting passages as examples of how *isostheneia* was being looked forward to in the Classical period, reflects what appears to be a fairly common reality underlying the investigation of themes in the history of philosophy. In this connection Lafrance has written:

> Pour nous, la perfection du philosophème, consisterait plutôt dans un juste équilibre entre la subjectivité et l'objectivité, dans un mélange harmonieux d'éléments

[5] Mark L. McPherran, "*Ataraxia* and *Eudaimonia* in Ancient Pyrrhonism: Is the Skeptic Really Happy?", page 137.

> propres à l'oeuvre d'art et à l'oeuvre de science. Le philosophème-poème aussi bien que le philosophème-formule algébrique indiqueraient peut-être l'échec de l'aventure philosophique provoqué soit par un manque de confiance dans la rationalité, soit par l'absence d'un certain ethos philosophique qui détournerait le regard des contenus pour le centrer uniquement sur les formes conceptuelles. Dans les deux cas, le type de rationalité spécifique au philosophème serait raté.[6]

It is this simultaneous adjudication of the narrowing and broadening of the criteria of relevance, always searching for some kind of balance or "juste équilibre entre la subjectivité et l'objectivité" appropriate for what is to be included in the group of texts considered as *anticipations* of the origins of Greek scepticism, which is taken to be a more or less adequate answer to the question: what are the grounds for considering such passages to be preconscious formulations of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*?

2. *Invocation of Calliope*

The early philosophical schools including the Academy and the Lyceum sought to place themselves under the patronage of the Muses who were nine daughters of Zeus and Memory.[7] And especially significant for the philosophers seems to have been Calliope: she who had emerged from the oral tradition as the beautifully voiced Muse of epic poetry. Léon Robin, in the notes to his translation

[6] Yvon Lafrance, "Philosophie et Histoire de la Philosophie", page 446.

[7] Rudolf Henry Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, page 65.

of the *Phaedrus*, points out the relationship she prefigures between oratory and dialectic:

> La subordination d'Uranie, muse des choses du ciel, à l'égard de Calliope, suggère l'idée que la double fonction de celle-ci relève en effet de quelque principe commun, qui ne peut être que la philosophie. Il y aurait donc là, au moins pour ce qui regarde l'éloquence, une sorte de présage de l'existence d'une rhétorique philosophique et de sa relation nécessaire avec l'étude du ciel et de la nature entière...[2]

There are two aspects to the appearance of the Muse Calliope as patroness of philosophers which find their way into a textual account of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism*. The first has to do with the connection between the fine language of the oral poetic tradition and the tension between dialectic and rhetoric. In the oral culture the Muse was responsible for the poets recollection of events which had transpired in the past, the details of which he was to recreate selectively in his song through the agency of her grace. That which was remembered was brought into the light of his day, and what remained inarticulate was buried in the darkness of time forgotten. But as some segments of the culture became literate during the sixth and fifth centuries, the Muses were honored by those who conceived of their favor in terms of a kind of philosophic textuality. Pierre Boyancé draws attention to this transformation of their role as literacy slowly took over some of the functions of rhapsodic orality:

> Les Muses, pour Platon comme pour le vulgaire sont les Déesses de la "musique", mais--et c'est en cela qu'il se distingue du vulgaire--la vraie musique est la

[2] Léon Robin, *Phèdre*, in *Platon oeuvres complètes*, page XXXVI.

philosophie.[3]

The second aspect which Calliope presides over is the production of records of what has been thought. As literacy began to displace some of the elements of the poetic tradition texts began to be collected and the reliance on oral performance diminished. The development of the sceptical notion depended upon having at hand a record of incompatible accounts on what appeared to be the same subject. The slowly developing technology of literacy gradually made it possible to collect many details of the opinions of thinkers which was not possible when the only storage facilities available were the memories of those who found themselves in disagreement.

3. Antithesis in the Early Literature

In early Greek literature antithesis appears often reflecting comparison and contrast, polarity and opposition. Palmer observes that antithesis "is endemic in Greek thought from the very beginning."[1] It has been suggested that the use of antithesis supported remembering in the oral culture, and found itself imported into the writing as literacy provided for textual record keeping. Hollingsworth claims of it that antithesis originates in

[3] Pierre Boyancé, *Le culte des Muses chez les philosophes grecs*, page 262.

[1] Leonard R. Palmer, *The Greek Language*, page 166.

"the first efforts of a language to be artistic."[2]

Antithesis appears in the epic poetry: there is reference to instances of describing accounts at variance with one another in Homer (before 700 B.C.). Diogenes Laertius reports that some called him the founder of the sceptical school because he "is always giving different answers at different times, and is never definite or dogmatic about the answer."[3] He quotes a passage (*Vit. Phil.* IX: 73) from the *Iliad* which they may have used as support for their claim:

> 1 στρεπτὴ δὲ γλῶσσ' ἐστὶ βροτῶν, πολέες δ' ἐνὶ μῦθοι παντοῖοι, ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα. ὁπποῖόν κ' εἴπῃσθα ἔπος, τοῖόν κ' ἐπακούσαις...[4]
>
> 1 Pliant is the tongue of mortals; numberless the tales within it; Ample is of words the pasture, hither thither widely ranging; And the saying which thou sayest, back it cometh later on thee...[5]

Diogenes' claim here is that these passages are instances in which Homer:

> 2 τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν λέγων καὶ ἀντίθεσιν τῶν λόγων.[6]
>
> 2 is speaking of the equal value of contradictory sayings.[7]

In the third century A.D., the notion seems to be located in, and *isostheneia* used in a discussion of, the earliest Greek oral

[2] John Emory Hollingsworth, *Antithesis in the Attic Orators from Antiphon to Isaeus*, page viii.
[3] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 71.
[4] Homer, *Iliad* XX: 248-250.
[5] Hicks [34] II: 487.
[6] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 73.
[7] Hicks [34] II: 487.

literature.

In Hesiod's (around 700 B.C.) *Theogony* (748-757) night is presented in conflict with day; as death ends the life of man, so night brings day to an end. Antithesis was used by Herodotus (c.484-c.420 B.C.) and Thucydides (460-c.400 B.C.).[8] With respect to its use by orators, Hollingsworth suggests that antithesis was also "particularly adapted for the exigencies of forensic speaking, where thought must have the strength of persuasion."[9]

Antithesis also appears in the dramatic literature. There is a fragment of Euripides' (c.485-c.406 B.C.) lost play, *Antiope*, in which the possibility of always opposing one argument to another is explicitly spoken of:

> 3 ἐκ παντὸς ἄν τις πράγματος δισσῶν λόγων ἀγῶνα θεῖτ' αὖ, εἰ λέγειν εἴη σοφός...[10]
>
> 3 In every case if one were clever at speaking, one could establish a contest of two-fold arguments...[11]

Kerferd, commenting on this passage, observes that:

> 3.1 it is interesting to notice that apparently, according to Aristides, it was one speaker in the play who had himself given expression to both arguments.[12]

Euripides used the techniques which were being developed by the thinkers of his day, and the practice of opposing one account to

[8] Grover Cleveland Kenyan, *Antithesis in the Speeches of the Greek Historians*.
[9] [199] 27.
[10] Euripides, *Antiope* fragment 189.
[11] Kerferd [214] 84.
[12] [214] 84.

another found a place in his scripts. Friedrich Solmsen speaks of this practice in connection with a form of argument thought to have originated with Aristotle:

> In tragedy, Euripides' (485-406 B.C.) *Alcestis, Medea,* and (the second) *Hippolytus,* all produced before 427, embody impressive samples of rhetorical technique including argumentations *in utramque partem.*[13]

The use of antithesis found its way into other dramatic literature of the later fifth century: in Aristophanes' (450-385 B.C.) *Clouds* (first produced in 423) there is a debate between two personified *logoi:* the Just Argument and the Unjust Argument. Sophocles (c.496-c.406 B.C.) wrote between 120 and 130 plays, of which only seven tragedies remain. He was especially capable of recreating the experience of human discord and suffering for those who find their way to his work. And, as might be expected, opposition and conflict figure in the action of his plots.

> In Sophocles' (496-406 B.C.) plays *Aias* and *Antigone,* the earliest preserved plays and both of them prior to 440, we find speeches for and against a particular course of action.[14]

Lloyd comments on what might have been the features of this form of expression which so appealed to authors of the period:

> Antithesis seems to have been attractive because it provided a kind of format for making classifications of various types. On the face of appearances the first distinctions are between what is said of a thing, and everything else.[15]

[13] Friedrich Solmsen, *Intellectual Experiments of the Greek Enlightenment,* page 24.

[14] [288] 24.

[15] G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy,* page 80.

Writing near the end of the Classical period Aristotle talks about the use of antithesis for giving emphasis to contrast, and for its utility in polarizing incompatible propositions:

> 4 ἡδεῖα δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ τοιαύτη λέξις, ὅτι τἀναντία γνωριμώτατα καὶ παρ' ἄλληλα μᾶλλον γνώριμα, καὶ ὅτι ἔοικεν συλλογισμῷ· ὁ γὰρ ἔλεγχος συναγωγὴ τῶν ἀντικειμένων ἐστίν. ἀντίθεσις μὲν οὖν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐστίν...[16]
>
> 4 Such a form of speech is satisfying, because the significance of contrasted ideas is easily felt, especially when they are thus put side by side, and also because it has the effect of a logical argument; it is by putting two opposing conclusions side by side that you prove one of them false. Such, then, is the nature of *antithesis*.[17]

The use of antithesis in the early literature suggests that the practice of opposing one account to another was something that Greeks in the Classical period were comfortable with. Antithesis can be seen as a factor *anticipating* the development of *isostheneia* in that the notion arises out of the experience of having confronted one account with another.

4. Opposition and the Presocratics

The use of opposition to frame a paradigm for the characterization of the features of the physical universe which attracted their attention was frequently employed by the Presocratic philosophers.

Xenophanes was honored by later sceptical thinkers as having

[16] Aristotle, *Rhetoric* III: 9, 1410a20-24.
[17] W. Rhys Roberts, *Rhetorica*.

contributed to the development of their way. The surviving records of his writing include fragments of satiric poems called *Silloi* which are preserved in various sources including Plutarch, Aëtius (first or second century A.D.), Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215 A.D.), Sextus Empiricus, and Simplicius (early sixth century A.D.). Xenophanes, reflecting uncertainty about the nature of the gods on the basis of commonly accepted and yet incompatible claims that different peoples produce, reports that:

> **5** Αἰθιοπές τε θεοὺς σφετέρους σιμοὺς μέλανάς τε Θρῆκές τε γλαυκοὺς καὶ πυρρούς φασι πέλεσθαι.[1]
>
> **5** The Ethiopians say that their gods are snub-nosed and black, the Thracians that theirs have light blue eyes and red hair.[2]

Xenophanes, summarizing a position which may be among the origins of Greek scepticism concerning religious issues, claimed that knowledge of the faithfulness of the accounts we construct about things is not possible for human beings:

> **6** καὶ τὸ μὲν οὖν σαφὲς οὔτις ἀνὴρ ἴδεν οὐδέ τις ἔσται εἰδὼς ἀμφὶ θεῶν τε καὶ ἄσσα λέγω περὶ πάντων· εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα τύχοι τετελεσμένον εἰπών, αὐτὸς ὅμως οὐκ οἶδε...[3]
>
> **6** no man knows, or ever will know, the truth about the gods and about everything I speak of: even if one chanced to say the complete truth, yet oneself knows it not...[4]

He goes on to claim that this situation exists because we have only appearances with which to fabricate our accounts:

[1] DK 21B16, from Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* VII: 22, 1.
[2] Kirk [215] 168.
[3] DK 21B34, from *M* VII: 49, 110; *M* VIII: 326, and from Plutarch, *De Audiendis Poetis* II: 17E.
[4] Kirk [215] 179.

7 δόκος δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσι τέτυκται.[5]

7 seeming is wrought over all things...[6]

Xenophanes holds that the best claim that we can make for our accounts is our opinion that they resemble the truth:

8 ταῦτα δεδοξάσθω μὲν ἐοικότα τοῖς ἐτύμοισι...[7]

8 let these things be opined as resembling the truth...[8]

Xenophanes also observed that different people produce different accounts of things. These accounts are different because we only have appearances on which to base them. Because of this we cannot know whether the accounts are faithful to their objects.

Parmenides of Elea was probably influenced by Pythagorean thinkers with whom he came into contact early. The written work which survives includes the occasional line in Plato and Aristotle, and about 150 lines of a poem preserved in Sextus and Simplicius. Parmenides divides his description of what there is into two groups. Within the first group are found the accounts created by mortals, and these are constructed in terms of two fundamental opposites: fire and night, which manifest themselves in sensible opposites like hot and cold, light and dark, light and heavy, soft and hard, and so on. Lloyd, commenting on this feature of Parmenides thought, observes:

Parmenides' (c.515 B.C.-) cosmogony in the *Way of*

[5] DK 21B34, from *M* VII: 49, 110; *M* VIII: 326; *Aud. Poet.* II: 17E.
[6] Kirk [215] 179.
[7] DK 21B35, from Plutarch, *Symposiacs* IX: 7.
[8] Kirk [215] 179.

> *Seeming* begins with the two substances *Fire*, or *Light*, and *Night*, which are equal (Fr. 94) and opposite (τἀντία Fr. 8 55 and 59).[9]

These unreliable accounts of the first group, according to Parmenides, are not to be relied upon with the confidence proper to the second group. In fact, Parmenides' opposition of the first group to the second was directed not to the sceptical purpose of casting both in doubt, but as a philosophical method of reflecting what he thought to be the viability of the second group as the way of truth. Nevertheless, the method of opposing accounts here is thought to be an early *anticipation* of what would later be *articulated* as the strategy underlying *the development of the notion of isostheneia*.

And still, it is significant for this textual exploration of the development of the sceptical notion that in his discussion of the second group of accounts, those leading to the truth, that persuasion plays a role:

> **9** ἡ μὲν ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ‹ὡς› οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι πειθοῦς ἐστι κέλευθος (Ἀληθείῃ γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ)...[10]

> **9** The one, that [it] is and that it is impossible for [it] not to be, is the path of Persuasion (for she attends upon Truth)...[11]

Perhaps here is some recognition of the value of persuasion, which later becomes an element in the way of the Greek Sceptics. They would oppose accounts within groups to one another, and accounts

[9] [232] 16.

[10] DK 28B2, from Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria* II: 29C, 105B.

[11] Schofield [215] 245.

from one group to accounts in the other, always confronted with the likelihood that for any particular opposition, the truth being sought is inaccessible.

Anaxagoras was born about 500 B.C., came to Athens from Clazomenae, and died having been exiled for impiety, in 428. He seems to have written only one book or roll, and it appears to have had an enduring appeal, for Simplicius was able to quote a considerable number of fragments from it in the sixth century A.D. Anaxagoras produced a physics which accounted for existence in terms of a mixture, which is composed of pairs of opposites.

> Anaxagoras (c.500-c.428 B.C.) describes in Fr. 4 an original mixture of all things which contains pairs of opposites (e.g. the wet and the *dry*, the *hot* and the *cold*, the *bright* and the *dark*) among other things (e.g. earth).[12]

The opposition between the elements of things in Anaxagoras' physics is here seen as an *anticipation* of the sceptical stategy which would become *articulate* later, of opposing accounts of things to one another. Pyrrhonists would likely have held that Anaxagoras, confident that his mixture of opposites was a reliable representation of what exists, was himself a Dogmatist.

Democritus' (c.460-c.360 B.C.) thought influenced Pyrrho and Epicurus (341-270 B.C.). Fragments are found in Aristotle, Sextus, Simplicius, Diogenes Laertius, Hippolytus (c.170-c.236 A.D.), Theophrastus (c.370-c.288 B.C.), Stobaeus (early fifth century A.D.), and Aëtius. In many of the fragments which survive

[12] [232] 16.

Democritus points to the radical instability in existing things which makes knowledge about them problematic. By way of response to this problem Democritus opposes the atom and void polarity, which alone is knowable.

There is a passage preserved in Stobaeus' *Anthologium*[13] in which a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears:

> **10** Ἢν μὴ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμέῃς, τὰ ὀλίγα τοι πολλὰ δόξει. σμικρὰ γὰρ ὄρεξις πενίην ἰσοσθενέα πλούτῳ ποιέει.[14]
>
> **10** if you do not desire much, a little will seem much to you; for a small appetite makes poverty equivalent to wealth.[15]

This text locates what seems to be the earliest appearance of the root ἰσοσθεν- in the writing of Democritus. The next appearance of the root in the texts in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* occurs more than two centuries later in Asclepiodotus' (first century B.C.) *Tactica*. The long period in which a word from the root does not appear is ground for some concern about the fidelity of the Stobaeus quotation. This comment bears on the issue:

> John Stobaeus, the fifth-century A.D. anthologist, assembled in his *Anthologium* educative extracts from the whole range of Greek literature, but with special emphasis on ethical sayings. Many Presocratic fragments (notably of Democritus) are preserved by him, often in a somewhat impure form. Stobaeus' main sources were the handbooks and compendia which proliferated in the Alexandrian period.[16]

[13] The Greek word ἐκλογῶν in this context can be translated 'choice collection of passages', but it can also be rendered as 'a balancing of accounts'.

[14] DK 68B284, from Stobaeus, *Anthologium* IV: 33, 24-25.

[15] Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, page 116.

[16] [215] 2.

It is difficult to believe that such a word would not have found its way into the lexica of the Hellenistic philosophers and rhetoricians, or the Alexandrian physicians of the same period, and have been preserved for us in a few fragments, that we might recognize its presence in the language at that time.

It seems that Presocratic physicists found the articulation of claims about what exists in models which relied heavily on paradigms of polarity or opposition very useful. Lloyd comments on the utility of these models:

> Some consideration of why theories based on opposites seem to have been attractive to the presocratics includes the reflection of the fact that in many of the natural phenomena a kind of alternation is readily apparent. For example day follows night and night does day; effort gives way to rest, as finally is life overcome by death. Oppositions also seem to find expression in religious language: good and evil, gods and men, the holy and the profane.[17]

The reliance on opposing accounts to one another as a means of adjudicating their value seems to have been part of the way the Presocratic physicists approached their subject matter. This disposition to confront one account with another seems to have survived and to have found place for expression in the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

[17] [232] 80.

5. Heraclitus and Incompatible Accounts

Heraclitus (thought to have been born about 540 B.C., and to have produced no philosophical work after 480 B.C.) lived in Ephesus, belonged to an aristocratic family, and had poor relations with his fellow citizens. He is thought to have written a book *On Nature* which has not survived. Fragments attributed to Heraclitus are found in Aristotle, Plutarch, Clement, Hippolytus, Sextus, Origen (185-255 A.D.), Diogenes Laertius, and Stobaeus.

Heraclitus drew attention to the different ways that living beings are affected by the same objects:

> **11** θάλασσα, φησίν, ὕδωρ καθαρώτατον καὶ μιαρώτατον, ἰχθύσι μὲν πότιμον καὶ σωτήριον, ἀνθρώποις δὲ ἄποτον καὶ ὀλέθριον.[1]
>
> **11** Sea water is the purest and most polluted: for fish, it is drinkable and life-giving; for men, not drinkable and destructive.[2]

Charles Kahn connects this passage with what would later become scepticism:

> **11.1** a sceptic like Sextus will include both the Heraclitean examples of sea water (LXX) and pigs bathing in the mire (LXXII) and Plato's point about olive oil among the standard arguments for suspending judgment.[3]

Commenting again on **11**, Kahn speaks of the connection between the doctrine of opposites and the value of antithesis in connection with this fragment:

> **11.2** the doctrine of opposites is, among other things, an attempt to attain a larger vision by recognizing the

[1] DK 22B61, in Hippolytus, *Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* IX: 10, 5.
[2] Freeman [178] 29.
[3] Charles H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, pages 186-187.

> life-enhancing function of the negative term, and hence comprehending the positive value of the antithesis itself.[4]

Heraclitus believed that things affecting us differently generated incompatible accounts:

> **12** ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὠυτή.[5]
>
> **12** The way up and down is one and the same.[6]

Charles Kahn commenting on this passage notes that:

> **12.1** every uphill path can equally well be described as downhill, depending upon where one is standing; just as it is one and the same road that runs from Philadelphia to New York and from New York to Philadelphia.[7]

In Heraclitus' thought the confrontation of incompatible accounts of things became the most important element in our effort to grasp the truth about their objects:

> **13** Δίκης ὄνομα φησὶν οὐκ ἂν ἤδεσαν, εἰ ταῦτα μὴ ἦν...[8]
>
> **13** They would not know the name of Right, if these things (i.e. the opposite) did not exist.[9]

James Lesher comments on this passage:

> **13.1** Individual words must be placed in essential relations with their opposites in order for their meaning to be understood.[10]

And Charles Kahn notes the connection between opposed accounts and

[4] [209] 189.
[5] DK 22B60, from *Haer.* IX: 10, 4.
[6] Freeman [178] 29.
[7] [209] 240-241.
[8] DK 22B23, from *Strom.* IV: 9, 7.
[9] Freeman [178] 26.
[10] James H. Lesher, "Heraclitus' Epistemological Vocabulary", page 168.

knowledge of things:

> **13.2** The thought of LXIX seems then to be the conceptual dependence of justice upon the existence of injustice and legal disputes. But the thought is expressed not in terms of concepts but in terms of the name by which Justice is known. If there were no judgments and penalties, men could not know or understand the word *dikê* that denotes them. But then they would not know the name of Justice.[11]

Heraclitus seems to have claimed that understanding is achieved when we recognise that incompatible accounts are regulated by a kind of balance:

> **14** οὐ ξυνιᾶσιν ὅκως διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῷ ὁμολογέει· παλίντροπος ἁρμονίη ὅκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης.[12]
>
> **14** They do not understand how that which differs with itself is in agreement: harmony consists of opposing tension, like that of the bow and the lyre.[13]

Emending παλίντροπος[14] Kirk, Raven and Schofield provide a gloss on παλίντονος:

> **14.1** παλίντονος ='counter-stretched', i.e. tending equally in opposite directions. A tension in one direction automatically produces an equivalent tension in the other; if not, the system collapses.[15]

And they discuss the role that harmony plays using some of the metaphors that later thinkers would employ to describe the equal force between incompatible accounts of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia:*

> **14.2** any pair, or sum of pairs, can be regarded either (a) as heterogeneous and analysable in terms of separate extremes, or (b) as tending together with itself to form a unity. Now comes an important addition: there is

[11] [209] 185.
[12] DK 22B51, from *Haer.* IX: 9, 2.
[13] Freeman [178] 28.
[14] [215] 192n1.
[15] [215] 193n2.

> (*sc.* in it, i.e. it exemplifies) a connexion or means of joining (the literal sense of ἁρμονίη) through opposite tensions, which ensures this coherence--just as the tension in the string of bow or lyre, being exactly balanced by the outward tension exerted by the arms of the instrument, produces a coherent, unified, stable and efficient complex. We may infer that if the balance between opposites were *not* maintained, for example if 'the hot' (i.e. the sum of hot substances) began seriously to outweigh the cold, or night day, then the unity and coherence of the world would cease, just as, if the tension in the bow-string exceeds the tension in the arms, the whole complex is destroyed.[16]

Charles Kahn commenting on this passage suggests that the balance between incompatible accounts is a paradigm for human attempts at understanding:

> **14.3** The concept of *harmoniê* as a unity composed of conflicting parts is thus the model for an understanding of the world ordering as a unified whole. And it is the comprehension of this pattern in all its applications that constitutes wisdom.[17]

In the case of later Sceptics this balance between conflicting accounts leads to the suspension of judgment which Kahn identified in **11.1.** And so these passages are introduced as *anticipations* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia.* For Heraclitus though, existence manifests itself in terms of a rational λόγος which finds itself appearing as a perpetual confrontation of balanced opposites:

> **15** εἰδέναι χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χωρεόμενα...[18]
>
> **15** One should know that war is general (universal) and jurisdiction is strife and everything comes about by way of strife and necessity.[19]

[16] [215] 193.
[17] [209] 200.
[18] DK 22B80, from Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI: 42.
[19] Freeman [178] 30.

Kahn's comment on this fragment focuses on the element that would later constitute the basis for the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*:

> 15.1 The symmetrical confrontation of the two sides in battle now becomes a *figura* for the shifting but reciprocal balance between opposites in human life and in the natural world, for the structure designated *harmonie* in LXXVIII (D.51). The imagery of the bow and the lyre is thus supplemented by that of two champions or two armies facing one another.[20]

Robinson connects the passage with the manifestation of *logos*:

> 15.2 In talking of war as 'common' (*'xynos'*), a poet such as Homer (*Iliad* 18.309), followed by Archilochus, fragment 38 Diehl, was of course merely suggesting the applicability of the effects of war to either side in war, depending on the tide of fortune. For Heraclitus the principle is universal, as is its expression (*logou*, fragment 2); it is that law (fragment 114), eternally expounded by 'that which is wise' (fragments 32, 108), whereby unity and balance are achieved through the endless clash of the opposites comprising the real.[21]

Heraclitus drew attention to the different ways that human beings are affected by the same objects. This situation was the basis for the generation of incompatible accounts concerning what seemed to be the same thing. Existence, according to the accounts human beings produce of it, manifests itself to us in a perpetual confrontation of balanced opposites, and understanding only becomes possible when this is recognized. This opposition of harmonized incompatible accounts was for Heraclitus the most significant element in our effort to grasp the truth about their objects. And it was a reflection of the strife in things which

[20] [209] 205.
[21] T.M. Robinson, *Heraclitus: Fragments*, pages 131-132.

Heraclitus called λόγος. Heraclitus extends his treatment of incompatible accounts to make observations about the things of which the accounts are claims. The epistemological balance at the level of incompatible accounts is a manifestation of the harmonious opposition at the level of things. Heraclitus takes his epistemological data to ground metaphysical claims about the strife between things.

There are several elements in Heraclitus' thought which appear to *anticipate* the articulation of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. The first is the perception that the same things give rise to incompatible accounts. Human beings seem to develop opposed irreconcilable claims concerning any single thing. The second element is the appreciation that there exists some kind of balance between the accounts. When the claims are tested by bringing them into confrontation with one another, there is little which can be advanced by which any claim can be preferred above others. And this is the state Heraclitus thought we find ourselves in with respect to what might be called what we know.

6. Alcmaeon's Homeostatic Model of Health

Diogenes Laertius reports that Alcmaeon of Croton, a physician and philosopher, was a student of Pythagoras.[1] This passage, supported by Aristotle's comment in *Metaphysics* I: 5, 986A29, has been used

[1] *Vit. Phil.* VIII: 83.

to date him late in the sixth or early in the fifth century B.C. In Alcmaeon's treatise on natural science, so claims Aetius:

> **16** Ἀλκμαίων τῆς μὲν ὑγιείας εἶναι συνεκτικὴν τὴν ἰσονομίαν τῶν δυνάμεων, ὑγροῦ, ξηροῦ, ψυχροῦ, θερμοῦ, πικροῦ, γλυκέος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν, τὴν δ' ἐν αὐτοις μοναρχίαν ὑσου ποιητικὴν· φθοροποιὸν γὰρ ἑκατέρου μοναρχίαν.[2]
>
> **16** Alcmaeon maintains that the bond of health is the 'equal balance' of the powers, moist and dry, cold and hot, bitter and sweet, and the rest, while the 'supremacy' of one of them is the cause of disease; for the supremacy of either is destructive.[3]

Lloyd commenting on this passage, remarks on the claim that Greeks of this period involved in the treatment of illness, believed that health consisted in a balance of opposed elements:

> **16.1** It was a commonplace of Greek medical theory that health consists in the balance of certain opposed factors in the body. Some such doctrine seems to have been held by Alcmaeon, for Aetius (v 30 I; DK 24 B4) reports that he held that health lies in the ἰσονομία or 'equal rights' of certain 'powers' in the body and that disease arises from the μοναρχία or 'supreme rule' of one of them: as examples of what he calls the 'powers', Aetius mentions wet, dry, cold, hot, bitter and sweet.[4]

Gregory Vlastos notes the extent to which this thesis regarding health was accepted in the ancient world:

> **16.2** For Alcmaeon, as for the "Hippocratic" medicine of Ionia and the Sicilian medicine of the Empedoclean school, the normal constitution of the organism is the *krasis* of equal "powers"; the "monarchic" preponderance of any power is a diseased condition, destructive of the organism.[5]

But Loren MacKinney, in a paper devoted to the treatment of this problematic notion of the balance of opposites, seems to hold that

[2] DK 24B4, in Aëtius, V: 30, I.
[3] Raven [215] 234.
[4] [232] 20.
[5] Gregory Vlastos, "Isonomia", page 363.

the notion was less widely accepted by those physicians involved in the articulation of theoretical accounts for use in the medicinal practice of the time:

> 16.3 the ideal of equilibrium, balance, etc., prevailed widely; more noticeably, to be sure, in the realm of health and hygiene than in that of medicine proper.[6]

The notion of well-being was associated with the notion of balance between opposing elements early in the fifth century B.C. This anticipates a homeostatic notion of physiological vitality first explicitly articulated in the middle of the nineteenth century.

There was a close relationship between philosophers and physicians in the Classical period: often philosophical vocabulary would find its way into the language of physiology, and medical preoccupations would surface in the treatises of the philosophers. As Kirk and Raven observe with respect to Alcmaeon:

> though Alcmaeon's interests were primarily medical and physiological, his theories even in these specialized fields exercised a considerable influence on later philosophers.[7]

And more generally Burnet, in an observation on the nature of this symbiotic relationship between the medical practitioners and philosophers, mentioned that from the time of Empedocles:

> it is impossible to understand the history of philosophy... without keeping the history of medicine

[6] Loren MacKinney, "The concept of Isonomia in Greek Medicine", page 81.

[7] [215] 1957: 232.

constantly in view.[6]

Within the bounds of the Classical period however, the influences are extremely difficult to separate one from the other. So it is the case that many medical texts are cited as *anticipations* of *the development of the notion of isostheneia*.

7. Empedocles: Love and Strife

Empedocles (c.493-c.433 B.C.) made important contributions to medicine and philosophy. There is some basis for associating him with the Pythagoreans, and Theophrastus calls him an admirer of Parmenides.[1] Galen speaks of him as the founder of the Sicilian medical school. In addition Empedocles is said to have exercised some influence on the development of rhetoric in general: Diogenes Laertius reports that Aristotle calls him the founder of rhetoric.[2] On the origins of the sophistic movement in particular he is claimed by Satyrus (third century B.C.) to have been the teacher of Gorgias (c.483-c.376 B.C.).[3] With respect to his written work, it is believed that he produced two poems: *On Nature* and *Purifications*. These together are thought to have contained about 5000 verses; about 350 verses are extant. Empedocles provided an

[6] John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, fourth edition, page 204n1. See also Henry E. Siegerist's *A History of Medicine; volume II: Early Greek, Hindu, and Persian Medicine*, and especially his discussion of Pre-Socratic Philosophers and Early Medical Schools on pages 84-115.

[1] In *Vit. Phil.* VIII: 55.

[2] *Vit. Phil.* VIII: 57.

[3] In *Vit. Phil.* VIII: 58.

account of the basic constituents of physical existence in terms of four elements:

> **17** πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ γαῖα καὶ ἠέρος ἄπλετον ὕψος· νεῖκός τ' οὐλόμενον δίχα τῶν, ἀτάλαντον ἁπάντῃ, καὶ φιλότης ἐν τοῖσιν, ἴση μῆκός τε πλάτος τε...[4]
>
> **17** Fire and Water and Earth and the boundless height of Air, and also execrable Hate apart from these, of equal weight in all directions, and Love in their midst, their equal in length and breadth.[5]

Here can be seen the two forces acting as a kind of regulative principle with respect to the four elements of the physicists:

> **17.1** Love and Strife are motive principles working on the four elements of earth, air, fire and water...[6]

Wright provides a gloss on ἀτάλαντον ἁπάντῃ which is useful for the purposes of this exploration of the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*:

> **17.2** ἀτάλαντον ἁπάντῃ: "equal in every way," "uniform," as in Hesiod *Theog.* 524 and Parmenides fr. 8.44. It is not that Strife is materially equal in weight to each or all of the roots but that its power can stretch evenly and comprehensively over them all.[7]

And an additional comment on **17** by Wright isolates the centrality of the two opposed principles love and strife in the cosmogony of Empedocles:

> **17.3** As Aristotle himself observes, if Strife did not exist all things would be one (*Metaph.* 1000b1-2), and if there were no principle of Love the roots would be in a state of permanent separation. It is the antagonism of two opposed principles as each fights (Aristotle *GC* 315a16-17) for control over the roots during the times of transition of power that gives rise to the world of

[4] DK 31B17, in Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Physicorum Commentaria* I: 4; 34r17-18.

[5] Freeman [178] 53.

[6] M.R. Wright, *Empedocles: the Extant Fragments*, page 167.

[7] [314] 170.

thnêta.[8]

Empedocles also claimed that the four elements are equal:

> **18** ταῦτα γὰρ ἴσά τε πάντα καὶ ἥλικα γείνατ' ἔασι, τιμῆς δ' ἄλλης ἄλλο μέδει, πάρα δ' ἦθος ἑκάστῳ, ἐν δὲ μέρει κρατέουσι περιπλομένοιο χρόνοιο.[9]
>
> **18** For all these are equal, and of like age, but each has a different prerogative and its own character, and in turn they prevail as time comes round.[10]

With respect to birth and death, these are thought to occur as a result of the uniting and separating of the four elements, all of which are equally powerful:

> **18.1** E. thought of the four elements as equal in some way, prevailing inevitably in turn; birth is explained by their uniting and death by their separation, for nothing can be added to or subtracted from their sum.[11]

Inwood commenting on **18** mentions the influence of love and strife in this process:

> **18.2** In these lines he says that what [comes] from the many (the four elements) is one and he shows [that this happens] because sometimes love predominates and sometimes strife.[12]

These two passages **17** and **18** are taken to be from the writing of Empedocles recorded by Simplicius almost nine hundred years remote from Empedocles. His writing is thought to be a valuable source of accurate quotations from the Presocratics. Simplicius' work contains 19 instances of words from the root ισοσθεν- found in the search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae;* only Galen (28 instances)

[8] [314] 31.
[9] DK 31B17, in *In Phys.* I: 4; 34r21-22.
[10] Raven [215] 328.
[11] [314] 167.
[12] Brad Inwood, *The Poem of Empedocles,* page 89.

and Sextus (25 instances) have the word appearing more often in their writing in the *TLG* data bank.

These two components of Empedocles thought, the four basic roots or elements of things, and their relation to each other regulated by the tension between love and strife, while cited here as *anticipations* of what later would be the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*, were intended by their author for a more constructive purpose. They constituted a large part of Empedocles' account of what is existing, and became influential in the articulation of a primitive physiological account of the things hidden in the human body.

> The limiting of basic opposites to four and their correlation to the roots is first found in medicine. Alcmaeon worked on the assumption of an indefinite number of opposites, (Cf. Alcmaeon ap. Aristotle *Metaph.* 986a31-34, Aetius 5.30.1, and also Hippocrates *VM* 14) but it was Empedocles' theory that the medical writers later took over and adapted to a fixed number of powers, and then of humors, in the body. Philistion in a simple way listed four *ideai* of the body, relating hot to fire, cold to air, dry to earth, and moist to water.[13]

In addition there is some support for the claim that Empedocles held that the best conditions for the functioning organism derive from a condition in which the elemental opposites are balanced against one another. With respect to quality of vision, Theophrastus reports that Empedocles held that vision is best when the dark-light opposites of water and fire are in equilibrium:

> **19** ἄριστα δὲ κεκρᾶσθαι καὶ βελτίστην εἶναι τὴν ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἴσων συγκειμένην.[14]

[13] [314] 26.

[14] DK 31A86, in Theophrastus, *De Sensu* VIII.

> **19** That ‹eye› is of happiest blend and is best which is composed of both ‹these constituents› in equal measure.[15]

Empedocles also drew attention to the occasions when the testimony of one sense organ could be opposed to another, and to the subjective nature of perception generally arising from the situation. In this regard Groarke comments:

> the senses are not contradictory or in opposition, and only seem so because they reflect different (and partial) aspects of the world that are expressed by specific kinds of effluences. To understand the world in a comprehensive way we must accept all the senses, and all the different aspects of the world that they reveal.[16]

But these features of perception which later Sceptics were to employ in their objections to knowledge claims made of things sensed, should not be taken to endorse the view that Empedocles was an early Sceptic.

Theophrastus also claims that Empedocles used the same account of an optimal balance between opposites to give an explanation of better or poorer intelligence.

> **20** ὅσοις μὲν οὖν ἴσα παραπλήσια μέμεικται καὶ μὴ διὰ πολλοῦ μηδ' αὖ μικρὰ μηδ' ὑπερβάλλοντα τῷ μεγέθει, τούτους φρονιμωτάτους εἶναι καὶ κατὰ τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἀκριβεστάτους, κατὰ λόγον δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἐγγυτάτω τούτων, ὅσοις δ' ἐναντίως, ἀφρονεστάτους.[17]

> **20** Those in whom these mingled elements are of the same or nearly the same ‹amount›, being neither widely separated nor too small nor of excessive size,--such persons are most intelligent and keen of sense; and others are intelligent and keen of sense according as they approach to such a mixture; but those whose

[15] G.M. Stratton, *Theophrastus and the Greek Physiological Psychology before Aristotle*, page 73.

[16] [192] 45.

[17] DK 31A86, in *Sens.* XI.

> condition is the very reverse are the least intelligent.[18]

Theophrastus wrote these passages around the end of the fourth century B.C. Empedocles had been dead for 130 years. The Hippocratic texts, in which the notion of health as a balance between opposites seems to first appear, had been written shortly after Empedocles death.

Empedocles provided an account of the basic constituents of physical existence in terms of four elements, which are in some sense equal. The relation of these elements to each other is regulated by a tension between love and strife. This account became influential in the articulation of a primitive physiological account of things hidden in the body. There is some support for the claim that Empedocles thought that the best condition for the functioning organism arose from a condition in which the elemental opposites are balanced against one another. These features of his thought are included here as *anticipations* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

8. Zeno of Elea: the Beginning of Dialectic

Plato claims that Zeno (early fifth century B.C.) could argue convincingly both for and against a given claim.[1] In the opening

[18] Stratton [129] 75.
[1] Plato, *Phaedrus* 261d.

passages of his *Helen*, Isocrates (436-338 B.C.) groups Zeno with the Sophists Gorgias and Protagoras, features of whose method he can be seen as anticipating:

> **21** ἢ Ζήνωνα τὸν ταὐτὰ δυνατὰ καὶ πάλιν ἀδύνατα πειρώμενον ἀποφαίνειν...[2]
>
> **21** or Zeno, who ventured to prove the same things as possible and again as impossible...[3]

Aristotle calls Zeno the inventor of dialectic.[4] Plutarch mentions Zeno in his *Life of Pericles*, and includes what appears to be a quotation from Timon of Phlius (c.320-c.230 B.C.):

> **22** διήκουσε δὲ Περικλῆς καὶ Ζήνωνος τοῦ Ἐλεάτου πραγματευομένου περὶ φύσιν, ὡς Παρμενίδης, ἐλεγκτικὴν δέ τινα καὶ δι' ἀντιλογίας κατακλείουσαν εἰς ἀπορίαν ἐξασκήσαντος ἕξιν, ὥσπερ καὶ Τίμων ὁ Φλιάσιος εἴρηκε διὰ τούτων· Ἀμφοτερογλώσσου τε μέγα σθένος οὐκ ἀλαπαδνὸν Ζήνωνος, πάντων ἐπιλήπτορος.[5]
>
> **22** Pericles was also a pupil of Zeno the Eleatic, who discoursed on the natural world, like Parmenides, and perfected a species of refutative catch which was sure to bring an opponent to grief; as Timon of Phlius expressed it: "His was a tongue that could argue both ways with a fury resistless, Zeno's; assailer of all things."[6]

Diogenes Laertius also appears to be quoting Timon of Phlius, who said of Zeno:

> **23** ἀμφοτερογλώσσου τε μέγα σθένος οὐκ ἀλαπαδνὸν Ζήνωνος πάντων ἐπιλήπτορος...[7]
>
> **23** Great Zeno's strength which, never known to fail, on each side urged, on each side could prevail."[8]

[2] Isocrates, *Helen* 3.
[3] Larue Van Hook, *Isocrates*, volume III, page 63.
[4] *Vit. Phil.* VIII: 57.
[5] Plutarch, *Pericles* IV: 3.
[6] Bernadotte Perrin, *Plutarch's Lives*, volume III, page 11.
[7] DK 29A1, in *Vit. Phil.* IX: 25.
[8] Hicks [34] II: 435.

Zeno's writings are among the first instances of the use of opposed arguments to bring the listener to a state of puzzlement on the issues in question. But the result was not suspension of judgement. Rather the difficulties created by Zeno's opposed arguments were designed to support their authors dogmatic conclusions concerning the impossiblity of non-being. In his puzzles Zeno sought to subject the commonly held beliefs about plurality and motion to a kind of confrontational examination, and it is in this regard that these passages are included as *anticipations* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

9. Balancing of Opposites in Hippocratic Texts

The relationship between medicine and philosophy from the time of Alcmaeon of Croton has already been noted as a symbiotic one, in which both disciplines influenced the other. This situation holds even more extensively in the case of the Hippocratic Texts. On this subject Frede has written:

> as far as medicine is concerned, it is generally agreed, and indeed obvious, that ancient medical authors, from the times of the Hippocratic writers onward, relied heavily on philosophers, not just for their views on physiology, but also for their conception of their art and their moral precepts for the doctor. Often they also formed fairly detailed philosophical views of their own. In fact, there is a whole tradition of philosophical thought in ancient medicine, particularly concerning the nature of medical knowledge, which is fairly independent of the thought of the philosophers, and which was substantial enough at times even to

> influence the views of the philosophers.[1]

Hippocrates of Cos (c.460-c.380 B.C.) was a younger contemporary of Socrates (469-399 B.C.); he seems to have been short in stature, to have travelled a good deal, and probably to have died near Larissa. He is reputed to have been, but more than likely was not, the author of the oath which physicians still make today. Plato tells us that Hippocrates believed that one could not understand the nature of the body without considering it as a whole unit.[2] Aristotle's student Meno, who wrote a doxographical history of early Greek medicine parts of which have been found in a papyrus in the British Museum--the *Anonymous Londinensis*, claims that Hippocrates accounted for illness as the result of air produced in the body by undigested food. Of the additional details of his life and thought very little testimony survives.

The collection of texts which has been known as the writing of Hippocrates are by anonymous authors, and date from the later fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

> many of the treatises are composite productions, made up of several independent pieces which are sometimes, it would seem, the work of different hands...[3]

It is now thought probable that none of them were written by the individual Hippocrates. These texts, representing pre-hellenistic medicine, were collected in the Alexandrian libraries, and unified by the editors under the authority of Hippocrates.

[1] Michael Frede, "Philosophy and Medicine in Antiquity", page 211.

[2] *Phdr.* 270a.

[3] [232] 9-10.

> It seems likely that none of the books preserved under the name of Hippocrates is genuine. Their content does not agree with the pre-Alexandrian testimonies. Moreover, the authenticity of hardly any of them seem to be attested by good tradition; in this case one would expect unanimity of the critics at least in regard to one or a few books. It is probable rather that the writings came to Alexandria as the remnants of medical literature which had circulated in the fifth and fourth centuries, but that they were anonymous, as technical literature of that era commonly was. Philological criticism then attributed them to Hippocrates on the basis of what was considered Hippocratic doctrine in the various periods.[4]

The use of opposites to produce physiological theories in terms of which accounts of health and illness could be articulated is common in the Hippocratic texts. In some cases one pair of opposites is the basis of the physiology, while in other texts two pairs of opposites are used, and in some places many pairs are used.

The Hippocratic treatises make use of single pairs of opposites in their accounts of physiology and pathology. The author of *On Regimen* suggests that fire and water are the basis of all that is animal:

> **24** Συνίστατι μὲν οὖν τὰ ζῷα τά τε ἄλλα πάντα καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ δυοῖν, διαφόροιν μὲν τὴν δύναμιν, συμφόροιν δὲ τὴν χρῆσιν, πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος. ταῦτα δὲ συναμφότερα αὐτάρκεά ἐστι τοῖσί τε ἄλλοισι πᾶσι καὶ ἀλλήλοισιν, ἑκάτερον δὲ χωρὶς οὔτε αὐτὸ ἑωυτῷ οὔτε ἄλλῳ οὐδενί.[5]
>
> **24** Now all animals, including man, are composed of two things, different in power but working together in their use, namely, fire and water. Both together these are sufficient for one another and for everything else, but each by itself suffices neither for itself nor for

[4] Ludwig Edelstein, "Hippocrates", page 518.
[5] Hippocratic Corpus, *De Victus* I: 3.

anything else.[6]

Lloyd comments on the central role that fire and water play in the formation of living things as described in this text:

> **24.1** *On Regimen* I is one of a number of other works which propose theories about the elements of which our bodies are composed. This writer says that all living things are made of *Fire* and *Water*, the former hot and dry (although 'there is moisture in Fire'), the latter cold and wet (but 'there is dryness in Water'). (*Vict.* I chs. 3 and 4, L VI 472 12ff. and 474 8ff.)[7]

In the Hippocratic texts there is also evidence that physicians began to use two pairs of opposites, based on Empedocles' model of the four physical elements earth, air, fire and water, in constructing their own physiological accounts of the basis for health and the treatments for disease.

The author of *On the Nature of Man* (thought to have been written between 440 and 400 B.C.)[8] uses pairs of the identifying properties of the Empedoclean elements (earth-cold; fire-hot; water-wet and air-dry) to produce a correlation of the four humors with the seasons of the year. The relationship between the element-effects water-wet and fire-hot is claimed to be the natural-physical basis for the season spring, which time of the year is the period in which the humor blood is dominant in the human organism, and figures in that season most prominently as the physiological basis of accounts of health and illness. The tension between air-dry and earth-cold gives rise to autumn and the humor black bile. The

[6] W.H.S. Jones, *Hippocrates*, volume IV, page 231.
[7] [232] 19-20.
[8] [64] xxvii.

relationship of fire-hot and air-dry supports an account of the season summer and its correlation with the humor yellow bile, as similarly does earth-cold and water-wet for winter and phlegm.

The author of *On the Nature of Man* goes on to detail the reciprocal nature of the relationship between elements, seasons and humors:

> **25** ἰσχύει δ' ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ τοτὲ μὲν ὁ χειμὼν μάλιστα, τοτὲ δὲ τὸ ἔαρ, τοτὲ δὲ τὸ θέρος, τοτὲ δὲ τὸ φθινόπωρον· οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τοτὲ μὲν τὸ φλέγμα ἰσχύει, τοτὲ δὲ τὸ αἷμα, τοτὲ δὲ ἡ χολή, πρῶτον μὲν ἡ ξανθή, ἔπειτα δ' ἡ μέλαινα καλεομένη.[9]
>
> **25** In the year sometimes the winter is most powerful, sometimes the spring, sometimes the summer and sometimes the autumn. So too in man sometimes phlegm is powerful, sometimes blood, sometimes bile, first yellow, and then what is called black bile.[10]

Wright comments on the acceptability of the model developed on this basis:

> **25.1** This scheme of elements and humors, with the more subtle pairing of opposites established by Aristotle, became the standard formula. (Cf. Aristotle *GC* 329b6-330a29, and R.E. Sigerist *History of Medicine* vol. 2, pp. 318-25.) There is a simpler version in (Hippocrates) *Carn.* 2, with *aithêr* as hot, earth as cold and dry, air as hot and wet, and (water) as wet and thick...[11]

In this text it appears to be possible to find a parallel between physical elements, seasons, humors on the one hand and opinions on the other. As there is in the case of opinions always some location between extreme positions which finds most acceptance at a particular time and within an isolated group, so in physical

[9] Hippocratic Corpus, *De Natura Hominis* VII.
[10] Jones [62] 23.
[11] [314] 27.

nature at any time there is always some position in which some conditions dominate.

There also seem to be some pairs which cannot enter into this schema of representing elements, seasons and humors. In this connection it is appropriate to observe that two potential pairs of opposites do not find their way into the account: the fire-hot is not thought to be amenable to a reciprocal relationship with the earth-cold, nor is the air-dry paired with the water-wet. A square of *natural* opposition could be constructed in which element-effects were opposed to one another in such a way that alternates and contraries would be reciprocally related; contradictories would not.

The Hippocratic treatises also make extensive use of more than two pairs of opposites in their accounts of physiology and pathology:

> **26** ἔνι γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ ἁλμυρὸν καὶ πικρὸν καὶ γλυκὺ καὶ ὀξὺ καὶ στρυφνὸν καὶ πλαδαρὸν καὶ ἄλλα μυρία παντοίας δυνάμιας ἔχοντα πλῆθός τε καὶ ἰσχύν.[12]
>
> **26** there is in man salt and bitter, sweet and acid, astringent and insipid, and a vast number of other things, possessing properties of all sorts, both in number and in strength.[13]

Lloyd, commenting on this chapter in *On Ancient Medicine,* points out that even on those occasions when what appears to have been the most acceptable theoretical accounts were called into question, the alternative accounts used models in which opposites played a central role:

[12] Hippocratic Corpus, *De Veteri Medicina* XIV.
[13] Jones [63] 39.

> in *On Ancient Medicine*, a treatise which attacks the use of theories based on the hot, the cold, the wet and the dry in medicine, the body is held to consist of many component kinds, among which the writer includes such pairs of opposites as the *sweet* and the *bitter*, the *astringent* (στρυφνόν) and the *insipid* (πλαδαρόν) (ch. 14, *CMG* I, 1 45 26 ff.).[14]

In early Greek medicine birth takes place from the compounding of opposites in approximately equal proportions, and as the balance breaks down death follows:

> **27** καὶ πάλιν, εἰ μὴ τὸ θερμὸν τῷ ψυχρῷ καὶ τὸ ξηρὸν τῷ ὑγρῷ μετρίως πρὸς ἄλληλα ἕξει καὶ ἴσως, θάτερον θατέρου πολὺ προέξει καὶ τὸ ἰσχυρότερον τοῦ ἀσθενεστέρου, ἡ γένεσις οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο... καὶ πάλιν γε ἀνάγκη ἀναχωρεῖν ἐς τὴν ἑωυτοῦ φύσιν ἕκαστον, τελευτῶντος τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τό τε ὑγρὸν πρὸς τὸ ὑγρὸν καὶ τὸ ξηρὸν πρὸς τὸ ξηρὸν καὶ το θερμὸν πρὸς τὸ θερμὸν καὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν πρὸς το ψυχρόν. τοιαύτη δὲ καὶ τῶν ζώων ἐστὶν ἡ φύσις, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων· γίνεταί τε ὁμοίως πάντα καὶ τελευτᾷ ὁμοίως πάντα.[15]
>
> **27** generation will not take place if the combination of hot with cold and of dry with moist be not tempered and equal--should the one constituent be much in excess of the other, and the stronger be much stronger than the weaker... each component must return to its own nature when the body of a man dies, moist to moist, dry to dry, hot to hot and cold to cold. Such too is the nature of animals, and of all other things. All things are born in a like way, and all things die in a like way.[16]

Lloyd draws attention to the importance of balance in his comment on this passage:

> **27.1** *On the Nature of Man*, for instance, puts forward a cosmological theory based on the *hot*, the *cold*, the *wet*, and the *dry*. The writer asserts that generation can only take place when these opposites are correctly balanced, and that, on death, each of the four opposites in the body returns to its like, 'the wet to the wet, the dry to the dry' and so on (ch. 3, L VI 36 17ff.).[17]

[14] [232] 20.
[15] *Nat. Hom.* III.
[16] Jones [62] 9-11.
[17] [232] 19.

In early Greek medicine, the connection between lack of a balance between opposites and sickness is well attested. In *On the Nature of Man* the author claims:

> **28** ἀνάγκη γάρ, ὅταν τούτων τι χωρισθῇ καὶ ἐφ' ἑωυτοῦ στῇ, οὐ μόνον τοῦτο τὸ χωρίον ἔνθεν ἐξέστη ἐπίνοσον γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔνθα ἂν στῇ καὶ ἐπιχυθῇ, ὑπερπιμπλάμενον ὀδύνην τε καὶ πόνον παρέχειν. καὶ γὰρ ὅταν τι τούτων ἔξω τοῦ σώματος ἐκρυῇ πλέον τοῦ ἐπιπολάζοντος, ὀδύνην παρέχει ἡ κένωσις. ἢν τ' αὖ πάλιν ἔσω ποιήσηται τὴν κένωσιν καὶ τὴν μετάστασιν καὶ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων, πολλὴ αὐτῷ ἀνάγκη διπλῆν τὴν ὀδύνην παρέχειν κατὰ τὰ εἰρημένα, ἔνθεν τε ἐξέστη καὶ ἔνθα ὑπερέβαλεν.[18]
>
> **28** when an element is isolated and stands by itself, not only must the place which it left become diseased, but the place where it stands in a flood must, because of the excess, cause pain and distress. In fact when more of an element flows out of the body than is necessary to get rid of superfluity, the emptying causes pain. If, on the other hand, it be to an inward part that there takes place the emptying, the shifting and the separation from other elements, the man certainly must, according to what has been said, suffer from a double pain, one in the place left, and another in the place flooded.[19]

In this regard, see also the following passage from *On Ancient Medicine:*

> **29** οὐ γὰρ τὸ ξηρὸν οὐδὲ τὸ ὑγρὸν οὐδὲ τὸ θερμὸν οὐδὲ τὸ ψυχρὸν οὐδὲ ἄλλο τούτων ἡγησάμενοι οὐδὲν οὔτε λυμαίνεσθαι οὔτε προσδεῖσθαι οὐδενὸς τούτων τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἰσχυρὸν ἑκάστου καὶ τὸ κρέσσον τῆς φύσιος τῆς ἀνθρωπείης, οὗ μὴ ἠδύνατο κρατεῖν, τοῦτο βλάπτειν ἡγήσαντο καὶ τοῦτο ἐζήτησαν ἀφαιρεῖν.[20]
>
> **29** For they did not consider that the dry or the moist or the hot or the cold or anything else of the kind injures a man, or that he has need of any such thing, but they considered that it is the strength of each thing, that which, being too powerful for the human constitution, it cannot assimilate, which causes harm, and this they sought to take away.[21]

[18] *Nat. Hom.* IV.
[19] Jones [62] 13.
[20] *VM* XIV.
[21] Jones [63] 37-39.

There are two comments by Lloyd in connection with theoretical accounts of sickness in terms of a lack of balance between opposites in which chapter XIV from *On Ancient Medicine* is cited.

> Similar doctrines of health and disease appear frequently in the Hippocratic Corpus, as, for example, in *On Ancient Medicine* (ch. 14, *CMG* I, 1 46 1 ff.) and *On the Nature of Man* (ch. 4, L VI 40 2 ff.). Specific diseases are often attributed to the effect of one of the opposites, such as hot, cold, wet, dry and so on, as when in *On Diseases* I the condition which the writer describes as erysipelas in the lung is said to be caused by dryness (ch. 18, L VI 172 1 ff.).[22]

> One type of general pathological theory is found in *On Affections:* 'in men, all diseases are caused by bile and phlegm. Bile and phlegm give rise to diseases when they become too dry or too wet or too hot or too cold in the body' (ch. I, L VI 208 7 ff.). Another appears in *On the Places in Man:* 'pain is caused both by the cold and by the hot, and both by what is in excess and by what is in default' (ch. 42, L VI 334 1 ff.). The notion that diseases are caused by states of *repletion* and *depletion* (πλήρωσις and κένωσις) occurs in several treatises among which is *On Ancient Medicine*, a work which is outspoken in its criticisms of pathological theories based on the hot, the cold, the wet and the dry.[23]

When sickness was accounted for in terms of an unbalanced physiological condition, it became quite simple to describe health as the result of an equilibrium between the opposed humoral components. This can be found in several locations in the Hippocratic Corpus; for example in *On Ancient Medicine:*

> **30** εἰ γάρ τί ἐστιν θερμὸν ἢ ψυχρὸν ἢ ξηρὸν ἢ ὑγρὸν τὸ λυμαινόμενον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ δεῖ τὸν ὀρθῶς ἰητρεύοντα βοηθεῖν τῷ μὲν θερμῷ ἐπὶ τὸ ψυχρόν, τῷ δὲ ψυχρῷ ἐπὶ τὸ θερμόν, τῷ δὲ ξηρῷ ἐπὶ τὸ ὑγρόν, τῷ δὲ ὑγρῷ ἐπὶ τὸ ξηρόν.[24]

[22] [232] 20.
[23] [232] 20-21.
[24] *VM* XIII.

> **30** For if there be such a thing as heat, or cold, or dryness, or moistness, which injures a man, it necessarily follows that the scientific healer will counteract cold with hot, hot with cold, moist with dry and dry with moist.[25]

Lloyd makes the following comment on chapter XIII in connection with Hippocratic doctrines of health:

> The converse of the theory that disease is caused by one of a pair of opposites is that cures may be effected by counter-balancing the opposites, and this doctrine, too, is extremely widespread in the Hippocratic writers. The principle behind this type of theory is expressed quite clearly at one point in *On Ancient Medicine*: 'for if that which causes a man pain is something hot, or cold, or dry, or wet, then he who would carry out the cure correctly must counteract cold with hot, hot with cold, wet with dry and dry with wet. (*VM* ch. 13; *CMG* I, 1 44 9 ff.)[26]

And see the following passage from *On Regimen*:

> **31** εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν εὑρετὸν ἐπὶ τούτοισι πρὸς ἑκάστου φύσιν σίτου μέτρον καὶ πόνων ἀριθμὸς σύμμετρος μὴ ἔχων ὑπερβολὴν μήτε ἐπὶ τὸ πλέον μήτε ἐπὶ τὸ ἔλασσον, εὕρητο ἂν ὑγείη τοῖσιν ἀνθρώποισιν ἀκριβῶς.[27]
>
> **31** If indeed in addition to these things it were possible to discover for the constitution of each individual a due proportion of food to exercise, with no inaccuracy either of excess or defect, an exact discovery of health for men would have been made.[28]

See Wright's comment on this passage:

> for health, temperament, and intelligence depending on their balance and proportion cf. *Reg.* I 4, *Aer.* 24, *Anon. Lond.* 20; for their connection with cosmic forces cf. *Aer.* I, *Nat. Hom.* 7, *Aph.* 3.3, *Reg.* I 2, and with the humors of the body cf. chap. 2, n. 28.[29]

[25] Jones [63] 35.
[26] [232] 21.
[27] *Vict.* I: 2.
[28] Jones [64] 229.
[29] [314] 14n67.

And see the following passage from *On the Nature of Man:*

> **32** τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔχει ἐν ἑωυτῷ αἷμα καὶ φλέγμα καὶ χολὴν ξανθὴν καὶ μέλαιναν, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ἡ φύσις τοῦ σώματος, καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἀλγεῖ καὶ ὑγιαίνει. ὑγιαίνει μὲν οὖν μάλιστα, ὅταν μετρίως ἔχῃ ταῦτα τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα κρήσιος καὶ δυνάμιος καὶ τοῦ πλήθεος, καὶ μάλιστα μεμιγμένα ᾖ...[30]
>
> **32** The body of man has in itself blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile; these make up the nature of his body, and through these he feels pain or enjoys health. Now he enjoys the most perfect health when these elements are duly proportioned to one another in respect of compounding, power and bulk, and when they are perfectly mingled.[31]

See also this passage from *On Regimen:*

> **33** ἀλλὰ γὰρ αἱ διαγνώσιες ἔμοιγε ἐξευρημέναι εἰσὶ τῶν ἐπικρατεόντων ἐν τῷ σώματι, ἥν τε οἱ πόνοι ἐπικρατέωσι τῶν σίτων, ἤ τε τὰ σῖτα τῶν πόνων, καὶ ὡς χρὴ ἕκαστα ἐξακεῖσθαι, προκαταλαμβάνειν τε ὑγείην, ὥστε τὰς νούσους μὴ προσπελάζειν, εἰ μὴ τις πάνυ μεγάλα ἐξαμαρτάνοι καὶ πολλάκις...[32]
>
> **33** But the discovery that I have made is how to diagnose what is the overpowering element in the body, whether exercises overpower food or food overpowers exercises; how to cure each excess, and to insure good health so as to prevent the approach of disease, unless very serious and many blunders be made.[33]

The use of opposites to produce physiological theories in terms of which accounts of health and illness could be articulated is common in the Hippocratic texts. In some cases one pair of opposites is the basis of the physiology, while in other texts two pairs of opposites are used, and in some places many pairs are used.

[30] *Nat. Hom.* IV.
[31] Jones [62] 11.
[32] *Vict.* III: 67.
[33] Jones [64] 367.

In early Greek medicine there is an account of birth taking place from the compounding of opposites in approximately equal proportions, and as the balance breaks down death follows. In the corpus of Hippocratic texts the connection between lack of balance between opposites and sickness is also well attested.

> *On Breaths* is one of a number of treatises which state the doctrine generally: 'again, depletion cures repletion, and repletion depletion... *And, in a word, opposites are cures for opposites.*' (*Flat.* ch. 1; *CMG* I, 1 92 6 ff.)...[34]

When sickness was accounted for in terms of an unbalanced physiological condition, it became quite simple to describe health as the result of an equilibrium between the opposed humoral components.

> The innate heat is the essential part of a man's *physis,* his nature, and it is nature that heals. 'Nature is the physician of diseases. Nature finds ways and means all by itself, not as a result of thought.'(*Epidemics* VI, 5, 1; L. V, 314) The discovery that there is a *vis medicatrix naturae,* a natural healing power in the human body, a force that tends to restore the lost balance, was one of the greatest discoveries medicine could make.[35]

The Hippocratic texts, being of some interest to philosophers in the period,[36] *anticipate* the development of the sceptical notion in their presentation of accounts based on the paradigm of opposition, and their hypothesis that the healthy condition is one in which the opposites are balanced with respect to one another.

[34] [232] 21.
[35] [287] 326.
[36] See passages dealing with this subject on pages 56-57, and 64.

10. Sophists: Confrontation and Persuasion

Protagoras is said to have befriended Pericles (c.495-429 B.C.), to have offered to teach skill in public speaking, and to have had his books burned by the Athenians. By ancient writers Protagoras was held to have claimed that opposed arguments could be advanced in response to any question. Protagoras is also said to have written a kind of catalogue of opposed arguments for those interested in forensic speaking. None of Protagoras' books survives. We have lists of titles, fragments, and testimonia.

Protagoras was well reported as having made use of the strategy of opposing arguments one to the other. Plato speaks of this feature of Protagoras' argument as constituting a denial of contradiction, and mentions that others have used it before Protagoras.[1] Aristotle also treats Protagoras' position on opposed arguments as implying the denial of contradiction.[2]

Seneca (c.1-65 A.D.) speaking about this feature of Protagoras' practice, reflected a contemporary way of thinking about opposed arguments when he claimed that:

> **34** Protagoras ait de omni re in utramque partem disputari posse ex aequo et de hac ipsa, an omnis res in utramque partem disputabilis sit.[3]

[1] Plato, *Euthydemus* 286c1-4.
[2] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV: 4.
[3] DK 80A20, from Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistularum* 88: 43.

> **34** Protagoras says that one can argue equally well on either side of any question, including the question itself whether both sides of any question can be argued.[4]

Clement of Alexandria held (written probably c.200-202 A.D.) that:

> **35** Ἕλληνές φασι Πρωταγόρου προκατάρξαντος παντὶ λόγῳ λόγον ἀντικεῖσθαι...[5]
>
> **35** Every argument has an opposite argument, say the Greeks, following Protagoras.[6]

Sextus Empiricus gives some indication of what might have been the basis for Protagoras' position on the viability of opposed arguments:

> 36 λέγει δὲ καὶ τοὺς λόγους πάντων τῶν φαινομένων ὑποκεῖσθαι ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ, ὡς δύνασθαι τὴν ὕλην ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῇ πάντα εἶναι ὅσα πᾶσι φαίνεται.[7]
>
> **36** He also says that the reasons for all apparent things are present in matter, so that the matter can, as far as it itself is concerned, be all the things it appears to anyone to be.[8]

The Annas and Barnes translation seems to reflect the claim that matter gives rise to incompatible accounts made by different people, and to do this better than the Bury translation.[9] In a note to the passage the translators provide the following gloss:

> **36.1** 'Reasons' translates λόγοι: the general sense of the view ascribed (no doubt falsely) to Protagoras is clear,

[4] Michael J. O'Brien, *The Older Sophists,* page 13.

[5] DK 80A20, in *Strom.* VI, 65.

[6] O'Brien [290] 13.

[7] DK 80A14, in *P* I: 218.

[8] Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes, *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Pyrrhonism,* page 56.

[9] Especially attractive is the Annas and Barnes translation "matter can, as far as it itself is concerned, be all the things it appears to anyone to be". Compare Bury's "matter, so far as depends on itself, is capable of being all those things which appear to all".

but the precise sense of λόγοι is obscure.[10]

Diogenes Laertius writes:

> **37** Καὶ πρῶτος ἔφη δύο λόγους εἶναι περὶ παντὸς πράγματος ἀντικειμένους ἀλλήλοις· οἷς καὶ συνηρώτα, πρῶτος τοῦτο πράξας.[11]
>
> **37** Protagoras was the first to maintain that there are two sides to every question, opposed to each other and he even argued in this fashion, being the first to do so.[12]

Brochard comments on the significance of this passage in Diogenes, and connects it with the sceptical notion of *isostheneia:*

> **37.1** par une conséquence directe de sa célèbre maxime, Protagoras déclare que sur tout sujet, on peut opposer deux assertions contraires: c'est la première forme de cette *isosthénie* des sceptiques, qui, opposant sur chaque question deux thèses contraires qui se font équilibre, se déclarent dans l'impossibilité de prononcer.[13]

By ancient writers Protagoras was held to have claimed that opposed arguments can be advanced in response to any question. He is also said to have written a kind of catalogue of opposed arguments for those interested in forensic speaking. These elements of what we know of his thought seem to establish him as having *anticipated* the development of the sceptical notion.

Gorgias was a Sicilian, may have studied with Empedocles early in life, and may have been familiar with philosophy and rhetoric before he visited Athens as an ambassador from his home town in 427 B.C. He settled in Athens and had substantial influence on

[10] [116] 56n234.
[11] DK 80A1, in *Vit. Phil.* IX: 51.
[12] Hicks [34] II: 463.
[13] [150] 16.

the development of rhetoric in general, and the Sophists in particular. He lived to be an very old man, and seems to have been alive when Plato began teaching in the Academy. Plato treats him with considerable respect in the dialogue written under his name.

Of Gorgias' writing there are fragments of a philosophical work titled either *About the Non-existent* or *About Nature*, which are dated to the late 440's before his arrival in Athens, and preserved in Sextus' *Against the Logicians* I: 65-87. Two complete pieces remain: *Encomium of Helen* and *Defense of Palamedes*. Of his philosophical position, Sextus claims that Gorgias defended a kind of metaphysical and epistemological nihilism:

> **38** ἕν μὲν καὶ πρῶτον ὅτι οὐδὲν ἔστιν, δεύτερον ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἔστιν, ἀκατάληπτον ἀνθρώπῳ, τρίτον ὅτι εἰ καὶ κατὰληπτόν, ἀλλά τοί γε ἀνέξοιστον καὶ ἀνερμήνευτον τῷ πέλας.[14]
>
> **38** firstly, that nothing exists; secondly, that even if anything exists it is inapprehensible by man; thirdly, that even if anything is apprehensible, yet of a surety it is inexpressible and incommunicable to one's neighbor.[15]

Gorgias' style is noted for its practice of opposing one account to another. This is evident in *Defense of Palamedes;* here a series of issues are presented in antithetical formats. In the *Encomium of Helen* as well Gorgias presents instances of account opposed by incompatible account. Notable in this piece, at §§12-13, is his discussion of the utility of persuasion in argument:

> **39** τὸ γὰρ τῆς πειθοῦς ἐξῆν ὁ ὸὲ νοῦς καίτοι εἰ ἀνάγκη ὁ εἰδὼς ἔξει

[14] DK 82B3, in *M* VII: 65.

[15] R.G. Bury, *Sextus Empiricus,* volume II *Against the Logicians,* page 35.

μὲν οὖν, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει. λόγος γὰρ ψυχῇ ὁ πείσας, ἣν ἔπεισεν, ἠνάγκασε καὶ πιθέσθαι τοῖς λεγομένοις καὶ συναινέσαι τοῖς ποιουμένοις. ὁ μὲν οὖν πείσας ὡς ἀναγκάσας ἀδικεῖ, ἡ δὲ πεισθεῖσα ὡς ἀναγκασθεῖσα τῷ λόγῳ μάτην ἀκούει κακῶς. ὅτι δ' ἡ πειθὼ προσιοῦσα τῷ λόγῳ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐτυπώσατο ὅπως ἐβούλετο, χρὴ μαθεῖν πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς τῶν μετεωρολόγων λόγους, οἵτινες δόξαν ἀντὶ δόξης τὴν μὲν ἀφελόμενοι τὴν δ' ἐνεργασάμενοι τὰ ἄπιστα καὶ ἄδηλα φαίνεσθαι τοῖς τῆς δόξης ὄμμασιν ἐποίησαν· δεύτερον δὲ τοὺς ἀναγκαίους διὰ λόγων ἀγῶνας, ἐν οἷς εἷς λόγος πολὺν ὄχλον ἔτερψε καὶ ἔπεισε τέχνῃ γραφείς, οὐκ ἀληθείαι λεχθείς· τρίτον ‹δὲ› φιλοσόφων λόγων ἀμίλλας, ἐν αἷς δείκνυται καὶ γνώμης τάχος ὡς εὐμετάβολον ποιοῦν τὴν τῆς δόξης πίστιν.[16]

39 For it was possible to see how the force of persuasion prevails; persuasion has the form of necessity, but it does not have the same power. For speech constrained the soul, persuading it which it persuaded, both to believe the things said and to approve the things done. The persuader, like a constrainer, does the wrong, and the persuaded, like the constrained, in speech is wrongly charged. To understand that persuasion, when added to speech, is wont also to impress the soul as it wishes, one must study: first, the words of astronomers who, substituting opinion for opinion, taking away one but creating another, make what is incredible and unclear seem true to the eyes of opinion; then, second, logically necessary debates in which a single speech, written with art but not spoken with truth, bends a great crowd and persuades; ‹and› third, the verbal disputes of philosophers in which the swiftness of thought is also shown making the belief in an opinion subject to easy change.[17]

Gorgias can be seen to have *anticipated* the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* in his endorsement of persuasion, and in his use of the method of confronting one account with another, both as means of supporting positions taken in argument. Gorgias had influence on Antiphon and Thucydides, as well as on his pupil Isocrates.

[16] DK 82B11, in Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen* 12-13.
[17] Kennedy [290] 52-53.

The *Dissoi Logoi* or *Dialexeis* thought to have been written early in 4th century B.C.,[18] is a collection of opposed arguments on questions, and is usually thought to have been produced by one or more of the students of the Sophists. It was often found attached to the manuscripts of Sextus Empiricus.[19]

The first four sections begin with the claim that incompatible accounts are supported by those who philosophize in Greece. Some say that the good is one thing and the bad another. Others say that they are the same, and that what is good for one person is bad for another, and that what is good for one person is bad for that same person at another time. The same kind of claim is made by the author for those who philosophize about what is seemly and disgraceful, what is just and unjust, and what is true and false.

At II: 18 the author of the *Dissoi Logoi* claims:

> **40** οἶμαι δ', αἴ τις τὰ αἰσχρὰ ἐς ἓν κελεύοι συνενεῖκαι πάντας ἀνθρώπως, ἃ ἕκαστοι νομίζοντι, καὶ πάλιν ἐξ ἀθρόων τούτων τὰ καλὰ λαβέν, ἃ ἕκαστοι ἄγηνται, οὐδὲ ἓν ‹κα› καλλειφθῆμεν, ἀλλὰ πάντας πάντα διαλαβέν. οὐ γὰρ πάντες ταὐτὰ νομίζοντι.[20]
>
> **40** I think that if someone should order all men to make a single heap of everything that each of them regards as disgraceful and then again to take from the collection

[18] Adolfo Levi, "On 'Twofold Statements'", page 292.

[19] In many of the manuscripts (22 of 39 of those on the list Mutschmann used in preparing the Teubner edition of Sextus in 1912-1914, and as updated in the preface to the second edition by Jurgen Mau in 1958-1961) the *Dialexeis* is appended. For a list of these manuscripts and some descriptive detail see *Appendix C: Manuscripts of Sextus Empiricus*. Floridi now indicates that there are 67 manuscripts which exist containing the works of this author, and appends a list on [175] 84-85. In addition the issue has been explored by E. Weber in his "Über den Dialect der sogenannten Dialexeis und die Handschriften des Sextus Empiricus".

[20] DK 90, in *Dissoi Logoi* II: 18.

> what each of them regards as seemly, not a thing ‹would› be left, but they would divide up everything, because not all men are of the same opinion.[21]

This seems to be a kind of *anticipation* of the Sceptic's notion of equal in strength: for every thing that some men have thought disgraceful, other men have thought that same thing attractive. In some way the accounts for a thing being disgraceful balance out the accounts for a thing being seemly.

Materials which have survived from the writing of the Sophists seem to indicate that these thinkers practiced opposing one argument to another, and relied on persuasion to support positions which they wished to have accepted. Both of these components of their way of conducting argument can be seen as *anticipations* of the notion of *isostheneia*.

11. Socrates' Practice of Refutation

Socrates is often spoken of as having practiced strategies in discussion which the Sceptics were later to acknowledge as having influenced the development of their method. Most prominent among these stategies is Socrates' practice of soliciting a claim from his companion on a particular topic, and then offering some incompatible claim as his contribution to the discussion. Usually these claims are beliefs which have a substantial amount of public support. What happened next is well recollected. Cicero tells us

[21] Sprague [290] 283.

of Socrates that:

> **41** is enim percontando atque interrogando elicere solebat eorum opiniones quibuscum disserebat, ut ad ea quae ii respondissent, si quid videretur, diceret.[1]
>
> **41** By thorough inquiry and questioning, he was in the habit of drawing forth the opinions of those with whom he was arguing, in order to state his own view as a response to their answers.[2]

The opposition of the first claim to the incompatible counter claim forces the partner in discussion to re-evaluate his position in the discomfort of having to confront some of the weaknesses behind a commonly held belief. The original claim is modified or abandoned, and a second position is tentatively developed, often under the pressure of the counterclaim. This second position is subjected to the same confrontation, and it too is abandoned or modified. Cicero speaks of Socrates' practice of opposing one argument to another:

> **42** ut haec in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi nullamque rem aperte iudicandi profecta a Socrate... usque ad nostram viguit aetatem...[3]
>
> **42** Take for example the philosophical method referred to, that of a purely negative dialectic which refrains from pronouncing any positive judgement. This, after being originated by Socrates... has flourished right down to our own period...[4]

Most of the discussions in the early Platonic dialogues are inconclusive. On the one hand the method is successful in moving some companions in such a discussion to a position from which they

[1] Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* II: 2.
[2] Long, and Sedley [236] I: 441.
[3] Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* I: 11.
[4] H. Rackham, *De Natura Deorum; Academica,* pages 13-15.

are unable to recall what it was that they were so confident of being able to claim about the topic under investigation. On the other hand Socratic practice expands the range of the interlocutor's suspicion that our power of statement may not be adequate to the confidence we have in it.

Socrates is often mentioned by later Sceptics as having been instrumental in the development of their method of refutation. In this method usually commonly held beliefs are solicited from his interlocutor. Socrates points out problems with these claims. And he has nothing of his own to offer in its place. The discussion leads to difficulties multiplied without prospect of resolution. Yet we do not find Socrates advocating anything like the suspension of judgment which Academics of the Hellenistic period support.

12. Megarians and the Development of Dialectic

Euclides (c.450-380 B.C.) of Megara housed Plato and other associates in the period following the execution of Socrates in 399 B.C. He is thought to have believed that there are many names for a single Good including God, wisdom and intelligence,[1] perhaps influenced in this respect by Parmenides and Socrates. This belief that it is common practice to produce a variety of fundamentally different names for what on reflection turns out to be the same thing appears to be an element in the *anticipation* of

[1] *Vit. Phil.* II: 106.

the Sceptic's notion that incompatible accounts are accepted because of the equality of their persuasiveness. Euclides' practice of attacking an opponent's conclusion and not the premisses of his argument is attested,[2] and situates him in the eristic tradition dating from late in the fifth century. Under his direction the Megarians began to concern themselves with logical puzzles.

This interest was pursued by Eubulides (fourth century B.C.) who was said to have originated many dialectical arguments in the form of questions, to have been involved in a controversy with Aristotle, and to have taught the orator Demosthenes (384-322 B.C.).[3] Others in the Megarian tradition dating from the Hellenistic period will find their place at *§ 18 Megarians: Teachers of Dialectical Method* in this collection of texts dealing with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia.*

Those in this tradition were initially called Μεγαρικοί. Later some of them became known as ἐριστικοί reflecting their disposition to attack conclusions and to con ɔnt their opponents with logical puzzles. And perhaps later still, as Sedley argues,[4] some of those who found themselves rooted in the Megarian tradition were known as διαλεκτικοί, a name Diogenes Laertius reports[5] was given to them because of their practice of putting arguments in the form of

[2] *Vit. Phil.* II: 107.
[3] *Vit. Phil.* II: 108.
[4] David Sedley, "Diodorus Cronus and Hellenistic Philosophy", pages 74-76.
[5] *Vit. Phil.* II: 106.

question and answer.

The significance of the Megarians for the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* lies in the support they gave to the evolution of what was at the time becoming understood as the dialectical method for the resolution of philosophical controversies. A secondary influence of the Megarians is found in their interest in logical paradoxes, which the Stoics took over and incorporated into their discussion of propositional logic. It is the effort of Hellenistic Stoicism to support the claim-making enterprise which members of the Academy would find objectionable.

13. Plato and the Philosophy of Dialectic

Plato's conception of the practice of philosophical argument seems to have changed from what it appears to be in the aporetic dialogues, to what he says it is in the later writing. The middle dialogues are generally thought to have been those written betweeen Plato's first visit to Syracuse in 388, and the second visit he made in 366. Included in those of this period are *Cratylus, Phaedo, Phaedrus, Symposium, Parmenides, Republic and Theaetetus.* Dialogues assigned to the early period before the founding of the Academy around 387 are *Apology, Lysis, Laches, Euthyphro, Charmides, Greater Hippias,*[1] *Lesser Hippias, Protagoras, Euthydemus, Meno* and *Gorgias.* The dialogues thought

[1] The support for the claim for Platonic authorship of this dialogue has been called into question.

to have been written in the later part of Plato's life, after 366 include *Timaeus, Sophist, Statesman, Philebus,* and *Laws.* In the aporetic dialogues is found the expression of reason doubting and being directed against itself in some sense. Here the method of dialectic appears in a sceptical aspect: it calls into question the very possibility of the affirmations to which it leads.

Plato's conception of the nature of dialectic as described in the dialogues of the early period appears to have been a reflection of the conversational practices which he had seen being conducted by Socrates. Here one of the most noticeable characteristics is the use of question and answer in an attempt to test the viability of an account.

> **43** εἶπατε καὶ κοινῇ μετὰ Σωκράτους σκέψασθε, διδόντες τε καὶ δεχόμενοι λόγον παρ' ἀλλήλων· εὖ γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο λέγει ὅδε, ὅτι περὶ τοῦ μεγίστου νῦν βουλευόμεθα τῶν ἡμετέρων.[2]
>
> **43** suppose that you take Socrates into partnership, and do you and he ask and answer one another's questions, for as he has well said, we are deliberating about the most important of our concerns.[3]

Most often Socrates is the questioner, while his respondent is someone who, by virtue of public acknowledgement or his own claim, appears to have knowledge of the topic to be discussed. But there are also a few occasions when Socrates offers to take the part of answerer.

> **44** ἀλλ' ὁμοίως καὶ πλουσίῳ καὶ πένητι παρέχω ἐμαυτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, καὶ ἐάν τις βούληται ἀποκρινόμενος ἀκούειν ὧν ἂν λέγω.[4]

[2] Plato, *Laches* 187d1-4.
[3] Benjamin Jowett, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato,* page 131.
[4] Plato, *Apology* 33b1-3.

> **44** I am ready to answer questions for rich and poor alike, and I am equally ready if anyone prefers to listen to me and answer my questions.[5]

Usually Socrates does not remain in the role of answerer for very long. Most often a short passage occurs in which several exchanges take place, and the role of questioner reverts to Socrates for one reason or another.

What seems to be sought in conversations of this format is not the cross-examination of the respondent alone, but the evaluation of claims which are commonly held to be faithful accounts of experience.

> **45** τὸν γὰρ λόγον ἔγωγε μάλιστα ἐξετάζω, συμβαίνει μέντοι ἴσως καὶ ἐμὲ τὸν ἐρωτῶντα καὶ τὸν ἀποκρινόμενον ἐξετάζεσθαι.[6]
>
> **45** It is the argument itself that I wish to probe, though it may turn out that both I who question and you who answer are equally under scrutiny.[7]

Socrates tells us that often, when he is not engaged in a conversation of this kind--one in which he is questioning those who have an authoritative account of some aspect of experience--that he is involved as answerer in an internal discussion which treats of similar topics.

> **46** ὑπό τε ἄλλων τινῶν τῶν ἐνθάδε καὶ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ ἀεί με ἐλέγχοντος πάντα κακὰ ἀκούω. καὶ γάρ μοι τυγχάνει ἐγγύτατα γένους ὢν καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ οἰκῶν· ἐπειδὰν οὖν εἰσέλθω οἴκαδε εἰς ἐμαυτοῦ καί μου ἀκούσῃ ταῦτα λέγοντος, ἐρωτᾷ εἰ οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι τολμῶν περὶ καλῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων διαλέγεσθαι, οὕτω φανερῶς ἐξελεγχόμενος περὶ τοῦ καλοῦ ὅτι οὐδ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο ὅτι ποτέ ἐστιν οἶδα.[8]

[5] Tredennick [92] 18-19.
[6] Plato, *Protagoras* 333c7-9.
[7] Guthrie [98] 328.
[8] Plato, *Greater Hippias* 304d1-8.

> **46** I am called every kind of bad name by some of the audience, including especially that man who is always cross-questioning me. He is a very close relative of mine and lives in the same house, and when I go home and he hears me give utterance to these opinions he asks me whether I am not ashamed of my audacity in talking about a beautiful way of life, when questioning makes it evident that I do not even know the meaning of the word 'beauty'.[9]

Now these conversations in which accounts of experience are tested demand of the respondent that he answer briefly, without recourse to long replies which often serve the diversionary purpose of escaping the power of the question and answer conversation.

> **47** εἰ δὲ ἀντιποιεῖται, διαλεγέσθω ἐρωτῶν τε καὶ ἀποκρινόμενος, μὴ ἐφ' ἑκάστῃ ἐρωτήσει μακρὸν λόγον ἀποτείνων, ἐκκρούων τοὺς λόγους καὶ οὐκ ἐθέλων διδόναι λόγον, ἀλλ' ἀπομηκύνων ἕως ἂν ἐπιλάθωνται περὶ ὅτου τὸ ἐρώτημα ἦν οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀκουόντων...[10]
>
> **47** let him continue the discussion with question and answer, not meeting every question with a long oration, eluding the arguments and refusing to meet them properly, spinning it out until most of his hearers have forgotten what the question was about...[11]

In addition to brevity of response, the additional requirement made by Socrates is that the parties to the conversation confront each other with statements representing genuine accounts of their experience on the issue. The requirement for authenticity seems to be necessary if the confrontation is to result in some movement in their appreciation of the matter at issue. And the process requires the exclusion of rhetorical appeals to the testimony of others either in support of or against a particular position.

> **48** ἐγὼ δὲ ἂν μὴ σὲ αὐτὸν ἕνα ὄντα μάρτυρα παράσχωμαι

[9] Jowett [93] 1559.
[10] *Prt.* 336c4-d2.
[11] Guthrie [98] 331.

ὁμολογοῦντα περὶ ὧν λέγω, οὐδὲν οἶμαι ἄξιον λόγου μοι πεπεράνθαι περὶ ὧν ἂν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος ᾖ· οἶμαι δὲ οὐδὲ σοί, ἐὰν μὴ ἐγὼ σοι μαρτυρῶ εἷς ὢν μόνος, τοὺς δ' ἄλλους πάντας τούτους χαίρειν ἐᾷς.

48 if I cannot produce in you yourself a single witness in agreement with my views, I consider that I have accomplished nothing worth speaking of in the matter under debate; and the same, I think, is true for you also, if I, one solitary witness, do not testify for you and if you do not leave all these others out of account.[13]

What seems to be happening in the early Socratic conversations is a kind of putting accounts of experience against one another to measure their viability as statements of the matter under discussion. The demand for honesty, and the proscription against rhetorical digressions and the impact of third party influence, arises from the nature of the enterprise. If there is to be some movement in the positions of the participants on the issue, it will have arisen from the opposition of incompatible accounts of an experience which both interlocutors have been authoritative in representing.

In the aporetic dialogues Socrates seems on some occasions to oppose one account to another triumphantly. His victory is that he has brought the other participant to share his opinion on the issue; but the difference between Socrates and the Sophist is that the latter has a positive claim to support, while Socrates usually brings the discussion to affirm the difficulty of articulating accounts of experience which are both general and yet faithful to individual instances. On occasion Plato allows Socrates to point

[12] Plato, *Gorgias* 472b6-c2.
[13] Woodhead [94] 254.

out that argument should not be used seeking victory irrespective of truth.[14]

In the middle period of his life as author Plato seems to have modified his conception of the nature of the method which he continued to name dialectic. On the one hand he accepts the problematic results which ensue when attempts are made to produce accounts of the objects of the senses.

> **49** Τούτων γὰρ δή, ὦ ἄριστε, φήσομεν, τῶν πολλῶν καλῶν μῶν τι ἔστιν ὃ οὐκ αἰσχρὸν φανήσεται; καὶ τῶν δικαίων, ὃ οὐκ ἄδικον; καὶ τῶν ὁσίων, ὃ οὐκ ἀνόσιον;[15]
>
> **49** is there any one of these many fair and honorable things that will not sometimes appear ugly and base? And of the just things, that will not seem unjust? And of the pious things, that will not seem impious?[16]

His objection to the use of these things as objects of knowledge is founded on their capacity to produce incompatible accounts.[17] These are possible of their objects not just at different times after some transformation of the object, but at the same time due to differing dispositions in the perceiver.[18] And yet Plato disapproved of the conception of knowledge which employed dialectic for arguing on opposed sides of the same question.[19]

[14] *Euthyd.* 272a7-b1.
[15] Plato, *Republic* 479a5-7.
[16] Shorey [99] 719.
[17] Plato, *Phaedo* 90c4-6; and see George Kerferd's discussion of this in [214] 66.
[18] *R* 479b.
[19] Plato, *R* 539b-d, *Philebus* 15d-16a; and see the comment of Harold Cherniss on this issue in his *The Riddle of the Early Academy,* page 101n50.

In this period of the middle dialogues the model for philosophical discussion continued to employ question and answer, and the role of persuasion continued to be minimal although Plato did suggest that there might be a place for a kind of method of probabilities. In the *Phaedrus* Socrates speaks of medicine and rhetoric as subjects about which it seemed possible to have the same kind of knowledge:

> **50** ΣΩ. Ὁ αὐτος που τρόπος τέχνης ἰατρικῆς ὅσπερ καὶ ῥητορικῆς.
> ΦΑΙ. Πῶς δή;
> ΣΩ. Ἐν ἀμφοτέραις δεῖ διελέσθαι φύσιν, σώματος μὲν ἐν τῇ ἑτέρᾳ, ψυχῆς δὲ ἐν τῇ ἑτέρᾳ, εἰ μέλλεις, μὴ τριβῇ μόνον καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ ἀλλὰ τέχνῃ, τῷ μὲν φάρμακα καὶ τροφὴν προσφέρων ὑγίειαν καὶ ῥώμην ἐμποιήσειν, τῇ δὲ λόγους τε καὶ ἐπιτηδεύσεις νομίμους πείθῳ ἣν ἂν βούλῃ καὶ ἀρετὴν παραδώσειν.[20]
>
> **50** SOCRATES: Rhetoric is in the same case as medicine, don't you think?
> PHAEDRUS: How so?
> SOCRATES: In both cases there is a nature that we have to determine, the nature of body in the one, and of soul in the other, if we mean to be scientific and not content with mere empirical routine when we apply medicine and diet to induce health and strength, or words and rules of conduct to implant such convictions and virtues as we desire.[21]

Here the objects of knowledge seem to have been conceived of differently than those with which the early dialogues were concerned, and this permitted some attenuation of the inability to make positive claims which is found there. Plato goes on in *Phaedrus* 271a-272b to provide some description of a rhetorical method which might be scientific. Long and Sedley comment on this passage as follows:

> The philosophical status of this subject [rhetoric] had been debated by Plato and Isocrates in the first half of

[20] *Phdr.* 270b1-9.
[21] Hackforth [96] 515.

> the fourth century. Against Isocrates, and earlier Sophists, Plato had utterly rejected persuasion, based upon what is 'likely' or 'plausible', as a proper aim of philosophy. In his *Phaedrus*, however, he allows 'Socrates' to defend persuasive discourse, provided it is carried out by a 'dialectician' who 'knows' the truth about his subject-matter and how to relate it to the kind of audience he faces.[22]

The difficulty of providing for some accomodation between dialectic and rhetoric in the Platonic dialogues, and the mention of its possiblility in this passage has also been commented upon by DeLacy:

> The most conspicuous feature of his [Cicero's] thought is the union of philosophy with rhetoric. This union carries with it some criticism of Socrates, who was blamed for their separation (see *De Oratore* iii, 61), and appears to align Cicero with Isocrates rather than Plato; yet he does not consider the union incompatible with Platonism ...and Greek theoretical rhetoricians had long since sought to implement Plato's prescription in the *Phaedrus* for a scientific rhetoric.[23]

This suggestion by Plato that there may be a rhetoric which could be the instrument by which objects of sense might be brought under science, as dialectic does for the objects of thought, does not seem to resurface in the dialogues. Nor does Plato in the *Phaedrus* go on to provide detail on how such a scientific rhetoric might be constituted.

In the later dialogues the role of question and answer is further limited, and in some passages the answerer merely maintains the form with single word replies, but the focus on the truth as its object continues to be undiminished.

[22] [236] I: 188-189.
[23] Phillip H. DeLacy, "Cicero", page 113.

> 51 νῦν γὰρ οὐ δήπου πρός γε αὐτὸ τοῦτο φιλονικοῦμεν, ὅπως ἀγὼ τίθεμαι, ταῦτ' ἔσται τὰ νικῶντα, ἢ ταὐθ' ἃ σύ, τῷ δ' ἀληθεστάτῳ δεῖ που συμμαχεῖν ἡμᾶς ἄμφω.[24]
>
> 51 I imagine we are not striving merely to secure a victory for my suggestions or for yours; rather we ought both of us fight in support of the truth...[25]

Dialectical method is itself spoken of in the *Sophist* as the division into opposites or alternates. But the role of rhetoric continued to be very limited.

There is material to be found in the *Theaetetus* to support the claim that in Plato's writing is to be found reflections of early scepticism. In this regard Long has written:

> As far as one can tell, Aenesidemus, the founder (at least practically speaking) of later Pyrrhonism, was the first philosopher who formally classified this material into ten distinct modes of argument which were thereby systematised as such in the Sceptic's arsenal. ...it has long been recognized that the material itself, or much of it, is as old as Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Democritus. It was certainly familiar to Plato who, in preparing for his exposition and refutation of Protagoras (*Tht.* 154a2-8), has Socrates present conflicting appearances in three groups corresponding to the first, second, and fourth modes of Aenesidemus.[26]

The first mode is that which presents appearances which are conflicting across differing species of animals. The second mode presents appearances which are conflicting across different individual humans, and the fourth mode presents instances in which appearances conflict within the experience of a single individual

[24] Plato, *Philebus* 14b5-7.
[25] Hackforth [97] 1090.
[26] [233] 89.

person. The passage identified by Long is:

> **52** ΣΩ. ἢ σὺ οὐισχυρίσαιο ἂν ὡς οἷον σοὶ φαίνεται ἕκαστον χρῶμα, τοιοῦτον καὶ κυνὶ καὶ ὁτῳοῦν ζῴῳ;
>
> ΘΕΑΙ. Μὰ Δί' οὐκ ἔγωγε.
>
> ΣΩ. Τί δέ; ἄλλῳ ἀνθρώπῳ ἆρ' ὅμοιον καὶ σοὶ φαίνεται ὁτιοῦν; ἔχεις τοῦτο ἰσχυρῶς, ἢ πολὺ μᾶλλον ὅτι οὐδὲ σοὶ αὐτῷ ταὐτὸν διὰ τὸ μηδέποτε ὁμοίως αὐτὸν σεαυτῷ ἔχειν;

> **52** SOCRATES: Or would you be prepared to maintain that every color appears to a dog or any other creature just such as it appears to you?
>
> THEAETETUS: Certainly not.
>
> SOCRATES: Or to another man? Does anything you please appear to him such as it appears to you? Are you quite sure of that? Are you not much rather sure that it does not even appear the same to yourself, because you never remain in the same condition.[28]

With respect to the ways in which later commentators from the Hellenistic and Imperial periods conceived of the sceptical aspects of Plato, Cicero tells us with respect to the written record of his thought that in his books:

> **53** nihil adfirmatur et in utramque partem multa disseruntur, de omnibus quaeritur, nihil certi dicitur...[29]

> **53** nothing is stated positively and there is much arguing both *pro* and *contra*, all things are inquired into and no certain statement is made...[30]

Reid commenting on this passage, notes:

> **53.1** the phrase *in utramque partem* (ἐπ' ἀμφότερα) is common throughout Latin, e.g. Ter. Haut. 47 and 440; Hor. S. 2, 2, 66 in neutram partem; Cic. Att. 3, 21 quamcumque in partem.[31]

[27] Plato, *Theaetetus* 154a2-8.
[28] Cornford [100] 859.
[29] *Ac.* I: 46.
[30] H. Rackham, *De Natura Deorum, Academica*, page 455.
[31] James Smith Reid, *Academica*, page 159n16.

There is a similar claim made about Plato by a sixth century A.D. anonymous commentator:

> **54** δεύτερον λόγον λέγουσιν ὅτι ἐξ ὧν τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν κατασκευάζει δῆλός ἐστιν ἀκαταληψίαν πρεσβεύων· οἷον περὶ φιλίας ἐν τῷ Λύσιδι διαλεγόμενος ταὐναντία κατασκεύασεν, καὶ περὶ σωφροσύνης ἐν τῷ Χαρμίδῃ, καὶ περὶ ὁσιότητος ἐν τῷ Εὐθύφρονι.[32]
>
> **54** Their second argument is that since he arrives at contradictory conclusions on the same subject, he must evidently hold that certain knowledge is unattainable; thus he supports conflicting views on friendship in the *Lysis*, on temperance in the *Charmides*, on piety in the *Euthyphro*.[33]

It can be seen that Plato recognised the problems which developed when the method for discovering a certain truth was applied to objects about which no certain truth was possible. He could see clearly the difficulties which developed in the accounts made of objects of the senses, and wished to pursue a kind of philosophical conversation which did not find itself ensnared in controversy and reliant on persuasion for its success. Later authors speaking from what had become their own somewhat Platonic tradition described Plato as demonstrating these difficulties, and of dialectic as a method which involved the confrontation of incompatible accounts.

The conception of a sceptical Plato is based by later authors on evidence from the aporetic dialogues, which for them reflected most accurately the reality of the problems having to do with supporting a conception of knowledge as requiring certainty. On

[32] Anonymous, *Prolegomena Philosophiae Platonicae* II (text page 10, lines 12-15).

[33] L.G. Westerink, *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, page 20.

the other hand the Plato of the *Republic*, the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* cannot be conceived of as being sceptical. In these works of the middle and later periods the dialectical method leads to a vision of a truth, the argument for which is dependent upon no premisses, and which is itself the certain presupposition of all arguments.

14. Isocrates and Rhetorical Education

Isocrates studied under Gorgias, and was a follower of Socrates. At the time of the annual burial of the dead in the fall of 338 B.C., and almost one hundred years old, Isocrates starved himself to death. His system of education, based on the study of rhetoric, competed for pupils with Plato's Academy. Ross has noted that Aristotle seems to have taught rhetoric in the Academy in opposition to Isocrates.[1]

It is in the text of Isocrates that there is an identification of men who argue in support of both sides of opposed positions:

> **55** καὶ καταγεγηράκασιν οἱ μὲν οὐ φάσκοντες οἷόν τ' εἶναι ψευδῆ λέγειν οὐδ' ἀντιλέγειν οὐδὲ δύω λόγω περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πραγμάτων ἀντειπεῖν...[2]
>
> **55** and men have grown old, some asserting that it is impossible to say, or to gainsay, what is false, or to speak on both sides of the same questions...[3]

[1] Sir David Ross, *Aristotle*, page 2.
[2] *Hel.* I.
[3] Van Hook [67] 61.

This policy of arguing both for and against any particular claim is an early indication of a practice which becomes significant in the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

15. Aristotle's Texts and the Origins of the Notion

In the texts of Aristotle some materials are located which are both reflections of the *origins* and *anticipations* of the *development of the notion of isostheneia*. To begin, Aristotle was familiar with, and transmitted some of the sceptical arguments which we find later collected in the ten modes of Aenesidemus (late second-early first century A.D.) and in *PH* I of Sextus Empiricus. Long speaks to this issue:

> Aristotle is aware of most of the material which forms the basis of the Pyrrhonist's *tropoi* or 'modes' for suspending judgement.[1]

In the second place, Aristotle often seems willing to entertain opposed arguments on a particular question. It is in this connection that he became known to later authors as the originator of the technique of arguing *in utramque partem*.

Thirdly, Aristotle argued that rhetoric had a role to play alongside dialectic in the pursuit of knowledge. This represented a departure from the position developed by Plato, but was consistent with the acceptance that rhetoric enjoyed in his time.

[1] [233] 85.

Finally, he seems to produce one of the early reports of the perplexity which arises when incompatible accounts are equally attractive. One of the examples of his ability to accept the discomfort of having no resolution for an important problem is his discussion of the status of the individual as object of knowledge.

There are passages in Aristotle's texts which are reflections of the *origins* of the notion of *isostheneia,* and which contain material which later Sceptics would use in supporting the claim that the evidence of the senses might not be a reliable source of knowledge. Arguments corresponding to those made later in the first, second and fourth modes of Aenesidemus are found in the *Metaphysics:*

> **56** τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀληθὲς οὐ πλήθει κρίνεσθαι οἴονται προσήκειν οὐδὲ ὀλιγότητι, τὸ δ' αὐτὸ τοῖς μὲν γλυκὺ γενομένοις δοκεῖν εἶναι τοῖς δὲ πικρόν, ὥστ' εἰ πάντες ἐκαμνον ἢ πάντες παρεφρόνουν, δύο δ' ἢ τρεῖς ὑγίαινον ἢ νοῦν εἶχον, δοκεῖν ἂν τούτους κάμνειν καὶ παραφρονεῖν τοὺς δ' ἄλλους οὔ· ἔτι δὲ καὶ πολλοῖς τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ταναντία περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν φαίνεσθαι καὶ ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτῷ δὲ ἑκάστῳ πρὸς αὑτὸν οὐ ταὐτὰ κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἀεὶ δοκεῖν.[2]
>
> **56** For they think that the truth should not be determined by the large or small number of those who hold a belief, and that the same thing is thought sweet by some when they taste it, and bitter by others, so that if all were ill or all were mad, and only two or three were well or sane, these would be thought ill and mad, and not the others. And again, they say that many of the other animals receive impressions contrary to ours; and that even to the senses of each individual, things do not always seem the same.[3]

In his summary of the results of these arguments Aristotle reports a Democritean conclusion, which would be found later in Pyrrhonist

[2] *Metaph.* IV: 5, 1009b2-9.
[3] Ross [12].

texts as an *appearance* of the notion of *isostheneia*:

> **57** ποῖα οὖν τούτων ἀληθῆ ἢ ψευδῆ, ἄδηλον· οὐθὲν γὰρ μᾶλλον ταδε ἢ τάδε ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ' ὁμοίως. διὸ Δημόκριτός γέ φησιν ἤτοι οὐθὲν εἶναι ἀληθὲς ἢ ἡμῖν γ' ἄδηλον.[4]

> **57** Which, then, of these impressions are true and which are false is not obvious; for the one set is not more true than the other, but both are alike. And this is why Democritus, at any rate, says that either there is no truth or to us at least it is not evident.[5]

With respect to Aristotle's own ability to entertain opposed arguments on a particular question, he often began his discussion of a problem by reviewing the arguments others had advanced before him. Here are his comments on the subject of reviewing previously formulated opinions from a passage early in *De Anima*:

> **58** Ἐπισκοποῦντας δὲ περὶ ψυχῆς ἀναγκαῖον ἅμα, διαποροῦντας περὶ ὧν εὐπορεῖν δεῖ προελθόντας, τὰς τῶν προτέρων δόξας συμπαραλαμβάνειν ὅσοι τι περὶ αὐτῆς ἀπεφήναντο, ὅπως τὰ μὲν καλῶς εἰρημένα λάβωμεν, εἰ δέ τι μὴ καλῶς, τοῦτ' εὐλαβηθῶμεν.[6]

> **58** For our study of soul it is necessary, while formulating the problems of which in our further advance we are to find the solutions, to call into council the views of those of our predecessors who have declared any opinion on this subject, in order that we may profit by whatever is sound in their suggestions and avoid their errors.[7]

This seems to have been a policy which Aristotle was relatively comfortable with; here is a passage from the *Metaphysics* in which he makes similar comments about problems of a different subject matter:

> **59** Ἀνάγκη πρὸς τὴν ἐπιζητουμένην ἐπιστήμην ἐπελθεῖν ἡμᾶς πρῶτον περὶ ὧν ἀπορῆσαι δεῖ πρῶτον· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ὅσα τε περὶ αὐτῶν ἄλλως ὑπειλήφασί τινες, κἂν εἴ τι χωρὶς τούτων τυγχάνει παρεωραμένον.

[4] *Metaph.* IV: 5, 1009b9-11.
[5] Ross [12].
[6] Aristotle, *De Anima* I: 2, 403b20-23.
[7] Smith [11].

ἔστι δὲ τοῖς εὐπορῆσαι βουλομένοις προὐργου τὸ διαπορῆσαι καλῶς· ἡ γὰρ ὕστερον εὐπορία λύσις τῶν πρότερον ἀπορουμένων ἐστί, λῦσαι δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγνοοῦντας τὸν δεσμόν...[9]

59 We must, with a view to the science which we are seeking, first recount the subjects that should be first discussed. These include both the other opinions that some have held on the first principles, and any point besides these that happens to have been overlooked. For those who wish to get clear of difficulties it is advantageous to discuss the difficulties well; for the subsequent free play of thought implies the solution of previous difficulties, and it is not possible to untie a knot of which one does not know.[9]

Later in the same Book III, Chapter I of *Metaphysics*, Aristotle reiterates the theme that reviewing previously formulated opinions facilitates discussion of the difficulties inherent in a particular subject. At the end of the passage below he introduces a metaphor comparing the incompatible opinions of those who have previously discussed a particular problem to parties confronting each other on a case before a court of law in which a decision must be rendered through the agency of judgement:

60 διὸ δεῖ τὰς δυσχερείας τεθεωρηκέναι πάσας πρότερον, τούτων τε χάριν καὶ διὰ τὸ τοὺς ζητοῦντας ἄνευ τοῦ διαπορῆσαι πρῶτον ὁμοίους εἶναι τοῖς οἷ δεῖ βαδίζειν ἀγνοοῦσι, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις οὐδὲ πότερον τὸ ζητούμενον εὕρηκεν ἢ μὴ γιγνώσκειν· τὸ γὰρ τέλος τούτῳ μὲν οὐ δῆλον τῷ δὲ προηπορηκότι δῆλον. ἔτι δὲ βέλτιον ἀνάγκη ἔχειν πρὸς τὸ κρῖναι τὸν ὥσπερ ἀντιδίκων καὶ τῶν ἀμφισβητούντων λόγων ἀκηκοότα πάντων.[10]

60 one should have surveyed all the difficulties beforehand, both for the purposes we have stated and because people who inquire without first stating the difficulties are like those who do not know where they have to go; besides, a man does not otherwise know even whether he has at any given time found what he is looking for or not; for the end is not clear to such a man, while to him who has first discussed the

[9] *Metaph.* III: 1, 995a23-30.

[9] Ross [12].

[10] *Metaph.* III: 1, 995a32-b3.

> difficulties it is clear. Further, he who has heard all the contending arguments, as if they were the parties to a case, must be in a better position for judging.[11]

This language of contending parties is reminiscent of the confrontational program which seems to inform the surviving literature of the Sophists, and permeates the early aporetic Platonic dialogues. It also reflects what seems to have been a disposition of the Greek literature of the Classical period to rely on antithesis as a device for presenting alternatives in clear terms. Aristotle's comment from his *Rhetoric* in 4 on the opposition of arguments like litigants for the purpose of proving one of them false reflects his conception of the utility of antithesis, and *anticipates* the use of the metaphor of the balance scales of justice to symbolize the difficulty deciding between two incompatible alternative accounts which is found later in Chrysippus (c.280-207 B.C.), Philo Judaeus (c.30 B.C.-c.45 A.D.), and Lucian (c.120-after 180 A.D.).

Some of the ancient writers claimed that Aristotle was the first to use the technique of arguing on opposed sides of a question. Cicero in his *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum,* has the pro-Antiochean Piso tell us that:

> **61** ab Aristoteleque principe de singulis rebus in utramque partem dicendi exercitatio est instituta... ut in omnibus rebus quicquid ex utraque parte dici posset expromeret.[12]
>
> **61** Aristotle introduced the practice of speaking pro and contra on particular subjects... in order that he might none the less set out all the possible arguments on

[11] Ross [12].
[12] *Fin.* V: 10.

either side in every subject.

Glucker argues that the policy which emerged in Arcesilaus of arguing on both sides of a question is well supported as having originated in Aristotle:

> **61.1** had Arcesilaus derived this practice from the early Academy, he would surely have staked a claim for the Academic ancestry of this dialectical technique, and such a claim would have been transmitted to Cicero by his Academic sources. If Cicero's Academic tradition admits that this practice was borrowed from Aristotle's school, this is surely because it was. Arcesilaus' innovation here was only that he made use of this technique *contra omnia semper* (Cic. *Fin.* V.10), in the spirit of the scepticism he discovered in Socrates and Plato.[14]

Long and Sedley argue that Cicero's sources for his claim on this issue are to be found in his reading of *Topics* Book I, Chapter 2, (101a34-36) and a passage in the *Metaphysics* at Book III, Chapter 1, (995b2-4).[15] Cicero speaks again of Aristotle's way of arguing on both sides of the question, in a passage from *De Oratore*:

> **62** sin aliquis extiterit aliquando qui Aristotelio more de omnibus rebus in utramque sententiam possit dicere et in omni causa duas contrarias orationes preaceptis illius cognitis explicare... is sit verus, is perfectus, is solus orator.[16]

> **62** if there should ever be anyone who could argue pro and contra on all subjects, in the Aristotelian manner, and with knowledge of Aristotle's rules deliver two opposing speeches in every case... [he] would be the true, the perfect, indeed the only orator.[17]

And again, but this time in *Orator*, Cicero speaks of Aristotle as

[13] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441.
[14] John Glucker, *Antiochus and the Late Academy*, pages 34-35n79.
[15] [236] II: 438.
[16] Cicero, *De Oratore* III: 80.
[17] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441-442.

one who advocated the practice of arguing on either side--*in utramque partem*--of a question:

> **63** In hac Aristoteles adulescentis non ad philosophorum morem tenuiter disserendi, sed ad copiam rhetorum, in utramque partem ut ornatius et uberius dici posset, exercuit idemque locos--sic enim appellat--quasi argumentorum notas tradidit unde omnis in utramque partem traheretur oratio.[18]

> **63** Aristotle trained young men in this, not for the philosophical manner of subtle discussion, but for the fluent style of the rhetorician, so that they might be able to uphold either side of the question in copious and elegant language. He also taught the "Topics"--that was his name for them--a kind of sign or indication of the arguments from which a whole speech can be formed on either side of the question.[19]

Aristotle's texts contain *anticipations* of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* by being willing to entertain opposed arguments on a particular issue, often without being able to provide a resolution of the difficulty they presented. And here the practice of arguing *in utramque partem* is connected with rhetoric. In a passage from *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero associates the practice of arguing both sides of a question not only with rhetoric, but with the discovery of what he called *veri simile*, translated by King as 'the probable truth':

> **64** itaque mihi semper Peripateticorum Academiaeque consuetudo de omnibus rebus in contrarias partes disserendi non ob eam causam solum placuit, quod aliter non posset quid in quaque re veri simile esset inveniri, sed etiam quod esset ea maxima dicendi exercitatio; qua princeps usus est Aristoteles, deinde eum qui secuti sunt.[20]

> **64** accordingly these considerations always led me to

[18] Cicero, *Orator* XIV: 46.
[19] H.M. Hubbell, *Brutus; Orator*, page 341.
[20] Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* II: 3, 9.

> prefer the rule of the Peripatetics and the Academy of discussing both sides of every question, not only for the reason that in no other way did I think it possible for the probable truth to be discovered in each particular problem, but also because I found it gave the best practice in oratory. Aristotle first employed this method and later those who followed him.[21]

In what sense can 'the probable truth' be accepted as a faithful rendering of what Cicero understood by *veri simile?* In a comment on *probabile et quasi ueri simile* from *Acad.* II: 32 in his (1885) edition of the text of *Academica*, Reid notes:

> **64.1** merely a tentative duplicated translation of πιθανόν, the Carneadean phrase. C.F. Hermann, De Philone Larissaeo p. 16, insists that Cic. has here confused two views, that of Carneades, who used the word πιθανόν, and that of Philo who used εἰκός; that while *probabile* represents πιθανόν, *ueri simile* represents εἰκός and that *quasi* implies that εἰκός was less familiar than πιθανόν. This show how far astray a great scholar may go through ignorance on a small point of diction. There is not a particle of evidence to show that Philo advanced a theory of probability different from that of Carneades (see nn. on § 104). In the present passage the only two systems hinted at are those of Arcesilas and Carneades. See n. on I, 45 paria momenta. As Augustine well understood (contr. Ac. 2, 16) Cic. renders Carneades' πιθανόν indifferently by *probabile* and by *ueri simile*.[22]

With respect to the second way in which Aristotle is thought to have *anticipated* the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*, that of being willing to entertain opposed arguments on a particular question as the originator of the technique of arguing *in utramque partem*, this practice while not leading to suspension of judgment, seemed to Cicero a kind of bridge between dialectic and rhetoric, or at the very least a device by means of which rhetoric was given a role in the resolution of philosophical disputes.

[21] J.E. King, *Tusculan Disputations*, page 155.
[22] Reid [20] 216n9.

And this leads quite naturally to a search for textual supports for the third way--the enhanced status assigned to rhetoric--in which Aristotle is thought to have reflected *the origins of the notion* with which this study is concerned. In this text from his *Topics* Aristotle seems to say that the ajudication of incompatible accounts, for each of which convincing arguments can be produced in support, is a dialectical problem:

> **65** Πρόβλημα δ' ἐστὶ διαλεκτικὸν θεώρημα τὸ συντεῖνον ἢ πρὸς αἵρεσιν καὶ φυγὴν ἢ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν καὶ γνῶσιν, ἢ αὐτὸ ἢ ὡς συνεργὸν πρός τι ἕτερον τῶν τοιούτων, περὶ οὗ ἢ οὐδετέρως δοξάζουσιν ἢ ἐναντίως οἱ πολλοὶ τοῖς σοφοῖς ἢ οἱ σοφοὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἢ ἑκάτεροι αὐτοὶ ἑαυτοῖς... ἔστι δὲ προβλήματα καὶ ὧν ἐναντίοι εἰσὶ συλλογισμοί (ἀπορίαν γὰρ ἔχει πότερον οὕτως ἔχει ἢ οὐχ οὕτως, διὰ τὸ περὶ ἀμφοτέρων εἶναι λόγους πιθανούς)...[23]
>
> **65** A dialectical problem is a subject of inquiry that contributes either to choice and avoidance, or to truth and knowledge, and does that either by itself, or as a help to the solution of some other such problem. It must, moreover, be something on which either people hold no opinion either way, or most people hold a contrary opinion to the wise, or the wise to most people, or each of them among themselves... problems also include questions in regard to which deductions conflict (the difficulty then being whether so-and-so is so or not, there being convincing arguments for both views)...[24]

It is worth noticing that 'convincing arguments' is the translation of λόγους πιθανούς, and that this adjective πιθανούς would resurface later as the name for a Stoic criterion which Carneades would borrow. In this connection see the comments **64.1** by Reid on the role of πιθανόν in the development of Cicero's expression *veri simile*. The relationship between dialectic and rhetoric seems to

[23] Aristotle, *Topics* I: 11, 104b1-14.
[24] Pickard-Cambridge, revised by Barnes [13] 173-174.

have been an issue with which Aristotle was concerned. It has already been mentioned that he is thought to have taught rhetoric in the Academy before Plato's death, and in some kind of competition with Isocrates.[25] In this passage Aristotle presents something of his conception of the articulation between dialectic and rhetoric:

> **66** ἔτι δὲ ταὐναντία δεῖ δύνασθαι πείθειν, καθάπερ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συλλογισμοῖς, οὐχ ὅπως ἀμφότερα πράττωμεν (οὐ γὰρ δεῖ τὰ φαῦλα πείθειν), ἀλλ' ἵνα μὴ λαν θάνῃ πῶς ἔχει, καὶ ὅπως ἄλλου χρωμένου τοῖς λόγοις μὴ δικαίως αὐτοὶ λύειν ἐχωμεν. τῶν μὲν οὖν ἄλλων τεχνῶν οὐδεμία ταναντία συλλογίζεται, ἡ δὲ διαλεκτικὴ καὶ ἡ ῥητορικὴ μόναι τοῦτο ποιοῦσιν· ὁμοίως γὰρ εἰσιν ἀμφότεραι τῶν ἐναντίων. τὰ μέντου ὑποκείμενα πράγματα οὐχ ὁμοίως ἔχει, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ τἀληθῆ καὶ τὰ βελτίω τῇ φύσει εὐσυλλογιστότερα καὶ πιθανώτερα ὡς ἁπλῶς εἰπεῖν.[26]
>
> **66** we must be able to employ persuasion, just as deduction can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it both ways (for we must not make people believe what is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are, and that, if another man argues unfairly, we on our part may be able to confute him. No other of the arts draws opposite conclusions: dialectic and rhetoric alone do this. Both these arts draw opposite conclusions impartially. Nevertheless, the underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to the contrary views. No; things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and more persuasive.[27]

Is Aristotle claiming that both dialectic and rhetoric can articulate good accounts on opposite sides of the same question? And is he claiming that the utility of doing this (articulating incompatible accounts) is that it "helps us see clearly what the facts are"? If so what is the status of the claim that "the

[25] on page 97.
[26] *Rh.* I: 1, 1355a29-39.
[27] Roberts, revised by Barnes [10] II: 2154.

underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to the contrary views."? In this regard Grote has commented that:

> it is an essential feature of Dialectic as well as of Rhetoric that they furnish means of establishing conclusions contrary or contradictory... The dialectic procedure is from its beginning intrinsically contentious...[28]

Leszl[29] draws attention to a problem long discussed in Aristotelian epistemology of bringing the requirement for certainty in knowledge, which Plato had upheld so well, into some kind of accomodation with the necessity for making sensory data the material out of which knowledge is constructed. It is in regard to the latter requirement that Aristotle is seen as having been one of the early spokesmen for an enhanced place for the biological sciences in the teaching of students. But Aristotle ran into a problem in accomodating the data of sense as objects which can be known: "what actual sensation apprehends is individuals, while what knowledge apprehends is universals" *De Anima* Book II, Chapter 5, (417b21-22). Yet if substance is what is most definable as he appears to claim in *Metaphysics* Book VII, Chapter 4, (1030b4-6); and Book VII, Chapter 5, (1031a1-3), and if substance belongs most appropriately to individuals as seems to be the case from a review of *Categories* Chapter 5, (2b4-6), and *On Sophistical Refutations* Chapter 7, (169a31-36) the result, as anticipated in the *Rhetoric* Book I, Chapter 2, (1356b28-35), is that there will be no systematic knowledge of the things which are

[28] George Grote, *Aristotle*, page 266.

[29] W. Leszl, "Knowledge of the Universal and Knowledge of the Particular in Aristotle".

said to be in the most appropriate sense.

Aristotle makes a comment about the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic which does not appear in any other place in his works, that one is the counterpart--the ἀντίστροφος--of the other, in a passage from the opening chapter of his *Rhetoric* I: 1, 1354a1. Green reviews the commentary on this isolated description, and believes that Aristotle probably did conceive of dialectic and rhetoric as subject to "a reciprocal and rule-governed transformation."[30]

Rhetoric seems to have been conceived of as of greater utility by Aristotle than by Plato and Socrates. It has been thought that this is related to the greater importance of finding a way to secure a place for the data of sensation in the knowing process. Perhaps it is in this sense that Aristotle is thought to have initiated a process in which the status of rhetoric was supported as a knowledge producing practice. Thorp has written of this feature of Aristotle's treatment of rhetoric.[31]

The notion that dialectic and rhetoric are ways of providing accounts of individuals that find their way into the scientific way of knowing called demonstration, and which alone may perhaps be called knowledge, has found supporters. Sally Raphael, by way of distinguishing the roles of each, has claimed that:

> Dialectic is a *pre-syllogistic* exercise but it is

[30] Lawrence D. Green, "Aristotelian Rhetoric, Dialectic, and the Traditions of *'Αντίστροφος*", page 27.

[31] John Thorp, "Aristotle's Rehabilitation of Rhetoric".

> necessary (a) to clarify the meaning of syllogistic premises, and (b) to reach the starting points of science... Rhetoric is like dialectic in that orators may argue either side of the question, but it is *not* a road to the ἀρχαί of science.[32]

With respect to the third way in which his texts reflect *the origins of the notion of isostheneia*, Aristotle seems here to have developed a position which related dialectic and rhetoric in some way, and to have held that their relation was made manifest in their appearance in the practice of arguing *in utramque partem*.

A fourth factor in terms of which Aristotle seems to have *anticipated* the *development of the notion of isostheneia*, is what appears as an early formulation of the experience which was later called the equal persuasiveness between incompatible accounts. This passage from Book VI of the *Topics* seems to contain one of the earliest recorded formulations of the notion arising from the opposition of incompatible accounts. It also includes a mention of health being a balance between opposed elements.

> **67** ἐνίοτε δὲ διαμαρτάνουσιν ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις, οἷον ὅσοι λέγουσιν ὅτι ὁ ὕπνος ἐστὶν ἀδυναμία αἰσθήσεως, καὶ ἡ ἀπορία ἰσότης ἐναντίων λογισμῶν, καὶ ἡ ἀληδῶν διάστασις τῶν συμφύτων μερῶν μετὰ βίας. οὔτε γὰρ ὁ ὕπνος ὑπάρχει τῇ αἰσθήσει (ἔδει δ', εἴπερ ἀδυναμία αἰσθήσεώς ἐστιν)· ὁμοίως δ' οὐδ' ἡ ἀπορία ὑπάρχει τοῖς ἐναντίοις λογισμοῖς, οὐδ' ἡ ἀληδῶν τοῖς συμφύτοις μέρεσιν· ἀλγήσει γὰρ τὰ ἄψυχα, εἴπερ ἀληδῶν αὐτοῖς παρέσται. τοιοῦτος δὲ καὶ ὁ τῆς ὑγιείας ὁρισμός, εἴπερ "συμμετρία, θερμῶν καὶ ψυχρῶν" ἐστιν· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ὑγιαίνειν τὰ θερμὰ καὶ ψυχρά. ἡ γὰρ ἑκάστου συμμετρία ἐν ἐκείνοις ὑπάρχει ὧν ἐστι συμμετρία ὥσθ' ἡ ὑγίεια ὑπάρχοι ἂν αὐτοῖς. ἔτι τὸ ποιούμενον εἰς τὸ ποιητικὸν ἢ ἀνάπαλιν συμβαίνει τιθέναι τοῖς οὕτως ὁριζομένοις. οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἀληδῶν ἡ διάστασις τῶν συμφύτων μερῶν, ἀλλὰ ποιητικὸν ἀληδόνος· οὐδ' ἡ ἀδυναμία τῆς αἰσθήσεως ὕπνος, ἀλλὰ ποιητικὸν θάτερον θατέρου· ἤτοι γὰρ διὰ τὴν ἀδυναμίαν ὑπνώσσομεν ἢ διὰ τὸν ὕπνον ἀδυνατοῦμεν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῆς ἀπορίας δόξειεν ἂν

[32] Sally Raphael, "Rhetoric, Dialectic and Syllogistic Argument: Aristotle's Position in "Rhetoric" I-II", page 166.

ποιητικὸν εἶναι ἡ τῶν ἐναντίων ἰσότης λογισμῶν· ὅταν γὰρ ἐπ' ἀμφότερα λογιζομένοις ἡμῖν ὁμοίως ἅπαντα φαίνηται καθ' ἑκάτερον γίνεσθαι, ἀποροῦμεν ὁπότερον πράξωμεν.[33]

67 Sometimes, however, people make mistakes in matters of this sort, e.g. all those who say that sleep is an incapacity to perceive, or that perplexity is a state of equality between contrary reasonings, or that pain is a violent disruption of parts that are naturally conjoined. For sleep is not an attribute of perception, whereas it ought to be, if it is an incapacity to perceive. Likewise, perplexity is not an attribute of opposite reasonings, nor pain of parts naturally conjoined: for then inanimate things will be in pain, since pain will be present in them. Similar in character, too, is the definition of health, if it is a balance of hot and cold elements: for then health will be necessarily exhibited by the hot and cold elements: for a balance of anything belongs to those things of which it is the balance, so that health will be an attribute of them. Moreover, people who define in this way put effect for cause, or cause for effect. For the disruption of parts naturally conjoined is not pain, but a cause of pain: nor again is an incapacity to perceive sleep, but the one is the cause of the other: for either we go to sleep because of the incapacity, or we are incapable because we go to sleep. Likewise also an equality between contrary reasonings would seem to be a cause of perplexity: for it is when we reflect on both sides of a question and find everything alike to be in keeping with either course that we are perplexed which of the two we are to do.[34]

There has been some question raised on the authenticity of the *Topics*. The words Aristotle uses to speak about the issue of 'equality between contrary reasonings' are ἡ τῶν ἐναντίων ἰσότης λογισμῶν, *anticipating* later formulations. In addition it is worth noticing the appearance in the same passage of the medical model of health as a balance between opposed factors. Aubenque makes a comment on this text:

[33] *Top.* VI: 6, 145a33-b20.
[34] Pickard-Cambridge, revised by Barnes [13] I: 244-245.

> **67.1** Bien plus, dans le seul passage où il propose une définition de l'aporie, Aristote semble soucieux d'en faire un état de l'âme, qu'il faut distinguer de l'argumentation qui en est la cause. Ce serait une mauvaise définition de l'aporie (en dépit de Bonitz, *Index aristotelicus*, 85a50, qui semble citer à tort cette définition comme la bonne) d'y voir une "égalité de raisonnements contraires" (*Top.* VI 6, 145b2), car une telle définition est de celles qui confondent l'effet et la cause. En fait, "l'aporie n'est pas un attribut des raisonnements contraires", mais un état de l'âme *résultant* d'une égalité des raisonnements contraires: c'est l'état qui s'empare de nous "lorsque les arguments dans les deux sens se manifestent à nous comme égaux de part et d'autre" et que "nous ne savons que faire" (ἀποροῦμεν ὁπότερον πράξωμεν, 145b18). L'aporie apparaît ici tellement peu comme un procédé méthodologique qu'elle va jusqu'à englober l'incertitude concernant l'action."[35]

In this passage Aristotle seems to associate the earlier medical paradigm, which was seen as *anticipating* the development of the notion, with an early conceptualization of the notion itself as being the result of reflection on what the experience of ἀπορία involved for the one who would know.

There are four areas in which Aristotle's texts, and those of later authors including Cicero on Aristotle, provide reflections of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia*. The first area consists of the transmission of the materials which would later be recorded in the tropes of Aenesidemus. The second area has to do with Aristotle's willingness to practice argument *in utramque partem*--on both sides--of a question. The third, and intimately related to the second, is the articulation of a

[35] Pierre Aubenque, "Sur la notion aristotélicienne d'aporie", page 6.

relationship between rhetoric and dialectic, which relationship provided a role for rhetoric in the resolution of philosophical problems. The fourth area in which some review of Aristotle's texts rewards the reader with an element in the exploration of the development of the notion which is the subject of this study is found in a passage from the *Topics*. Here some passages indicate their author's intuitive *anticipation* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* embedded in a discussion of ἀπορία.

16. Anticipations of the Notion in the Classical Period

The texts from the Classical period contain materials which are taken to be indications of the early phases of the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. The *articulation* of the notion, which becomes evident later in the Hellenistic period, requires that incompatible accounts be confronted one with the other, and it also depends upon the perception that these incompatible accounts are of equal persuasiveness. In the Classical period the first part of this requirement has been realized: here the notion seems to have been *anticipated* in the texts which contain instances of accounts being opposed to one another, and in those textual passages in which the balance of opposing elements is present.

And of particular significance has been thought to be the intention of the early philosophical schools to place themselves

under the patronage of the muse of fine speaking Calliope whom Hesiod had appealed to in *Theogony* V: 78. Rhetorical components of argument would figure in the *articulation* of the notion of *isostheneia* later in the Hellenistic period. Early historical and dramatic literature of the oral tradition had used antithesis as a means of stressing contrast and distinction, and found it valuable as a mnemonic device.

Among the Presocratic physicists Xenophanes, Anaxagoras and Democritus appear to have been influenced by a practice of producing descriptions of what there is by means of opposites, and Heraclitus seems to have drawn attention to the perplexing situation which arises when the same thing is the occasion of incompatible accounts. Empedocles is thought to have been the early source of the four element doctrine which was the basis of the early physiologies of the Hippocratic corpus, and to have regulated these elements by two opposed principles: love and strife. He is also thought to have been instrumental in the development of a kind of self-conscious rhetoric. The physicians of the Classical period produced a rational account of what they could not perceive in their patients, and used the notion of balance between the four elements as a basis for understanding health and vitality. The absence of balance, or harmony as Alcmaeon spoke of it, is the foundation for illness and death. Protagoras is thought to have written a book on opposed arguments, and this is supposed to have been concerned with issues which related to the development of the sceptical notion. Gorgias,

thought to have studied rhetoric with Empedocles, has written on the power of persuasion, and the sophistic text *Dissoi Logoi* contains arguments arranged in opposition to one another. Isocrates trained men for successful public lives using rhetoric as the basis of his educational methodology.

The development of dialectic in opposition to rhetoric seems to have been noticeable in Zeno of Elea, in the Megarians, and most particularly in Plato. Aristotle seeking perhaps to enhance the role which the observations of the senses might play in knowledge gathering, found himself early in his career lecturing on rhetoric, and later beginning to clear a place for it alongside dialectic in what might be loosely understood as his method of obtaining premisses for syllogistic argument. In Plato and Aristotle are also to be found records of their knowledge of several of the patterns of opposition which would later find themselves included in the ten modes of Aenesidemus.

The *anticipation* or preparation for the sceptical notion in the Classical period is then thought to have occurred in two dimensions. Firstly there seems to have been a tendency to produce accounts of what people sought to understand in antithetical terms, or in terms of descriptions which relied on polarized opposites. This seems to be a kind of prefiguring of the situation of widely supported incompatible accounts which the development of the notion appears to require. The materials located in Plato and Aristotle reflecting acquaintance with what

would later be the first, second and fouth modes of opposition, indicate that in the Classical period are some of the resources which both constitute the *origins* of the sceptical way, and *anticipate* the notion of *isostheneia*. Secondly there seems to have been a tension between the utility value of dialectic and rhetoric in the production of claims about what is known. This dynamic relation between the two faces of λόγος will continue to inform this collection of texts which is next concerned with *the development of the notion* as it is *articulated* in the Hellenistic period.

Hellenistic Period 323 to 31 B.C.

non enim hominum interitu sententiae quoque occidunt, sed lucem auctoris fortasse desiderant; ut haec in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi nullamque rem aperte iudicandi profecta a Socrate, repetita ab Arcesila, confirmata a Carneade usque ad nostram viguit aetatem; quam nunc prope modum orbam esse in ipsa Graecia intellego. (Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I: 11)

When men die, their doctrines do not perish with them, though perhaps they suffer from the loss of their authoritative exponent. Take for example the philosophical method referred to, that of a purely negative dialectic which refrains from pronouncing any positive judgement. This, after being originated by Socrates, revived by Arcesilaus, and reinforced by Carneades, has flourished right down to our own period; though I understand that in Greece itself it is now almost bereft of adherents. (H. Rackham)

17. Texts From the Hellenistic Period

Almost all of the philosophical texts written during the Hellenistic period have failed to survive. Long and Sedley speaking about this loss in *The Hellenistic Philosophers* report:

> the total literary output of Hellenistic philosophy must have run into many thousands of books. From these, all that survive intact are thre epitomes and a set of maxims by Epicurus, and a hymn by Cleanthes. We are also fortunate to possess the brilliant Epicurean poem of the Roman writer Lucretius, a number of Latin works by Cicero presenting outlines of the main Hellenistic philosophies, and the writings of a few post-Hellenistic philosophers who were adherents of Hellenistic schools. All our other evidence is, to a greater or lesser degree, fragmentary. Philosophers' views are summarized or quoted, normally out of context, by later writers who are as often as not their declared enemies.[1]

In addition to the loss of almost all of the original philosophical writing, the Hellenistic literature on the history of philosophy has also suffered a similar fate. Only four of the seventy surviving fragments of the successions literature mention philosophical doctrines. In the doxographical surveys the few fragments which have survived vary considerably in nature.

For the purposes of this study of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism* the surviving texts from the Hellenistic period are several Latin passages from Cicero, and a little from Lucretius. In addition there are Gre

[1] [236] I: 8.

quotations of Hellenistic Stoic and Epicurean writings and doxographical passages, both of which originate from authors of the Imperial period.

This situation distances the textual resources on the Hellenistic period from the *articulation* of the sceptical notion as it might have occurred. And this distance is constituted by a variety of factors, temporal, philosophical, linguistic, and polemical, each of which are woven together in different measure, often on separate occasions within a single author.

Perhaps the temporal sources of textual distortion are the most transparent. Many authors from the second and third centuries of the Imperial period, and from whom we obtain passages about the development of the sceptical notion in Hellenistic thinkers, are distanced from the original texts by some five or six hundred years. In many cases the original texts were no longer available, and handbooks prepared by intermediaries, who themselves may not have had access to the original work, were relied upon.

In the realm of the philosophical sources of distortion, some doxographers, working from handbooks and compendia, attribute philosophical positions which have developed only in the first centuries of the Imperial period to earlier authors.

With respect to linguistic sources of change, Cicero and Lucretius were in many instances producing an innovative Latin philosophical

vocabulary for the material which they preserved. And authors of the Imperial period worked with Greek vocabulary which was not available to Hellenistic authors. The development of Greek technical vocabulary continued, an example of which is the emerging use of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- to name the sceptical notion.

In other instances the identification of linguistic distance is not so easily noticed. The first, second, and third centuries of the Imperial period witnessed an effort on the part of authors to imitate the linguistic expressions common in the Classical period. This Atticism constrained literary figures in the early Christian era to return to the great texts of the Classical period for models.

Finally textual corruption often occured due to polemical considerations. Often a later author claiming to report a passage from the writing of an earlier one distorted the presentation of this text for the purposes of his own argument. Speaking of Plutarch, who is widely thought to have been a reliable source of quotations from Stoic and Epicurean authors of the Hellenistic period, Cherniss gives some indication of the difficulty:

> The harshest critic of his treatment of the Stoics here seems nevertheless to have had complete confidence in the accuracy of his quotations. Yet many of the passages that had been taken for quotations are not quotations but paraphrases; and paraphrase may always involve interpretation to some extent, even if it be unintentional interpretation. Moreover, as can be established in a case subject to verification, Plutarch, though he often quotes the text of Plato accurately,

> sometimes substitutes for the original term a different one of his own and sometimes abridges the original text, omitting words that may have seemed to him to be irrelevant to the purpose of his quotation or less innocently something that would have embarrassed his interpretation but the omission of which in any case affects the original implication and connexion of what is quoted. Most of his quotations of the Stoics cannot now be compared with the original texts from which they were taken. They may be accurate and in default of evidence to the contrary must be accepted as such; but it is always possible that they may not be so and, even if accurate so far as they go, may be incomplete and in any case that in their original context they might have been seen to have a significance or nuance which has been obscured or obliterated by their isolation. Like Plutarch's paraphrases and interpretations his quotations of the Stoics as of others must each be judged for itself both in the context of his own purpose in using it and in comparison with all other available and relevant evidence.[2]

Two general difficulties are encountered with the selection of pieces of text from thinkers in the Hellenistic period, which are thought to be reflections of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia*. The first is that so little of the literature has survived, and the second is that much of what has survived is not reliably preserved. These problems are diffused through the texts of this period collected as *articulations* of the notion of *isostheneia*.

18. Megarians: Teachers of Dialectical Method

The influence of Socrates on the early members of the Megarian tradition including Euclides and Eubulides, and their contribution

[2] [105] 404-405.

to the developing interest in the dialectical sclution to logical puzzles has been noted in *§12. Megarians and the Development of Dialectic.* Others in the Megarian tradition, including Stilpo of Megara (c.380-c.300 B.C.) and Diodorus Cronus (mid-fourth century to c.284 B.C.), while seeming to be but minor figures in the philosophical ferment at the end of the Classical and beginning of the Hellenistic periods from the perspective of the twentieth century, were yet particularly significant to their contemporaries as teachers of the dialectical method for the resolution of philosophical problems.

Diogenes Laertius tells us of Stilpo that his dialectical skills were so admired "that nearly the whole of Greece was attracted to him and joined the school of Megara."[1] He is said to have taught Zeno of Citium (335-263 B.C.) shortly after his arrival in Athens in 313 B.C. In addition he seems to have denied the Platonic distinction between universals and individuals, and this on the grounds of considerations similar to those noted in Aristotle's difficulty over how the individual could be the most real and not that which is known. He apparently declined an invitation to Alexandria by Ptolemy Soter (c.367-c.283 B.C.), and enjoyed such public esteem near the end of his life that people would leave the shops to catch a glimpse of him in the street on a visit to Athens.[2]

Diodorus Cronus seems to have been concerned to continue working

[1] *Vit. Phil.* II: 113.
[2] *Vit. Phil.* II: 119.

at the solutions to the logical puzzles originated by Eubulides. Born in Iasos, he spent the early decades of the Hellentistic period in Athens, where Zeno of Citium and Arcesilaus are said to have been attracted by his teaching.[3] He spent the last years of his life in Alexandria.

The Megarians seem to have been instrumental in the enhancement of the status of the dialectical method, understood as that of question and answer, as the fourth century came to an end. It appears that they enjoyed great public esteem, and that they influenced both Zeno, the originator of Stoicism, and Arcesilaus, the leader of the third century Academy in whose thought the sceptical notion seems to have first become *articulate*.

19. Pyrrho: the Policy of Aphasia

Pyrrho of Elis wrote nothing. Timon of Phlius was one of his students and did make records of Pyrrho's views, but Timon's books are lost. Fragments of them are thought to be faithfully reported[1] by Aristocles of Messene, (thought by some to have lived early in the first century A.D.)[2] in his work *On Philosophy* which is also no longer extant. However parts of it are quoted in *Preparatio*

[3] [286] 79.

[1] Long and Sedley claim that "Aristocles' report of Timon is based upon an authentic document of early Pyrrhonism, and is little if at all contaminated by later scepticism" in [236] II: 6.

[2] See the comments by Long and Sedley on the redating in [236] II: 6.

Evangelica by Eusebius.

Pyrrho is claimed to have resolutely avoided the disputes of the philosophers, and to have been known as one following a policy of aphasia or non-assertion. According to Timon, Pyrrho held:

> **68** οὔτ' μηδὲ πιστεύειν αὐταῖς δεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀδοξάστους καὶ ἀκλινεῖς καὶ ἀκραδάντους εἶναι, περὶ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου λέγοντας ὅτι οὐ μᾶλλον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ καὶ ἔστι καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ οὔτε ἔστιν οὔτε οὐκ ἔστιν. τοῖς μέντοι γε διακειμένοις οὕτω περιέσεσθαι Τίμων φησὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἀφασίαν, ἔπειτα δ' ἀταραξίαν...[4]
>
> **68** we must not trust them, but be without opinions, and without bias, and without wavering, saying of every single thing that it no more is than is not, or both is and is not, or neither is nor is not. To those indeed who are thus disposed the result, Timon says, will be first speechlessness, and then imperturbability...[4]

With repsect to Pyrrho's committment to the avoidance of argument, Long and Sedley note that:

> **68.1** his scepticism, as we interpret it, was a dogmatic position; and the tranquillity it yielded gave Pyrrho no reason to engage in philosophical argument.[5]

There are thought to be two views of Pyrrho's reasons for this policy that one account of a thing cannot be preferred to another, and consequently that argument should be avoided. One kind of reason has to do with epistemological considerations which find their basis in the extensive appearance and acceptance of many well supported accounts of things which seem to be interminably and unresolvably in conflict with each other. This material from

[3] Eusebius, *Preparatio Evangelica*, XIV, xviii: 758d.

[4] E.H. Gifford, *Eusebii Pamphili Evangelicae Praeparationis Libri XV*, pages 816-817.

[5] [236] I: 446.

Aenesidemus' writing concerning Pyrrho appears in Diogenes Laertius:

> **69** Καὶ Αἰνεσίδημος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ Πυρρωνείων λόγων οὐδέν φησιν ὁρίζειν τὸν Πύρρωνα δογματικῶς διὰ τὴν ἀντιλογίαν, τοῖς δὲ φαινομένοις ἀκολουθεῖν. ταῦτα δὲ λέγει καὶ τῷ Κατὰ σοφίας καὶ τῷ Περὶ ζητήσεως.[7]
>
> **69** Aenesidemus, in the first of his Pyrrhonist discourses, says that Pyrrho determines nothing in doctrinaire fashion, because of the opposition of arguments, but follows appearances. He says the same in his *Against wisdom* and *On inquiry*.[7]

Long and Sedley believe this view originated with Zeller's *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, 1852, and to have been fashionable since then.[8] It is grounded in Aenesidemus' comment about ἀντιλογίαι and is focused on our accounts of the objects of knowledge.

A second view of Pyrrho's reasons for his avoidance of argument is based on concerns about the objects of knowledge themselves. According to Timon, Pyrrho held:

> **70** τὰ μὲν οὖν πράγματά φησιν αὐτὸν ἀποφαίνειν ἐπ' ἴσης ἀδιάφορα καὶ ἀστάθμητα καὶ ἀνεπίκριτα· διὰ τοῦτο μήτε τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἡμῶν μήτε τὰς δόξας ἀληθεύειν ἢ ψεύδεσθαι.[9]
>
> **70** that things are equally indifferent, unmeasurable and inarbitrable. For this reason neither our sensations nor our opinions tell us truths or falsehoods.[10]

This metaphysical interpretation of Pyrrho's position, supported by these lines from Aristocles, has been proposed by Decleva

[6] *Vit. phil.* IX: 106.
[7] Long and Sedley [236] I: 468.
[8] [236] II: 6.
[9] *PE* XIV xviii: 758d.
[10] Long and Sedley [236] I: 14-15.

Caizzi.[11] Long and Sedley believe this is a more adequate account of the reasons for Pyrrho's avoidance of argument:

> **70.1** Pyrrho's scepticism was not simply the outcome of equally-balanced and undecidable disagreements between philosophers... but the response to a metaphysical thesis, concerning the nature of things.[12]

Here Pyrrho's worry is that one account of a thing cannot be preferred to another because the things are equally indifferent, unmeasurable and inarbitrable.

Annas and Barnes comment on this passage as follows:

> **70.2** The idea that things are 'equally' indifferent, etc. seems to imply a version of what Sextus will later characterize as equipollence: we come to appreciate that there is as much to be said against any claim as in its favour. And 'non-assertion' looks very like the notion of *epochê* or suspension of judgement. But Pyrrho, consistently with his anti-academic stance, has no worked-out account of his own position--at least, none that we have any knowledge of.[13]

With respect to Pyrrho's position, it is thought that he made a practice of avoiding the disputes of the philosophical schools. This policy of aphasia distinguishes Pyrrho from the tradition of the Hellenistic Academy, whose members were very much involved in the speculative developments of their era.

Some contemporary scholars believe that Pyrrho's avoidance of argument was based on what might be called metaphysical rather than epistemological reasons. This further distinguishes his

[11] Fernanda Decleva Caizzi, *Pirrone: testimonianze,* pages 225-227.

[12] [236] I: 17.

[13] [116] X.

concerns from those of the sceptical Academy, whose grounds for dispute with the Stoics were largely epistemological.

20. Epicurus and Equally Reliable Impressions

Epicurus studied under Nausiphanes (c.360- B.C.) early in his life, and may have learned some of the atomist philosophy of Democritus from him. Diogenes Laertius reports that Epicurus wrote about 300 rolls, most of which are now lost.[1] What does survive are three letters and a collection of maxims in Diogenes' tenth book on Epicurus. There is also a group of short sayings in a Vatican manuscript. Our knowledge of his thought is derived mainly from Lucretius' (c.94-c.55 B.C.) *De Rerum Natura* which, although written more than 200 years after his death, is thought to have very little in it which was not developed by Epicurus himself. Lucretius tells us of Epicurus' claim that sensory impressions have equal value:

> 71 ideoque necesse est non possint alios alii convincere sensus. nec porro poterunt ipsi reprehendere sese, aequa fides quoniam debebit semper haberi.[2]

> 71 it necessarily follows that the senses cannot convict each other. Nor, again, will they be able to confute themselves, since all will always have to be considered of equal reliability.[3]

The expression *aequa fides* seems to reflect a notion which is very similar to the sceptical *isostheneia*. There is a passage in

[1] *Vit. Phil.* X: 26.
[2] Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV: 495-498.
[3] Long and Sedley [236] I: 78.

Bailey's commentary which discusses *aequa fides* precisely in connection with the sceptical notion which is the subject of this study, and with a standard sceptical argument for the unreliability of the senses:

> **71.1 aequa fides:** 'equal trust' in all the different sensations of a single sense. We cannot convict the distant view of the tower of being false because of the near view. Epicurus' ἰσοσθένεια (D.L. x.31).[4]

Bailey's commentary on the expression specifically connects the *aequa fides* of Lucretius' text with the Greek ἰσοσθένεια in *Vit. Phil.* X: 31.

There is also a passage in Plutarch's *Adversus Colotem* which reiterates the Epicurean claim with regard to sensations:

> **72** ναὶ μὰ Δία σοῦ γε μᾶλλον, ὦ βέλτιστε, τὸ ἀκόλουθον ὁρῶν καὶ φυλάττων, τὸ πᾶσαν εἶναι φαντασίαν ὁμοίως ἀξιόπιστον ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῆς, ὑπὲρ ἄλλου δὲ μηδεμίαν ἀλλὰ ἐπίσης ἔχειν.[5]
>
> **72** Exactly, my good friend, since he is a better hand than you at noticing and holding to the consequences of his doctrine--that every sensation is equally trustworthy when it testifies in its own behalf, but none when it testifies in behalf of anything else, but all are on the same footing.[6]

In the text below Diogenes Laertius seems to be recording materials from Epicurus' *Summary* and his *Sovran Maxims,* when he tells us of his subject's confidence in sense perception that:

> **73** οὐδὲ ἔστι τὸ δυνάμενον αὐτὰς διελέγξαι. οὔτε γὰρ ἡ ὁμογένεια αἴσθησις τὴν ὁμογενῆ διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν...[7]

[4] [73] III: 1240.
[5] Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem* 25 (1121C-D).
[6] Benedict Einarson and Phillip H. De Lacy, *Plutarch's Moralia,* volume XIV, page 275.
[7] *Vit. phil.* X: 31-32.

> **73** Nor is there anything which can refute sensations or convict them of error: one sensation cannot convict another and kindred sensation, for they are equally valid...[8]

This equal reliability of sensations provides a kind of pre-mature analogue in the balance of impulses, to the equal persuasiveness of accounts which is the basis of the sceptical notion.

And there is a passage from Plutarch's *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis* in which Epicureans are presented as being confronted with the problem of deciding between impulses of equal appeal arising from such sensations:

> **74** Τοῦ κατηναγκάσθαι δοκοῦντες ὑπὸ τῶν ἐξωθεν αἰτιῶν ταῖς ὁρμαῖς ἀπόλυσιν πορίζειν ἐνιοι τῶν φιλοσόφων ἐπελευστικήν τινα κίνησιν ἐν τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ κατασκευάζουσιν, ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπαραλλάκτων μάλιστα γιγνομένην ἐκδηλον· ὅταν γὰρ δυεῖν ἴσον δυναμένων καὶ ὁμοίως ἐχόντων θάτερον ἢ λαβεῖν ἀνάγκη, μηδεμιᾶς αἰτίας ἐπὶ θάτερον ἀγούσης τῷ μηδὲν τοῦ ἑτέρου διαφέρειν, ἡ ἐπελευστικὴ δύναμις αὕτη τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπίκλισιν ἐξ αὑτῆς λαβοῦσα διέκοψε τὴν ἀπορίαν.[9]
>
> **74** Some philosophers, thinking to provide the impulses with release from the constraint of external causes, contrive within the ruling faculty a kind of adventitious motion which becomes manifest especially in the case of indistinguishable alternatives. They argue that, when it is necessary to accept one of two things that are alike and of equal import, there being no cause directing us to one of the two, since it is no different at all from the other, this adventitious force in the soul takes a swerve of itself and resolves the perplexity.[10]

The movement in Epicurean epistemology was from sensations to impulses to assent, which latter was responsible for the existence

[8] Hicks [34] II: 561.
[9] Plutarch, *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis* 23 (1045B-C).
[10] Harold Cherniss, *Plutarch's Moralia*, volume XIII, page 509.

of accounts. There seems to be a kind of parallel (whether postulated by some later Epicurean or by Diogenes Laertius is difficult to evaluate) between Epicurus' claim of the equal reliability of sensory impressions and the sceptical notion of equal strength of incompatible accounts. This parallel may be supported by citing Diogenes' use of ἰσοσθένεια to refer to Epicurus' claim in 73. Words from the root ἰσοσθεν- appear five times in the text of Diogenes. On one occasion 2 the word is used to suggest that Homer had knowledge of the sceptical notion. The other three instances of the word 162, 163, and 164 are from Diogenes Laertius' ninth book in which he discusses philosophers who are thought to have been part of the Pyrrhonian tradition.

21. Arcesilaus and Argument Ad Hominem

Arcesilaus of Pitane was head of the Academy from 273 to 242 B.C.; he wrote very little, and nothing that we know of having to do with philosophy. The passages in ancient texts in which his name appears have been collected by Mette.[1] Arcesilaus is thought to have been responsible for initiating a change in Academic interest and method which marked him off from his immediate predecessors.

With respect to the change in subjects of interest, a part of the impetus seems to have been Academic mistrust of the growing reliance on the evidence of the senses found in the other

[1] Hans Joachim Mette, "Zwei Akademiker heute: Krantor und Arkesilaos".

philosophical communities in Athens. Aristotle had supported a role for sense perception with which the Academic tradition was uncomfortable. But the Epicureans and the Stoics were constructing accounts of knowing which relied more heavily on the data of sensory experience. With respect to the change of method, the role of rhetoric became enhanced, and seems gradually to have taken a place alongside dialectic in handling the issues with which members of the Academy found themselves concerned.

Arcesilaus was interested in rhetoric in the early years of his intellectual life. Alluding to the impact of this period of his training, Cicero says of Arcesilaus that "he was distinguished both by acuteness of intellect and by a certain admirable charm of style."[2] Diogenes Laertius tells us that "in persuasiveness he had no equal."[3] Arcesilaus, during the period in which he studied under Theophrastus,[4] probably had some exposure to the discussion of the roles of dialectic and rhetoric in Aristotle's *Topics* and *Rhetoric*. Cicero speaks of Arcesilaus' way of arguing:

> 75 sin aliquis... aut hoc Arcesilae mode... contra omne quod propositum sit disserat... is sit verus, is perfectus, is solus orator.[5]
>
> 75 if there should ever be anyone who... should argue in the manner of Arcesilaus... against every thesis... [he] would be the true, the perfect, indeed the only orator.[6]

One of the most widely recognized features of Arcesilaus' method,

[2] *Ac.* II: 16.
[3] *Vit. Phil.* IV: 37.
[4] *Vit. Phil.* IV: 29.
[5] *De Or.* III: 80.
[6] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441-442.

and one that seems to have been well attested in the testimonia, is his way of opposing one claim to another. In *De Oratore* Cicero tells us of Arcesilaus' method that it derived from Socratic practice:

> **76** quem ferunt eximio quodam usum lepore dicendi aspernatum esse omne animi sensusque iudicium primumque instituisse--quanquam id fuit Socraticum maxime--non quid ipse sentiret ostendere sed contra id quod quisque se sentire dixisset disputare.[7]
>
> **76** he is said to have employed a remarkably attractive style of discourse in rejecting mental and sensory judgement entirely and to have initiated the practice--an entirely Socratic one it is true--of not stating his own opinion but arguing against the opinions put forward by everyone else.[8]

Cicero, advocating the Socratic method in *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, tells us of Arcesilaus that he:

> **77** eum revocavit instituitque ut ii qui se audire vellent non de se quaererent, sed ipsi dicerent quid sentirent. quod cum dixissent, ille contra. sed eum qui audiebant, quoad poterant, defendebant sententiam suam.[9]
>
> **77** revived it and prescribed that those who wanted to listen to him should not ask him questions but state their own opinions. When they had done so, he argued against them. But his listeners, so far as they could, would defend their own opinion.[10]

Later in *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, Cicero takes some trouble to distinguish Arcesilaus' practice of arguing against his opponents premisses from Aristotle's method of argument *in*

[7] *De Orat.* III: 67.

[8] H. Rackham, *De Oratore, De Fato, Paradoxica Stoicorum* and *De Partitione Oratoria*, page 55.

[9] *Fin.* II: 2.

[10] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441.

utramque partem:

> **78** ab Aristoteleque principe de singulis rebus in utramque partem dicendi exercitatio est instituta, ut non contra omnia semper, sicut Arcesilas, diceret...[11]
>
> **78** Aristotle introduced the practice of speaking pro and contra on particular subjects, not, like Arcesilaus, with the object of always arguing against everything...[12]

According to Diogenes Laertius, Arcesilaus transformed the dialectical method which Plato had used, and did so under the influence of the Megarians:

> **79** πρῶτος ἐπισχὼν τὰς ἀποφάσεις διὰ τὰς ἐναντιότητας τῶν λόγων. πρῶτος δὲ καὶ εἰς ἑκάτερον ἐπεχείρησε, καὶ πρῶτος τὸν λόγον ἐκίνησε τὸν ὑπὸ Πλάτωνος παραδεδομένον καὶ ἐποίησε δι' ἐρωτήσεως καὶ ἀποκρίσεως ἐριστικώτερον.[13]
>
> **79** was the first to suspend his judgement owing to the contradictions of opposing arguments. He was also the first to argue on both sides of a question, and the first to meddle with the system handed down by Plato and, by means of question and answer, to make it more closely resemble eristic.[14]

In Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*, he speaks of Arcesilaus' practice of opposing one argument to another as being a kind of destructive dialectic:

> **80** ut haec in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi nullamque rem aperte iudicandi... repetita ab Arcesila... usque ad nostram viguit aetatem...[15]
>
> **80** take for example the philosophical method referred to, that of a purely negative dialectic which refrains from pronouncing any positive judgement. This, after being... revived by Arcesilas... has flourished right

[11] *Fin.* V: 10.
[12] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441.
[13] *Vit. Phil.* IV: 28.
[14] Hicks [34] I: 405.
[15] *N.D.* I: 11.

down to our own period...[16]

This way of arguing has been characterised as *ad hominem*: arguing from the premisses of one's opponent, without oneself making a claim with respect to their truth or falsity, or the validity of his argument:

> for the ancient sceptic the main danger is rash assent, and *ad hominem* reasoning is ideally suited to remove this in two ways. Firstly, you directly attack the opponent's rash assent. You take what he accepts and show him that there are problems *just from this*: having located a problem in his beliefs you get him to give up those beliefs. And secondly, you have done this without committing *yourself*. If your argument depends on beliefs of yours, that makes it vulnerable to objections that can be brought against those beliefs. The fewer beliefs of yours your argument rests on, the harder it is for the opponent to avoid by rejecting or attacking those beliefs."[17]

And this method of confrontational dialectic, pursued without recourse to a particular point of view, marks a significant phase in the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. For it is the opposition of one account to another without finding in either some grounds for preference.

Cicero tells us that Arcesilaus believed that his method of arguing against all claims had for its constructive purpose the discovery of truth:

> **81** Arcesilan vero non obtrectandi causa cum Zenone pugnavisse, sed verum invenire voluisse...[18]
>
> **81** Arcesilaus did not do battle with Zeno merely for the sake of criticizing him, but really wished to discover

[16] Rackham [22] 13-15.
[17] [138] 49.
[18] *Ac.* II: 76.

the truth...[19]

This relentless search for truth is the expression Sextus uses to characterize the Sceptic in *P* I. They are the only ones who have not abandoned the ongoing inquiry. Later in the *Academica,* Cicero speaks again of this restless examination of the claims of others in the search for some account which might be preferred to others:

> **82** Restat illud quod dicunt veri inveniundi causa contra omnia dici oportere et pro omnibus.[20]

> **82** There remains their statement that for the discovery of the truth it is necessary to argue against all things and for all things.[21]

Reid, commenting on **82**, connects the practice of *ad hominem* argument with the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

> **82.1** cf. I, 46 contra omnium sententias dicens; also below §60n. The Academic (or rather New Academic) practice of arguing against all opinions follows as a direct consequence from the doctrine of the ἰσοσθένεια τῶν λόγων, for which see n. on I, 45. Cf. also De Or. I, 84 mos erat patrius Academiae aduersari semper omnibus in disputando; ib. I, 263. This practice, called εἰς ἑκάτερα ἐπιχείρησις (Numen. ap. Euseb. 14, 7, 15; cf. also ἐπαμφοτερίζειν, Galen. Plac. 4 §365, ed. Müller) or 'in utramque partem disputatio' (above, I, 46; De Fat. I; Tusc. 2, 9; N.D. 2, 168; De Or. 3, 107) is sometimes traced by Cic. back to Aristotle, Plato and Socrates, but occasionally with more truth to the Megarians, who were the great cultivators of ἀντιλογικοὶ λόγοι (Plato, Phaedo 90 B). In Fin. 5, 10 the use made by Aristotle and the use made by Arcesilaus of the 'in utramque partem disputatio' are contrasted."[22]

Two issues arise when one considers the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. The first issue is the role that

[19] Rackham [20] 563.
[20] *Ac.* II: 60.
[21] Rackham [20] 543.
[22] [20] 177-178n26.

rhetoric came to play in argument. This role does not seem to have been as well described in the surviving material. On this subject Long has commented:

> Arcesilaus, before joining Crantor, attended Theophrastus' lectures on rhetoric. This conclusion gains support from Theophrastus' alleged disappointment at losing a pupil so "adept at argument" (εὐεπιχείρητος), and Diogenes' ensuing comment on Arcesilaus' being ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἐμβριθέστατος καὶ φιλογράμματος (IV 30). We should also recall that the Peripatetics were the leading exponents of rhetoric at this time. It must have been Theophrastus' lectures on rhetoric, and not those on botany, which drew such large audiences (Diog. Laert. V 37)... Rhetoric, especially in the Peripatos, was a recognized part of the philosophical curriculum.[23]

The second issue is the policy of arguing against all claims. This practice seems to have been fairly widely attributed to Arcesilaus.

22. *The Notion First Made Articulate?*

Cicero tells us of Arcesilaus' lack of confidence in the possibility of judgement that:

> 83 Huic rationi quod erat consentaneum faciebat, ut contra omnium sententias disserens in eam plerosque deduceret, ut cum in eadem re paria contrariis in partibus momenta rationum invenirentur, facilius ab utraque parte adsensio sustineretur.[1]

> 83 He used to act consistently with this philosophy, and by arguing against everyone's opinions he drew most people away from their own, so that when reasons of equal weight were found on opposite sides on the same

[23] Anthony A. Long, "Diogenes Laertius' Life of Arcesilaus", page 440.

[1] *Ac.* I: 45.

> subject, the easier course was to withhold assent from either side.[2]

This is the earliest record found of the notion made fully articulate; it was written by Cicero in 45 or 44 B.C. In a note on the material in these passages, Reid makes the following comment:

> 83.1 we have here the distinctive principle of Arcesilas, which marks him off from Carneades. He stated that if the arguments on both sides of any question whatever were weighed they would be found exactly to balance. Cf. Numenius ap. Eus. Pr. Eu. 14, 4, 15 of Arcesilaus εἶναι πάντα ἀκατάληπτα καὶ τοὺς εἰς ἑκάτερα λόγους ἰσοκρατεῖς ἀλλήλοις: Sext. A.M. 9, 207, ἰσοσθενεῖς λόγοι: id. P.H. I, 9 ἰσοσθένεια τῶν λόγων (the same phrase in Diog. 9, 101): ib. I, 183 ἴση πιθανότης: ib. I, 26 ἰσοσθένης διαφωνία: to the same purpose are the common phrases ἀρρεψία (P.H. I, 190) and ἀοριστία (ib. I, 198). This doctrine of Arcesilas places him exactly on a level with Pyrrho; cf. Num. ap. Eus. pr. Eu. 14, 6, 5 Μνασέας γοῦν καὶ Φιλόμηλος καὶ Τίμων οἱ σκεπτικοὶ σκεπτικὸν αὐτὸν προσονομάζουσιν, ὥσπερ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἦσαν, ἀναιροῦντα καὶ αὐτὸν τὸ ἀληθὲς καὶ τὸ ψευδὲς καὶ τὸ πιθανόν ἦν τοίνυν Πυρρώνειος πλὴν τοῦ ὀνόματος. So Timon quoted by Num. 14, 5, 12 traces Arcesilas' inspiration to Menedemus, Pyrrho and Diodorus, as well as to Crantor and Theophrastus. Sextus finds it hard to draw a distinction between Arcesilas and the Sceptics; see P.H. I, 232-234 where he says that A. considered ἐποχὴ an ἀγαθὸν, οὐ πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον (like the Sceptics) but πρὸς τὴν φύσιν. Plutarch wrote a treatise περὶ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν Πυρρωνείων καὶ Ἀκαδημαικῶν: see Volkmann I p. 111. The description given of A. by Aristo the Chian is well known: 'πρόσθε Πλάτων, ὄπιθεν Πύρρων, μέσσος Διόδωρος' (Parodied from Homer: see Sext. I.1.; Eus. I.1.; Diog. 4, 33). As to his supposed esoteric and dogmatic teaching see n. on 2, 60. For the *expression* 'momenta rationum' cf. n. on 2, 124.[3]

The next earliest record of the appearance of the notion seems to have been written sometime between Cicero and Sextus. This text comes from an anonymous commentary on a passage in Plato (*Tht.*

[2] Long and Sedley [236] I: 438.
[3] [20] 158-159n12.

151e4-5) in which Socrates praises Theaetetus' willingness to state his own belief. The commentary has been thought to originate in the second century A.D., but Tarrant argues that it is the work of a member of the sceptical Academy in the first century B.C.[4]

> **84** κατὰ γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα οὔτε ὁ λόγος κριτήριον οὔτε ἀληθὴς φαντασία οὔτε πιθανὴ οὔτε καταληπτικὴ οὔτε ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον, ἀλλ' ὅτι νῦν αὐτῷ φαίνεται. εἰ δὲ τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐκ ἀποφαίνεται, διὰ τὸ οἴεσθαι ἰσοκρατεῖς εἶναι τοὺς εἰς τὰ ἐναντία λόγους, καὶ ἐζομαλίζειν τὰς φαντασίας, καὶ μηδεμίαν ἐν αὐταῖς ἀπολείπειν διαφορὰν κατὰ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἢ ψεῦδος, πιθανὸν ἢ ἀπίθανον, ἐναργὲς ἢ ἀμυδρόν, καταληπτὸν ἢ ἀκατάληπτον, ἀλλὰ πάσας εἶναι ὁμοίας...[5]
>
> **84** For according to Pyrrho, what is the criterion is neither reason, nor a true impression, nor a convincing impression, nor a cognitive impression, nor anything else of the kind, but what now appears to him. Whether it is or is not such as it appears he does not assert, because he thinks that the arguments for the opposing views are of equal strength, and he makes the impressions on a par with each other, leaving no difference between them in respect of their being true or false, convincing or unconvincing, self-evident or obscure, or cognitive or incognitive, but holds that they are all alike.[6]

Note the appearance of ἰσοκρατεῖς 'equal strength', and πιθανὸν ἢ ἀπίθανον translated by Long and Sedley as 'convincing or unconvincing'.

Sextus tells us of Arcesilaus:

> **85** ὡς μίαν εἶναι σχεδὸν τὴν κατ' αὐτὸν ἀγωγὴν καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν· οὔτε γὰρ περὶ ὑπάρξεως ἢ ἀνυπαρξίας τινὸς ἀποφαινόμενος εὑρίσκεται, οὔτε κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν προκρίνει τι ἕτερον ἑτέρου...[7]
>
> **85** his school is practically the same as ours. For he is not found asserting the existence or non-existence of

[4] Harold Tarrant, "The Date of Anon. *In Theaetetum*".
[5] Anonymous, *In Platonis Theaetetum* 60.48-61.46.
[6] Long and Sedley [236] I: 470.
[7] *P* I: 232.

> anything, nor does he prefer one thing to another by way of credibility or incredibility...[8]

Here Sextus is using the gloss on ἰσοσθένεια which appears so often in his work, that Arcesilaus does not prefer one thing to another οὔτε κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν by way of credibility or incredibility.

The latest record of dating the notion to the Academy of Arcesilaus comes from Eusebius who, speaking in his own voice, claims that Arcesilaus had some knowledge of the sceptical notion:

> **86** φάναι γὰρ περὶ ἁπάντων ἐπέχειν δεῖν· εἶναι γὰρ πάντα ἀκατάληπτα, καὶ τοὺς εἰς ἑκάτερα λόγους ἰσοκρατεῖς ἀλλήλοις, καὶ τὰς αἰσθήσεις δὲ ἀπίστους εἶναι καὶ πάντα λόγον.[9]
>
> **86** for he declared that we ought to suspend judgement about all things, for all are incomprehensible, and the arguments on either side equal each other in force, also that the senses and reason in general are untrustworthy.[10]

There seems to have been some agreement among the sources used by the authors cited that something like the sceptical notion was the basis of Arcesilaus' method of arguing against the Stoics. It is perhaps this agreement which is the occasion of the remark by Annas and Barnes on the issue:

> ...whatever the force of their appeal to their own heritage, the Sceptical Academics went beyond Socratic practice in one respect: Arcesilaus held that appreciation of the equal force of arguments for and against would leave one in a state of suspension of judgement (*epochê*), a Pyrrhonian kind of result.[11]

However there is some uncertainty about the claim. With respect

[8] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441.
[9] *PE* XIV, iv: 726d.
[10] Gifford [39] III, ii: 782.
[11] [116] XI.

to the stategy of arguing, Long has commented:

> By the time of Cicero, the distinction between argument *pro* and *contra*, and argument only *contra*, is often obscured; and it would be unwise to suppose that Arcesilaus never took both sides himself. None the less, all of his surviving arguments in Cicero and Sextus are rejoinders to the theses stated by his opponents. And it seems highly probable that this was his recommended method for inducing suspension of judgement.[12]

It seems possible that Arcesilaus may have relied for the most part on the *ad hominem* form, or argument *contra* the thesis offered by his interlocutor, and to have employed dialectical and rhetorical stategies in supporting his advocated suspension of judgment. If this is the case his practice puts him in the Socratic tradition, with the exception being that Arcesilaus appears to have found the rhetorical element of value in controversial disputation. The revival of rhetorical aspects to argument as practiced in the Academy seems to have left little record of its development between Plato's death in 347 and Arcesilaus' assumption of Plato's role as its head in 273 B.C.

23. Chrysippus and Defending Opposite Sides

Chrysippus, successor of Cleanthes (331-232 B.C.) as head of the Stoa, is responsible for giving Stoicism a kind of orthodoxy, reformulating the doctrines of his predecessors and adding new material of his own. He is said to have been a prolific author,

[12] [234] 446.

and in fact is thought to have written in excess of six hundred rolls of papyrus, none of which has survived.[1] Diogenes Laertius tells us of Chrysippus that:

> **87** Τέλος δ' Ἀρκεσιλάῳ καὶ Λακύδῃ, καθά φησι Σωτίων ἐν τῷ ὀγδόῳ, παραγενόμενος ἐν Ἀκαδημείᾳ συνεφιλοσόφησε...[2]
>
> **87** At last, however,--so we are told by Sotion in his eighth book,--he joined Arcesilaus and Lacydes and studied philosophy under them in the Academy.[3]

Sotion of Alexandria was active between 170 and 200 A.D. The work which Diogenes referred to here was probably his *Successions of Philosophers* in thirteen books. With respect to the impact of this early experience as a student in the Academy, Diogenes Laertius continues:

> **88** δι' ἣν αἰτίαν καὶ κατὰ τῆς συνθείας καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἐπεχείρησε, καὶ περὶ μεγεθῶν καὶ πληθῶν τῇ τῶν Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν συστάσει χρησάμενος.[4]
>
> **88** And this explains his arguing at one time against, and at another in support of, ordinary experience, and his use of the method of the Academy when treating of magnitudes and numbers.[5]

It is difficult to tell whether Diogenes wishes his reader to understand that Chrysippus practiced the *ad hominem* method of Arcesilaus--that of arguing against his opponent's claims, or whether Diogenes is merely claiming that, on a particular occasion Chrysippus defended one side of a given position, and on another occasion he defended another, perhaps contrary, side of the same

[1] The catalogue of his works given by Diogenes Laertius (*Vit. Phil.* VII: 189-202) is incomplete.
[2] *Vit. Phil.* VII: 183-184.
[3] Hicks [34] II: 293.
[4] *Vit. Phil.* VII: 184.
[5] Hicks [34] II: 293.

position.

Plutarch made many excerpts from the lost books of Chrysippus which he used in supporting the doctrines of the Hellenistic Academy against the Stoics. In his *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* he has preserved several passages from Chrysippus' writing on the subject of opposed arguments.

> **89** Τὸ πρὸς τὰ ἐναντία διαλέγεσθαι καθόλου μὲν οὐ φησιν ἀποδοκιμάζειν, χρῆσθαι δὲ τούτῳ παραινεῖ μετ' εὐλαβείας, ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς δικαστηρίοις, μὴ μετὰ συνηγορίας ἀλλὰ διαλύοντας αὐτῶν τὸ πιθανόν...[6]

> **89** He says that he does not absolutely reject the practice of arguing the opposite sides of a question, but he recommends that this be used cautiously as it is in the court-room not by way of putting the case for them but by way of destroying their plausibility.[7]

This seems to reflect the Academic tradition with which Chrysippus had some early experience. But there is a departure from the method of Arcesilaus in that both sides of a particular question are supported on selective occasions.

And on these occasions, the grounds Chrysippus seems to advocate for supporting both sides of a question is the search for truth:

> **90** ἐν δὲ τῷ Περὶ τῆς τοῦ λόγου χρήσεως εἰπών, ὡς οὐ δεῖ τῇ τοῦ λόγου δυνάμει πρὸς τὰ μὴ ἐπιβάλλοντα χρῆσθαι καθάπερ οὐδ' ὅπλοις, ταῦτ' ἐπείρηκε· "πρὸς μὲν γὰρ τὴν τῶν ἀληθῶν εὕρεσιν δεῖ χρῆσθαι αὐτῇ καὶ πρὸς τὴν τούτων συγγένειαν, εἰς τἀναντία δ' οὔ, πολλῶν ποιούντων τοῦτο", πολλοὺς δῆ λέγων ἴσως τοὺς ἐπέχοντας."[8]

> **90** and yet in his treatise on the Use of Discourse, after having said that the faculty of reason must not be used for inappropriate ends, just as weapons must not either, he has added this statement: "It must be used

[6] *St. Rep.* 10, 1035F.
[7] Cherniss [105] 435-437.
[8] *St. Rep.* 10, 1037B.

> for the discovery of truths and for their organization, not for the opposite ends, though this is what many people do." By "many people" he probably means those who suspend judgement.[9]

'Those who suspend judgement about everything' was a commonly employed characterization of Arcesilaus and the Academy under his direction. The designation of these as 'Sceptics' is anachronistic; Long and Sedley point out that the term only comes into use in later Pyrrhonism.[10] And there are occasions when the Stoics seem to have accepted that suspension of judgment was the appropriate response:

> **91** εἰ δέ, ὅτι ποιεῖ φαντασίας ἀγωγοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν συγκατάθεσιν, καθ' εἱμαρμένην αἱ συγκαταθέσεις γίγνεσθαι λέγονται, πῶς οὐ μάχεται πρὸς ἑαυτὴν πολλάκις ἐν τοῖς μεγίστοις διαφόρους ποιοῦσα φαντασίας καὶ περισπώσας ἐπὶ τἀναντία τὴν διάνοιαν, ὅτε τοὺς προστιθεμένους τῇ ἑτέρᾳ καὶ μὴ ἐπέχοντας ἁμαρτάνειν λέγουσιν, ἂν μὲν ἀδήλοις εἴκωσι προπίπτοντας, ἂν δὲ ψευδέσι διαψευδομένους, ἂν δὲ κοινῶς ἀκαταλήπτοις δοξάζοντας;[11]
>
> **91** but, if because she produces mental images conducive to assent the acts of assent are said to occur in conformity with destiny, how is it that she is not in conflict with herself when often in matters of the greatest moment she produces mental images which differ from one another and drag the mind off in contrary directions? When this happens, the Stoics say that they err who instead of suspending judgment adhere to one of the images, that they are precipitate if the images to which they yield are obscure, deceived if the images are false, and fanciful if the images are commonly inapprehensible.[12]

But there are other passages from Chrysippus, preserved for us by Plutarch, which reveal practical reasons why the methods of his early teachers should not be employed. In one of these passages

[9] Cherniss [105] 447.
[10] [236] I: 446, and II: 192.
[11] *St. Rep.* 47, 1056E-F.
[12] Cherniss [105] 599-601.

we hear that using the technique of arguing both sides of a question interferes with a students ability to learn:

> **92** ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ Περὶ βίων, ταῦτα γράφων· "οὐχ ὡς ἔτυχε δ' οὐδὲ τοὺς ἐναντίους ὑποδεικτέον λόγους οὐδὲ πρὸς τὰ ἐναντία πιθανὰ ἀλλ' εὐλαβουμένους μὴ καὶ περισπασθέντες ὑπ' αὐτῶν τὰς καταλήψεις ἀφῶσιν, οὔτε τῶν λύσεων ἱκανῶς ἂν ἀκοῦσαι δυνάμενοι καταλαμβάνοντές τ' εὐαποσείστως· ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν καταλαμβάνοντες καὶ τὰ αἰσθητὰ καὶ τἆλλα ἐκ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ῥᾳδίως προίενται ταῦτα, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Μεγαρικῶν ἐρωτημάτων περισπώμενοι καὶ ὑπ' ἄλλων πλειόνων καὶ δυναμικωτέρων ἐρωτημάτων."[13]
>
> **92** in the fourth book on Ways of Living, where he writes as follows: "The opposite arguments and the plausibilities on opposite sides are to be exhibited not at random but with care lest the hearers be diverted by them and actually lose hold of their apprehensions because they cannot understand the solutions adequately and have their apprehensions insecurely, since the very people who apprehend in accordance with common experience both sensible objects and the other things that depend on the senses easily give these up when diverted by the dialectical questions of the Megarians or by others more numerous and more cogent."[14]

In another passage we find Chrysippus recommending the avoidance of the technique of opposed argument because of the difficulties it creates for the teacher:

> **93** "τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἐποχὴν ἄγουσι περὶ πάντων ἐπιβάλλει" φησί "τοῦτο ποιεῖν καὶ συνεργόν ἐστι πρὸς ὃ βούλονται· τοῖς δ' ἐπιστήμην ἐνεργαζομένοις καθ' ἣν ὁμολογουμένως βιωσόμεθα, τὰ ἐναντία, στοιχειοῦν καὶ καταστοιχίζειν τοὺς εἰσαγομένους ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι τέλους, ἐφ' ὧν καιρός ἐστι μνησθῆναι καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων λόγων, διαλύοντας αὐτῶν τὸ πιθανὸν καθάπερ καὶ ἐν τοῖς δικαστηρίοις..."[15]
>
> **93** "For," he says, "while that practice is incumbent upon those who in all matters observe suspension of judgement and is conducive to their purpose, it is, on the contrary, incumbent upon those who inculcate knowledge in accordance with which we shall live consistently to instruct their pupils in the principles and to fortify them from beginning to end by destroying

[13] *St. Rep.* 10, 1036D-E.
[14] Cherniss [105] 443.
[15] *St. Rep.* 10, 1036A.

> the plausibility of the opposite arguments, just as is done in the court-room too, when an opportunity arises to mention them also."[16]

It seems as if some movement away from *ad hominem* argument had taken place in the Academy by the time Chrysippus wrote the books from which Plutarch made the excerpts which were included in *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*. For we find him speaking of arguing both for and against particular claims in **89**, **92**, and **93**.

Moreover, while on the one hand Chrysippus seems to endorse the utility of this method in the realm of theoretical questions in the passage **88** from Diogenes Laertius, on the other hand he appears to devalue the method in the quotation in **90**. And Chrysippus clearly limits its use in the more practical business of learning **92** and teaching **93**.

Plutarch made many observations that Chrysippus was contradicting himself. This would not be appropriate criticism of an Academic, but would be telling against one who became known as responsible for the articulation of Stoic orthodoxy.

The following passages containing appearances of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-, and found in Galen's *De Motu Musculorum*, are attributed to Chrysippus in von Arnim's *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* II: 450 under the heading *Physicae Doctrinae Fundamenta:*

> **94** τρίτην δὴ κατάστασιν τῷ τοιούτῳ σώματι προσφέρωμεν, ὅταν ἰσοσθενῶς εἰς τἀναντία τείνηται.[17]

[16] Cherniss [105] 437.
[17] Galen, *De Motu Musculorum* I: 8.

> **94** let us apply a third condition to such a body whenever it is being drawn in opposite directions equally strongly.

This passage is from *De Motu Musculorum*:

> **95** καὶ γὰρ οὗτος, ἐὰν ἰσοσθενὴς ᾖ τῇ τοῦ ῥοῦ σφοδρότητι, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀεὶ διαμένει τόπον, οὐχ ὡς μηδ' ὅλως κινούμενος, ἀλλ' ὅτι πρόσω τοσοῦτον ὑπὸ τῆς οἰκείας διαφέρεται κινήσεως, ὅσον ὑπὸ τῆς ἔξωθεν ὀπίσω φέρεται.[18]
>
> **95** for even this, if it is equally strong in (respect to) the vehemence of its discharge (flow), always remains in the same place, not (so much) as though it were being wholly unmoved, but (rather) because it is being carried forward as much by its own peculiar (natural) motion, as (much as) it is being carried backward (by a movement) from outside (unnatural to) it.

Commenting on **94** and **95** Sambursky notes:

> Of special interest is the use Galen makes of the analogy of *tonike kinesis* in his study of muscular motion. According to him, muscles of an extended arm under strain, being in a state of excitation (which implies movement) and yet at rest as a whole, offer a picture of tensional motion. It is not surprising that Galen, as the foremost authority of his age on muscles, veins and arteries, and their motions and pulsations, and as a firm adherer to the continuum theory of the Stoics should have introduced the concept of a stationary movement of the type of tensile motion into his studies. But Galen went even further than this and developed a theory of equilibrium which makes a distinction between rest and the state of a body on which equal but opposing forces are applied.[19]

In addition to these passages from Galen, there is another passage containing an appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-, found in Clement of Alexandria's Στρωματεῖς. It is attributed to Chrysippus in von Arnim's *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* II: 121, under the

[18] *Mot. Musc.* I: 8.

[19] Samuel Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics*, page 32.

heading *De Cognitione Doctrina:*

> **96** Οὐ μόνοι οἱ ἐφεκτικοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶς δογματικὸς ἔι τισιι ἐπέχειι εἰωθειι ἤτοι παρᾶ γνώμης ἀσθένειαι ἢ παρὰ πραγμάτωι ἀσάφειαι ἢ παρὰ τὴι τῶι λόγων ἰσοσθένειαι.[20]
>
> **96** Not only those practicing suspension of judgment but also every dogmatist has been accustomed to suspend judgment (you know) either before the weakness of the understanding or in front (view) of the obscurity of things, or (again) (confronted with) the equal strength of the (incompatible) accounts.

Here the notion which is the subject of this study is clearly articulated. In addition, it is named with a word from the root ἰσοσθειν-. This doesn't seem to occur before the texts of Sextus. On this basis some anachronism is suspected in the language of Clement's fragment from Chrysippus. Whether this anachronism extends also to the account of the notion of *isostheneia* is difficult to evaluate.

Perhaps these passages provide some measure by which the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* can be glimpsed here at this critical moment in it's development. It may be that the epistemological notion was articulated from a conception based in the natural sciences of the Stoics, much as it has been supposed that the same notion was anticipated in the natural sciences of the Hippocratic physicians.

24. Carneades: Arguing Both For and Against

Carneades, a native of Cyrene, was well known for his oratorical

[20] *Strom.* VIII: V.16,3.

ability, and was head of the Academy when he was sent to Rome in 155 B.C. by the Athenians on a political mission with the Peripatetic Critolaus (late fourth-third century B.C.) and the Stoic Diogenes of Babylonia (c.240-152 B.C.). He resigned his position as head of the Academy in 137 B.C. owing to age and infirmity. Carneades left no written account.[1] His views were transmitted by his pupils, most directly in the 400 lost rolls of Clitomachus (187-110 B.C.), and are preserved for us in the testimonia of other authors. The passages in ancient texts in which his name appears have been collected by Mette.[2]

Cicero reports in *Academica* that Carneades had studied dialectic:

> **97** ab eo enim Stoico dialecticam didicerat, haec autem merces erat dialecticorum.[3]
>
> **97** for Diogenes as a Stoic had taught him dialectic, and that was the fee of professors of that subject.[4]

Cicero speaks of Carneades' way of arguing in *De Oratore*:

> **98** sin aliquis... aut hoc... mode... Carneadi contra omne quod propositum sit disserat... is sit verus, is perfectus, is solus orator.[5]
>
> **98** If there should ever be anyone who... should argue in the manner of Carneades, against every thesis... [he] would be the true, the perfect, indeed the only orator.[6]

Rhetoric was exerting some pressure on dialectic in the schools of

[1] *Vit. Phil.* IV: 65.
[2] Hans Joachim Mette, "Weitere Akademiker heute: von Lakydes bis zu Kleitomachos".
[3] *Ac.* II: 98.
[4] Rackham [20] 593.
[5] *De. Orat.* III: 80.
[6] Long and Sedley [236] I: 441-442.

the time of Carneades.[7]

In *De Natura Deorum* Cicero speaks of Carneades' practice of opposing one argument to another:

> **99** ut haec in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi nullamque rem aperte iudicandi... confirmata a Carneade usque ad nostram viguit aetatem...[8]
>
> **99** Take for example the philosophical method referred to, that of a purely negative dialectic which refrains from pronouncing any positive judgement. This, after being... reinforced by Carneades, has flourished right down to our own period...[9]

Cicero also tells us that Carneades believed that this method of arguing had for its constructive purpose the discovery of truth:

> **100** restat illud quod dicunt veri inveniundi causa contra omnia dici oportere et pro omnibus.[10]
>
> **100** There remains their statement that for the discovery of the truth it is necessary to argue against all things and for all things.[11]

Numenius writing in the second century A.D., and quoted in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica,* says of Carneades with respect to the sceptical notion that:

> **101** κατὰ γὰρ τὴν τοῦ 'πιθανοῦ' ῥοπὴν ἑκάτερον παρασχὼν οὐδέτερον εἶπε βεβαίως καταλαμβάνεσθαι. ἦν γοῦν λιστὴς καὶ γόης σοφώτερος. παραλαβὼν γὰρ ἀληθεῖ μὲν ὅμοιον ψεῦδος, καταληπτικῇ δὲ φαντασίαι (ἀ)κατάληπτον ὅμοιον καὶ ἀγαγὼν εἰς τὰς ἴσας οὐκ εἴασεν οὔτε τὸ ἀληθὲς εἶναι οὔτε τὸ ψεῦδος ἢ οὐ μᾶλλον τὸ ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου ἢ μᾶλλον ἀπὸ τοῦ 'πιθανοῦ'.[12]

[7] George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece;* see especially his comments in the section entitled 'The Quarrel with Philosophy'.

[8] *N.D.* I: 11.

[9] Rackham [22] 13-15.

[10] *Ac.* II: 60.

[11] Rackham [20] 543.

[12] *PE* XIV viii: 738a.

> **101** For after granting each side according to the turn of the scale in probability, he said that neither was comprehended with certainty. He was in fact a more clever freebooter and conjurer than Arcesilaus. For together with something true he would take a falsehood like it, and with a conceptual presentation a concept similar to it, and after weighing them till the scales were even, he would admit the existence neither of the truth nor of the falsehood, or no more of the one than of the other, or more only from probability.[13]

Here there seems to be clear articulation of the sceptical notion, and the claim that Carneades' practice involved its use.

Lactantius (c.240-c.320 A.D.) in his *Divinae Institutiones* preserves an account of Carneades' practice of the opposition of one argument to another:

> **102** is cum legatus ab Atheniensibus Romam missus esset, disputavit de iustitia copiose audiente Galba et Catone Censorio maximis tunc oratoribus, sed idem disputationem suam postridie contraria disputatione subvertit et iustitiam quam pridie laudaverit sustulit, not quidem philosophi gravitate, cuius firma et stabilis debet esse sententia, sed quasi oratorio exercitii genere in utramque partem disserendi... Carneades autem ut Aristotelem refelleret ac Platonem iustitiae patronos, prima illa disputatione collegit ea omnia quae pro iustitia dicebantur, ut posset illam, sicut fecit, evertere... non quia vituperandam esse iustitiam sentiebat, sed ut illos defensores eius ostenderet nihil certi, nihil firmi de iustitia disputare.[14]
>
> **102** When he [Carneades] was sent by Athens as an ambassador to Rome, he discoursed at length on justice in the hearing of Galba and Cato the Censor, the foremost orators of the time. On the next day he overturned his own discourse with a discourse on the opposite side, and subverted justice, which he had praised on the previous day, not with the seriousness of a philosopher, whose opinion should be firm and stable, but in the manner of a rhetorical exercise in which

[13] Gifford [39] III, ii: 794.

[14] Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones* V: 14.3-5.

> argument is given pro and contra... With the object of refuting Aristotle and Plato, supporters of justice, Carneades in his first discourse assembled all the arguments in favour of justice in order that he might overturn them, as he did... not because he thought justice ought to be disparaged, but to show that its defenders had no certain or firm arguments about it.[15]

Brochard mentions the sceptical notion in connection with Carneades' performance on this embassy to Rome:

> **102.1** Il ne paraît pas que Carnéade ait été moins éloquent le premier jour que le second; son ambition ou sa coquetterie était d'exprimer avec une égale force le pour et le contre.[16]

Carneades seems to have made a practice of arguing for both sides of a question. This would have been an important step in the development of the notion. Where Arcesilaus and Socrates argued to defeat their interlocutors claims, in the practice of Carneades we have the beginning of the method of balancing one argument against another. In addition there seems to have been in Carneades' practice more reliance on rhetoric than was the case in what we know of the argument of Arcesilaus.

25. The Pithanon: the Probable or the Persuasive?

There is broad agreement that the persuasive (τὸ πιθανόν) was derived from the Stoics, and used by Carneades as a kind of practical criterion for making choices between alternative actions. Clitomachus details what he has taken to be a part of

[15] Long and Sedley [236] I: 442.
[16] [150] 155.

the position of his predecessor in four volumes that deal with the withholding of assent. Cicero quotes from volume one:

> **103** Duo placet esse Carneadi genera visorum, in uno hanc divisionem, alia visa esse quae percipi possint, alia quae percipi non possint, in altero autem alia visa esse probabilia, alia non probabilia, itaque quae contra sensus contraque perspicuitatem dicantur ea pertinere ad superiorem divisionem, contra posteriorem nihil dici oportere; quare ita placere, tale visum nullum esse ut perceptio consequeretur, ut autem probatio, multa. Etenim contra naturam est probabile nihil esse, et sequitur omnis vitae ea quam tu, Luculle, commemorabas eversio; itaque et sensibus probanda multa sunt, teneatur modo illud, non inesse in iis quicquam tale quale non etiam falsum nihil ab eo differens esse possit. Sic quidquid acciderit specie probabile, si nihil se offeret quod sit probabilitati illi contrarium, utetur eo sapiens, ac sic omnis ratio vitae gubernabitur. Etenim is quoque qui a vobis sapiens inducitur multa sequitur probabilia, non comprehensa neque percepta neque adsensa sed similia veri; quae nisi probet, omnis vita tollatur.[1]
>
> **103** Carneades holds that there are two classifications of presentations, which under one are divided into those that can be perceived and those that cannot, and under the other into those that are probable and those that are not probable; and that accordingly those presentations that are styled by the Academy contrary to the senses and contrary to perspicuity belong to the former division, whereas the latter division must not be impugned; and that consequently his view is that there is no presentation of such a sort as to result in perception, but many that result in a judgement of probability. For it is contrary to nature for nothing to be probable, and entails that entire subversion of life of which you, Lucullus, were speaking; accordingly even many sense-percepts must be deemed probable, if only it be held in mind that no sense-presentation has such a character as a false presentation could not also have without differing from it at all. Thus the wise man will make use of whatever apparently probable presentation he encounters, if nothing presents itself that is contrary to that probability, and his whole plan of life will be charted out in this manner. In fact even the person whom your school brings on the stage as the wise man follows many things probable, that he has

[1] *Ac.* II: 99.

> not grasped nor perceived nor assented to but that possess verisimilitude; and if he were not to approve them, all life would be done away with.[2]

The ancient texts are ambiguous on the issue of whether the criterion had to do also with knowledge claims or was merely practical relating to choice of action. In contradiction of Clitomachus, Metrodorus of Stratonicea (late second century B.C.), a student of Carneades, and Philo of Larissa (160-c.80 B.C.) the last undisputed head of the Academy, believed that it applied to knowledge claims as well as matters of practical value.[3]

There are several instances in Cicero[4] and Sextus[5] where this problem is raised. Cicero[6] seems to support Clitomachus' view of Carneades' intention for the use of the persuasive as a criterion operating in the realm of practical choice alone. Hirzel believed that Carneades' persuasive was a criterion which also functioned in supporting knowledge claims.[7] Brochard as well seems to have agreed with Metrodorus and Philo against Clitomachus and Cicero:

> **103.1** Nous pouvons donc dire, avec réserves il est vrai, que Carnéade avait renoncé à l'ἐποχή; il reconnaît la légitimité de certaines croyances; il est probabiliste. C'est lui qui, le premier, a introduit dans l'Académie le πιθανόν.[8]

Many translators have rendered τὸ πιθανόν as "the probable",

[2] Rackham [20] 593-595.
[3] *Ac.* II: 78.
[4] *Ac.* II: 59, 67, 112, 148.
[5] *P* I: 230; *M* VII: 172-173.
[6] *Ac.* II: 78.
[7] Rudolf Hirzel, *Untersuchungen zu Ciceros philosophischen Schriften,* volume III page 180.
[8] [150] 135.

influenced by Cicero's translation of it as *probabile*. But an English equivalent which seems to be a more faithful reflection of the way Carneades used the term now seems to be "the persuasive". This distinction between the conception of the Carneadean τὸ πιθανόν as the probable and the persuasive has been written about by Couissin, who noted:

> La représentation persuasive ne présente guère de garanties de vérité, mais on attribue à Carnéade une théorie des degrés de probabilité, qu'on pourrait nommer plus exactement l'échelle des critères: 1° la représentation persuasive; 2° la représentation persuasive qui n'est pas tirée en sens contraire (ἀπερίσπαστος); 3° la représentation persuasive qui n'est pas tirée en sens contraire et qui a été l'objet d'un examen détaillé (Sext., *Dogm.*, I, 176-189)...[9]

Commenting more recently on the same problem, Burnyeat has observed that:

> Now this talk of persuasion and persuasiveness has an identifiable historical resonance. In a context (*M* VIII 51) closely parallel to the passage just quoted, and not long after a mention of Aenesidemus (*M* VIII 40), Sextus equates what persuades us (*to peithon hemas*) with the Academic notion of *to pithanon*. *'Pithanon'* is often mistranslated 'probable', but what the word normally means in Greek is 'persuasive' or 'convincing', and Carneades defined a *pithane* impression as one which appears true (*M* VII 169, 174). The important point for our purposes is that in the skeptic historiography, as in most history books since, Carneades was supposed to have made *to pithanon* the Academic criterion for the conduct of life (*M* VII 177 ff.): a fallible criterion, since he allowed that in some instances we would be persuaded of something which was actually false (*M* VII 175).[10]

[9] Pierre Couissin, "Le Stoïcisme de la Nouvelle Académie", page 264.

[10] Myles F. Burnyeat, "Can the Skeptic Live His Skepticism?", pages 28-29.

In a footnote to this passage Burnyeat adds:

> Getting the translation right is a first step towards undoing the myth of Carneades as a proponent of 'probabilism'...[11]

Sextus Empiricus discusses the differences between the New Academy's use of derivatives of πείθω and the Sceptic's use of them. In *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, he speaks of the difference in the level of confidence each group has in their saying of things that they are good or evil:

> **104** ἀγαθὸν γάρ τί φασιν εἶναι οἱ Ἀκαδημαϊκοὶ καὶ κακὸν οὐχ ὡς ἡμεῖς, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τοῦ πεπεῖσθαι ὅτι πιθανόν ἐστι μᾶλλον ὃ λέγουσιν εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ὑπάρχειν ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον, καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ κακοῦ ὁμοίως, ἡμῶν ἀγαθόν τι ἢ κακόν εἶναι λεγόντων οὐδὲν μετὰ τοῦ πιθανὸν εἶναι νομίζειν ὃ φαμεν, ἀλλ' ἀδοξάστως ἑπομένων τῷ βίῳ, ἵνα μὴ ἀνενέργητοι ὦμεν.[12]
>
> **104** For the Academics say that things are good and bad not in the way we do, but with the conviction that it is plausible that what they call good rather than its contrary really is good (and similarly with bad), whereas we do not call anything good or bad with the thought that what we say is plausible--rather, without holding opinions we follow ordinary life in order not to be inactive.[13]

It is worth noting here that Annas and Barnes abandon the use of 'probable' in favour of 'plausible' to translate πιθανόν.

Later Sextus describes the difference between the Sceptics and the members of the New Academy with respect to their belief in the reliability of sense impressions:

> **105** τάς τε φαντασίας ἡμεῖς μὲν ἴσας λέγομεν εἶναι κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ τὰς μὲν πιθανὰς εἶναί φασι τὰς

[11] [152] 29n16.
[12] *P* I: 226.
[13] Annas and Barnes [116] 59-60.

δὲ ἀπιθάνους.[14]

105 Further, we say that appearances are equal in convincingness or lack of convincingness (as far as the argument goes), while they say that some are plausible and others implausible.[15]

Here the use of 'convincingness--lack of convingness' in lieu of 'probabilit--improbablity' to render κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν, and 'plausible--implausible' in lieu of 'probable--improbable' to render τὰς μὲν πιθανὰς... τὰς δὲ ἀπιθάνους makes the Annas and Barnes translation attractive.

Sextus glosses πείθω in a discussion of the difference in the way the Sceptics and the New Academicians use the verb:

106 Εἰ δὲ καὶ πείθεσθαί τισιν οἵ τε ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως λέγουσι, πρόδηλος καὶ ἡ κατὰ τοῦτο διαφορὰ τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν. τὸ γὰρ πείθεσθαι λέγεται διαφόρως, τό τε μὴ ἀντιτείνειν ἀλλ' ἁπλῶς ἕπεσθαι ἄνευ σφοδρᾶς προσκλίσεως καὶ προσπαθείας, ὡς ὁ παῖς λέγεται πείθεσθαι τῷ παιδαγωγῷ· ἅπαξ δὲ τὸ μετὰ αἱρέσεως καὶ οἱονεὶ συμπαθείας κατὰ τὸ σφόδρα βούλεσθαι συγκατατίθεσθαί τινι, ὡς ὁ ἀσωτος πείθεται τῷ δαπανητικῶς βιοῦν ἀξιοῦντι. διόπερ ἐπειδὴ οἱ μὲν περὶ Καφνεάδην καὶ Κλειτόμαχον μετὰ προσκλίσεως σφοδρᾶς πείθεσθαί τε καὶ πιθανὸν εἶναί τι φασίν, ἡμεῖς δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἁπλῶς εἴκειν ἄνευ προσπαθείας, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο ἂν αὐτῶν διαφέροιμεν.[16]

106 Even if both Academics and Sceptics say that they go along with certain things, the difference even here between the two philosophies is clear. For 'go along with' is used in different senses. It means not resisting but simply following without strong inclination or adherence (as a boy is said to go along with his chaperon); and it sometimes means assenting to something by choice and, as it were, sympathy (as a dissolute man goes along with someone who urges extravagant living). Hence, since Carneades and Clitomachus say that they go along with things and that some things are plausible in the sense of having a strong wish with a strong inclination, whereas we say so in the sense of simply yielding without adherence, in

[14] *P* I: 227.

[15] Annas and Barnes [116] 60.

[16] *P* I: 229-230.

this respect too we differ from them.[17]

To their translation of this passage Annas and Barnes append the following gloss on 'go along with':

> **106.1** 'Go along with' translates the verb πείθεσθαι: πείθεσθαι + dative means either (i) 'obey' or (ii) 'believe'. According to Sextus, the Academics go along with things in sense (ii), whereas the Sceptics only go along with things in sense (i). Sextus here alludes to the fact that the Sceptic will 'yield' or 'assent' to items forced upon us...[18]

Sextus speaking of the members of the third Academy, discusses their position on φαντασία. Here the derivatives of the verb πείθω are used in giving an account of differences in their level of confidence.

> **107** ἡ τοίνυν φαντασία τινὸς φαντασία ἐστίν, οἷον τοῦ τε ἀφ' οὗ γίνεται καὶ τοῦ ἐν ᾧ γίνεται, καὶ ἀφ' οὗ μὲν γίνεται ὡς τοῦ ἐκτὸς ὑποκειμένου αἰσθητοῦ, τοῦ ἐν ᾧ δὲ γίνεται καθάπερ ἀνθρώπου. τοιαύτη δὲ οὖσα δύο ἂν ἔχοι σχέσεις, μίαν μὲν ὡς πρὸς τὸ φανταστόν, δευτέραν δὲ ὡς πρὸς τὸν φαντασιούμενον. κατὰ μὲν οὖν τὴν πρὸς τὸ φανταστὸν σχέσιν ἢ ἀληθὴς γίνεται ἢ ψευδής, καὶ ἀληθὴς μὲν ὅταν σύμφωνος ᾖ τῷ φανταστῷ, ψευδὴς δὲ ὅταν διάφωνος. κατὰ δὲ τὴν πρὸς τὸν φαντασιούμενον σχέσιν ἡ μέν ἐστι φαινομένη ἀληθὴς ἡ δὲ οὐ φαινομένη ἀληθής, ὧν ἡ μὲν φαινομένη ἀληθὴς ἔμφασις καλεῖται παρὰ τοῖς Ἀκαδημαικοῖς καὶ πιθανότης καὶ πιθανὴ φαντασία. ἡ δ' οὐ φαινομένη ἀληθὴς ἀπέμφασίς τε προσαγορεύεται καὶ ἀπειθὴς καὶ ἀπίθανος φαντασία· οὔτε γὰρ τὸ αὐτόθεν φαινόμενον ψευδὲς οὔτε τὸ ἀληθὲς μέν, μὴ φαινόμενον δὲ ἡμῖν πείθειν ἡμᾶς πέφυκεν.[19]

> **107** The presentation, then, is a presentation of something--of that, for instance, from which it comes and of that in which it occurs; that from which it comes being, say, the externally existent sensible object, and that in which it occurs, say, a man. And, such being its nature, it will have two aspects, one in its relation to the object presented, the second in its relation to the subject experiencing the presentation. Now in regard to its aspect in relation to the object presented it is either true or false--true when it is in

[17] Annas and Barnes [116] 60-61.

[18] [116] 61n253.

[19] *M* VII: 167-170.

> accord with the object presented, but false when it is not in accord. But in regard to its aspect in relation to the subject experiencing the presentation, the one kind of presentation is apparently true, the other apparently false; and of these the apparently true is termed by the Academics "emphasis" and probability and probable presentation, while the not apparently true is denominated "ap-emphasis" and unconvincing and improbable presentation; for neither that which itself appears false, nor that which though true does not appear so to us, is naturally convincing to us.[20]

The appearance of the persuasive as a kind of epistemological criterion is a significant element in the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*. With the persuasive, as it seems to have been used by Carneades, there is the first occasion of using a rhetorical element in an epistemological role. Eusebius writes of this practice:

> **108** λόγων μὲν οὖν ἀγωγῇ ἐχρήσατο ᾗ καὶ ὁ Ἀρκεσίλαος· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐπετήδευε τὴν εἰς ἑκάτερα ἐπιχείρησιν καὶ πάντα ἀνεσκεύαζε τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων λεγόμενα, μόνωι δ' ἐν τῶι περὶ τῆς ἐποχῆς λόγωι πρὸς αὐτὸν διέστη φὰς ἀδύνατον εἶναι ἄνθρωπον ὄντα περὶ ἁπάντων ἐπέχειν, διαφορὰν δὲ εἶναι ἀδήλου καὶ ἀκαταλήπτου καὶ πάντα μὲν εἶναι ἀκατάληπτα, οὐ πάντα δὲ ἄδηλα.[21]
>
> **108** In argument he employed the same method as Arcesilaus, for, like him, he too practised the mode of attacking both sides, and used to upset all the arguments used by the others: but in the principle of 'suspension of judgement' alone he differed from him, saying that it was impossible for a mortal man to suspend judgement upon all matters, and there was a difference between 'uncertain' and 'incomprehensible,' and though all things were incomprehensible, not all were uncertain.[22]

It represents a move away from the kinds of epistemological criteria which had been previously generated within the

[20] Bury [117] 91-93.
[21] *PE* XIV vii: 736d-737a.
[22] Gifford [39] III, ii: 793.

philosophical community, which were directed towards serving as a guarantee of the truth of claims. On this subject Couissin has noted:

> Le πιθανόν est sa fin en ce sens: il se propose de convaincre ses auditeurs, tantôt d'une thèse, tantôt de la thèse contraire, non pour prouver l'une ou l'autre de ces thèses, mais pour la faire approuver. Carnéade est un avocat qui soutient alternativement le pour et le contre, par une méthode d'antilogie qui aboutit à l'équilibre des arguments: cet équilibre ou isosthénie, c'est l'égale force persuasive des arguments. Tout est incompréhensible, mais tout, en un sens, est persuasif.[23]

The issue of how the Hellenistic Academy of Carneades conceived of the criterion proposed is also taken up by Groarke:

> The notion that *isostheneia* means "equal probability" confuses a vague notion of plausibility with a modern mathematical notion that has a precision and objectivity foreign to ancient thought... For the most part, the sceptics and their adversaries judge arguments by their rhetorical force, not by some objective measure of probability.[24]

After Carneades, it became possible for investigators to ask of a particular claim in regard to its value, "how much support does this claim have?" rather than "is the claim true or not?"

26. The Empirical Physicians and the Individual

One of the contributions toward the development of Hellenistic medicine provided under the direction of the scholars in the Museum was the collection of the texts from the Classical period

[23] [159] 267.
[24] [192] 105n22.

having to do with this subject. They seem to have been edited and unified in Alexandria under the authority of Hippocrates, but it is unlikely that any of the texts we have can be reliably attributed to the historical figure. The body of work collected in the sister libraries attracted physicians from the two main Greek schools of medicine on the island of Cos and the peninsula of Cnidos, both locations which were part of territory included in the Ptolemaic monarchy.

Towards the middle of the third century Alexandrian medicine began to explore areas of the subject which had been neglected by the physicians of the Classical period. The dissection of cadavers was permitted, and provided for an expansion of the available knowledge of anatomy. Some vivisection seems to have been carried out on condemned prisoners provided by the Ptolemys. The focus of the expanding body of medical knowledge was on what could be sensed, rather than on what might be deduced from a group of first principles as had been the case in the Classical period of Greek medicine represented by the Hippocratic texts. The empirical school of medicine began to recognise itself largely as a result of the work of Herophilus (first half of the third century B.C.).

In Alexandria the advance of medical practice was taking place under the influence of the Hellenistic effort to provide a philosophical support for the data of sense. This effort was accompanied by the physician's growing concern to deal with the individual patient's particular complaints, and their aversion to

submerging these complaints under the mask of a theoretical account. Edelstein's comment with respect to this medical focus on the individual as the object to be understood is relevant:

> If the Greeks have a dislike for the individual and a preference for the typical (Burckhardt, *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* III, 428-33), the counter-balance is provided by medicine, not by geography, history, or another science. It has been contended that philosophy took over the antithesis between experience and knowledge, between art and accident, from medicine.[1]

The outcome of this unwillingness to disregard the detail of the individual for empirical medicine was the acquisition of the reputation for scepticism with respect to the practice of inferring from past experience to future expectation.

27. Aenesidemus and the Ten Modes

It seems that Aenesidemus was a member of the Academy at the end of the time when it was sceptical, but according to Photius (ninth century A.D.) became unhappy as it moved towards eclecticism under the direction of Antiochus.[1] It also seems that Aenesidemus left Athens and lived the latter part of his life in Alexandria.[2] The following are cited as the titles of his works: Πυρρώνειοι λόγοι,[3]

[1] Ludwig Edelstein, "Empiricism and Scepticism in the Teaching of the Greek Empiricist School", page 201n18.
[1] Photius, *Bibliotheca* cod. 212.
[2] Aristocles in Eusebius *PE* XIV xviii: 763d.
[3] *Vit. phil.* IX: 106.

Ὑποτύπωσις εἰς τὰ Πυρρώνεια,[4] Κατὰ σοφίας,[5] Περὶ ζητήσεως,[6] and Πρώτη εἰσαγωγή, all of which are lost.

Sextus credits Aenesidemus with the ten modes.[7] There are three sources for the modes: Diogenes Laertius,[8] Philo Judaeus,[9] and Sextus Empiricus.[10] The account written by Philo is the earliest.[11] Sextus produced the most complete treatment. Diogenes Laertius' account of the modes is the shortest. He reports some passages from Aenesidemus' lost writing:

> **109** ἔστιν οὖν ὁ Πυρρώνειος λόγος μνήμη τις τῶν φαινομένων ἢ τῶν ὁπωσοῦν νοουμένων, καθ' ἣν πάντα πᾶσι συμβάλλεται καὶ συγκρινόμενα πολλὴν ἀνομαλίαν καὶ ταραχὴν ἔχοντα εὑρίσκεται, καθά φησιν Αἰνεσίδημος ἐν τῇ εἰς τὰ Πυρρώνεια ὑποτυπώσει.[12]
>
> **109** Pyrrhonist discourse is a kind of recollection of appearances, or of ideas of any kind, on the basis of which they are all brought into confrontation with each other and, when compared, are found to present much disparity and confusion. This is what Aenesidemus says in his *Outline introduction to Pyrrhonism*.[13]

[4] *Vit. phil.* IX: 78.
[5] *Vit. phil.* IX: 106.
[6] *Vit. phil.* IX: 106.
[7] *M* VII: 345.
[8] *Vit. phil.* IX: 79-88.
[9] Philo Judaeus, *De Inebriate* 169-202.
[10] *P* I: 36-163.
[11] This claim has recently been called into question by Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes in [139] 27 and 199. A commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* probably incorrectly ascribed to Herennius (third century A.D.) is now thought to be a medieval compilation by Andreas Darmarios. This text contains an account of the modes very close in wording to the account preserved in Philo's book. It was thought that the version attributed to Herennius was a copy of *De Inebriate*. Scholars now argue that Philo's text is a copy of that version which the compiler has preserved more faithfully.
[12] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 78.
[13] Long and Sedley [236] I: 468.

Aenesidemus doesn't leave the matter there, but goes on to describe what is the outcome of this confrontation of appearances or ideas:

> **110** πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἐν ταῖς σκέψεσιν ἀντιθέσεις προαποδεικνύντες καθ' οὓς τρόπους πείθει τὰ πράγματα, κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς αἱροῦσι τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν πίστιν· πείθειν γὰρ τά τε κατ' αἴσθησιν συμφώνως ἔχοντα καὶ τὰ μηδέποτε ἢ σπανίως γοῦν μεταπίπτοντα τά τε συνήθη καὶ τὰ νόμοις διεσταλμένα καὶ τὰ τέρποντα καὶ τὰ θαυμαζόμενα. ἐδείκνυσαν οὖν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων τοῖς πείθουσιν ἴσας τὰς πιθανότητας.[14]
>
> **110** As to the contradictions in their doubts, they would first show the ways in which things gain credence, and then by the same methods they would destroy belief in them; for they say those things gain credence which either the senses are agreed upon or which never or at least rarely change, as well as things which become habitual or are determined by law and those which please or excite wonder. They showed, then, on the basis of that which is contrary to what induces belief, that the probabilities on both sides are equal.[15]

There is a passage in the eight modes credited to Aenesidemus by Sextus in which the former speaks of equal credibility:

> **111** ἕκτον καθ' ὃν πολλάκις τὰ μὲν φωρατὰ ταῖς ἰδίαις ὑποθέσεσι παραλαμβάνουσιν, τὰ δὲ ἀντιπίπτοντα καὶ τὴν ἴσην ἔχοντα πιθανότητα παραπέμπουσιν...[16]
>
> **111** According to the sixth, they often adopt what is concordant with their own hypotheses but reject what runs counter to them, even when this has equal plausibility.[17]

Long has argued that it is here, at the end of the Hellenistic period, that the development of *isostheneia* as the basis of the method of Pyrrhonism, becomes fully articulate:

> Only with Aenesidemus does Pyrrhonism acquire, as its instrument for suspending judgement, the dialectical

[14] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 78-79.
[15] Hicks [34] II: 491.
[16] *P* I: 183.
[17] Annas and Barnes [116] 45.

> method attributed by Diogenes to Arcesilaus. I conclude, then, that Arcesilaus' originality in this respect is unlikely to have been singled out until there were other philosophers, neo-Pyrrhonists, who juxtaposed opposing arguments as a means of producing ἰσοσθένεια and ἐποχή.[18]

Aenesidemus provided a record of disagreements some of which had been noted earlier in Plato and Aristotle,[19] and some of which were the product of the confrontations between Stoics and Academics in the Hellenistic period. The impact of Aenesidemus' writing was to provide a catalogue of topics for which argument on both sides had been persuasively supported.

28. Zeuxis: a Book on Two-Sided Arguments

Zeuxis (first century B.C.) knew Aenesidemus, and is mentioned only once in ancient texts:

> **112** ἀλλὰ καὶ Ζεῦξις ὁ Αἰνεσιδήμου γνώριμος ἐν τῷ Περὶ διττῶν λόγων... τιθέασι τὰ φαινόμενα μόνα.[1]

> **112** Zeuxis, the friend of Aenesidemus, in his work *On Two-sided Arguments*... hold to phenomena alone.[2]

Brochard considers Hass' and Zeller's arguments to identify Zeuxis the sceptic with Zeuxis of Laodicea inconclusive.[3] In his comments on this passage concerning Zeuxis, Brochard tells us:

[18] [234] 445.

[19] See **49** and the passage from Long above on page 94 for Plato's role in the transmission of these arguments. For some of the Aristotelian treatment of the materials which would later find their way into Aenesidemus' writing see **56** and **57**.

[1] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 106.

[2] Hicks [34] II: 517.

[3] [150] 237-239.

> **112.1** Ce titre donne à penser que comme bien d'autres sceptiques, il exposait le pour et le contre sur divers sujets, de manière à conclure à l'*isosthénie*, c'est-à-dire à l'égale valeur des thèses contradictoires, et par suite à l'impossibilité de rien affirmer.[4]

If nothing more can be determined, at the very least **112** seems to add some support to the claim that others were interested in the problem of disagreement in the middle of the first century B.C.

29. Cicero: Early Source for Hellenistic Academy

Cicero received a broad education. He studied under Philo in Rome and Athens, befriended the Epicureans Phaedrus (c.140-c.70 B.C.) and Zeno of Sidon (c.150-c.70 B.C.), and heard the Peripatetic Staseas of Naples (late second-early first century B.C). Later (79-77) he spent some time with the Stoic Posidonius (c.135-c.50 B.C.) in Rhodes, and with Antiochus in the Academy. Cicero's philosophical works were completed between February 45 and November 44. In this period he produced *Tusculan Disputations*, *De Natura Deorum*, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, and *Academica*.

Cicero was also responsible for producing some of the Latin philosophical terminology. See his comment on rendering ἐποχή:

> **113** "inhibere" illud tuum, quod valde mihi adriserat, vehementer displicet. Est enim verbum totum nauticum. Quamquam id quidem sciebam, sed arbitrabar sustineri remos, cum inhibere essent remiges iussi. Id non esse eius modi didici heri, cum ad villam nostram navis appelleretur. Non enim sustinent, sed alio modo remigant. Id ab ἐποχῇ remotissumum est. Quare facies,

[4] [150] 236.

> ut ita sit in libro, quem ad modum fuit. Dices hoc idem Varroni, si forte mutavit. Nec est melius quicquam quam ut Lucilius: "Sustineas currum ut bonus saepe agitator equosque." Semperque Carneades προβολὴν pugilis et retentionem aurigae similem facit ἐποχῆ. Inhibitio autem remigum motum habet, et vehementiorem quidem, remigationis navem convertentis ad puppim.[1]

> **113** the word *inhibere* suggested by you, which at first took my fancy very much, I strongly disapprove of now. For it is exclusively a nautical word. That, however, I knew before; but I thought rowers rested on their oars, when told to *inhibere*. Yesterday, when a ship put in by my house, I learned that was not so. They don't rest on their oars, they back water. That is very different to the Greek ἐποχή. So change the word back to what it was in the book; and tell Varro to do the same, if he has altered it. One can't improve on Lucilius: "Pull up chariot and horses as a good driver oft does." And Carneades always compares the philosopher's suspension of judgment (ἐποχή) to the guard of a boxer and the pulling up of a charioteer. But the *inhibitio* of rowers implies motion, and indeed the rather violent motion of rowing to back the boat.[2]

In a comment on the appearance of ἐποχῆ at *Ac.* II: 59 in his (1885) edition of the text of *Academica*, Reid notes:

> **113.1** "ἐποχῆ: 'suspension of judgment'. The further explanation of this phrase will be found in n. on § 104. Cic. uses ἐπέχειν, ἐποχὴ familiarly in Att. 6, 6, 3; ib. 6, 9, 3; ib. 15, 21, 2. The verb is represented by *sustinere se ab omni adsensu* in § 48; *retinere adsensum* in § 57; by *ab utraque parte adsensionem sustinere* in I, 45 (cf. 2, 68); by *adsensionem cohibere* in N.D. I, 1, and *adsensus cohibere,* below § 68; *iudicium sustinere* in Sen. ep. 108, 21."[3]

In a comment on the appearance of *ut agitator* at *Ac.* II: 59 Reid notes:

> **113.2** in the amusing letter to Atticus 13, 21 Cic. discusses renderings of ἐπέχειν and quotes a line of Lucilius 'sustineas currum ut bonus saepe agitator equosque', adding 'semperque Carneades προβολὴν pugilis

[1] Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* XIII: 21.
[2] E.O. Winstedt, *Letters to Atticus,* volume III, pages 145-147.
[3] [20] 247n15.

> et retentionem aurigae similem facit ἐποχῆ'. The line of Lucilius probably referred directly to Carneades. Aug. contr. Ac. 2, 12 renders ἐποχή by *refrenatio* et *quasi suspensio assensionis*. Cf. § 59 n.[4]

Cicero supported a view of philosophy and rhetoric as being interdependent rather than independent. He thought that the nature of this relationship implied some criticism of Socrates, who was held partly responsible for their early separation.[5] Cicero does not consider this conviction incompatible with Platonism; he pointed to the dialogues as evidence of Plato's competence in persuasive discourse.[6] Rhetoricians had often referred to Plato's call for a rhetoric which might serve scientific interests.[7] Arcesilaus and Carneades enhanced the role of rhetoric in the Academy when their argument seemed to conceive of philosophic inquiry in terms of the model of a confrontation of opposed opinions.

Cicero is the oldest source for our information about Arcesilaus and Carneades. In *Academica* we find what seems to be the first recorded appearance of the notion in his comments on Arcesilaus at 83. His sources for Carneades seem to have been material written by Clitomachus, perhaps made available to him by Philo and Antiochus. He doesn't seem to have known Aenesidemus. He spoke of Pyrrhonism as a moral philosophy which had long since ceased to attract supporters.

[4] [20] 289n18.
[5] *De Or.* III: 61.
[6] *De Or.* I: 47.
[7] *Phdr.* 271c ff.

30. Articulations of the Notion in Hellenistic Period

Some of the elements of the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* in the Hellenistic period emerge in the change in the way arguments were opposed to one another. The textual resources indicate that Pyrrho consistently followed a policy of avoiding argument. Epicurus found all impressions to have equal reliability, and this may have been part of the source of later disputes concerning how to decide between the acts of assent on which they were based. Arcesilaus made a practice of arguing against his opponents claims without defending claims of his own. Chrysippus may have pursued the difficulty which arose concerning equally reliable accounts from the Epicurean claim with respect to sensation. A passage from Clement of Alexandria attributes knowledge of the notion of *isostheneia* to Chrysippus. Carneades seems to have been willing to support claims which were opposed to one another. This indicates that some *articulation* of the notion was occurring: the Sceptics were those who thought that they had always been able to find an incompatible argument of equal strength to oppose to any argument.

Other significant elements in the development of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* in the Hellenistic period include some movement towards the acceptance of an enhanced role for persuasion in supporting claims. This may have occurred during the later

third and early part of the second centuries, for Carneades uses the persuasive as a kind of criterion, possibly for evaluating knowledge claims as well as alternative actions. Later in the period rhetoric established a place for itself in the curricula of the philosophical schools.

The Hellenistic Academics were not called Sceptics. The term does not seem to have entered the philosophical lexicon before the first century A.D.[1] More than likely the Academics were called those who suspend judgment about everything.[2] The policy of suspension of judgment appears to have been supported by the recognition that it was not possible to choose between incompatible accounts of equal strength in the Academy and from the earlier part of the third century. The conception of what contributed to the strength of an account made some accomodation for rhetoric at the expense of dialectic later in the third and throughout the second century. By the beginning of the first century the confidence to pursue dialectical solutions to philosophical problems had been eroded, and the vitality of the Athenian philosophical schools collapsed into a kind of eclecticism.

[1] See Tarrant's comments on the emergence of the term in [295] 22-33.

[2] [236] I: 446.

Imperial Period after 31 B.C.

Τοῖς ζητοῦσί τι πρᾶγμα ἢ εὕρεσιν ἐπακολουθεῖν εἰκὸς ἢ ἄρνησιν εὑρέσεως καὶ ἀκαταληψίας ὁμολογίαν ἢ ἐπιμονὴν ζητήσεως. διόπερ ἴσως καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν ζητουμένων οἱ μὲν εὑρηκέναι τὸ ἀληθὲς ἔφασαν, οἱ δ' ἀπεφήναντο μὴ δυνατὸν εἶναι τοῦτο καταληφθῆναι, οἱ δὲ ἔτι ζητοῦσιν. καὶ εὑρηκέναι μὲν δοκοῦσιν οἱ ἰδίως καλούμενοι δογματικοί, οἷον οἱ περὶ Ἀριστοτέλην καὶ Ἐπίκουρον καὶ τοὺς στωικοὺς καὶ ἄλλοι τινές, ὡς δὲ περὶ ἀκαταλήπτων ἀπεφήναντο οἱ περὶ Κλειτόμαχον καὶ Καρνεάδην καὶ ἄλλοι Ἀκαδημαϊκοί, ζητοῦσι δὲ οἱ σκεπτικοί. (Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* I: 1-4)

When people are investigating any subject, the likely result is either a discovery, or a denial of discovery and a confession of inapprehensibility, or else a continuation of the investigation. This, no doubt, is why in the case of philosophical investigations, too, some have said that they have discovered the truth, some have asserted that it cannot be apprehended, and others are still investigating. Those who are called Dogmatists in the proper sense of the word think that they have discovered the truth--for example, the schools of Aristotle and Epicurus and the Stoics, and some others. The schools of Clitomachus and Carneades, and other Academics, have asserted that things cannot be apprehended. And the Sceptics are still investigating. (Annas and Barnes)

31. Texts from the Imperial Period

Texts on the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* from the Imperial period are scattered in many unlikely places, often buried in a corner of an author's work which was directed toward other issues. They surface unexpectedly here and there as manifestations of an evolving Pyrrhonism, the features of whose development are for the most part hidden from our view. Brochard speaks of this difficulty:

> Rien de plus obscur que l'histoire du scepticisme à partir du moment où la nouvelle Académie ayant cessé d'exister, on vit renaître une école qui prit le nom de pyrrhonienne. C'est à peine si, pour une période d'environ deux cents ans, nous pouvons savoir quelles furent les doctrines des plus illustres sceptiques. Le scepticisme est comme un fleuve qui s'enfonce sous la terre pour ne revenir à la lumière que fort loin de l'endroit où il a disparu.[1]

One of the ways of dealing with this problem is to track instances in which words from the root ἰσοσθεν- are used to name the sceptical notion. This has recently been made possible by means of a variety of machine-readable texts in which are transcribed the literary resources from the periods under study here.

Among these, and most important for the purposes of identifying the locations of passages having to do with the *appearances* of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* in the Imperial period, is the

[1] [150] 227.

Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, prepared under the direction of Theodore F. Brunner and Luci Berkowitz at the University of California Irvine. Their task of evaluating texts, preparing and pre-editing of non-standard texts, hardware and software development, and data entry has proceeded over the last twenty-five years. In March 1975 the *TLG Newsletter* reported that the data bank contained more than one million words. Twenty million words had been transcribed by 1977, and fifty-seven million words in 1985. It is only since 1992 that this project of transcribing the Greek texts has been completed. Today virtually all of the sixty-five million words of the surviving Greek literary resource is available for electronic searching.

The machine-readable textual resource of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* has enabled some of the path of the "fleuve qui s'enfonce sous la terre" as it relates to the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* to be followed in the Imperial period. Here and there an *appearance* of the notion is identified by means of electronic searching of texts. This searching method has most likely made it possible to uncover some materials which may have been previously inaccessible. A few numbers puts this claim into perspective. The texts of Aristotle and Plato combined amount to a word count of 1706349 words. Galen's texts are represented in 2608974 words; the Greek medical corpus alone is in excess of 411 authors with 5400000 words.

In addition to the resource of Greek texts in the *Thesaurus*

Linguae Graecae, this study has used the *Resource of Latin Texts, Papyri and Inscriptions* prepared by the Packard Humanities Institute which contains surviving literary materials through the second century A.D. The research on the development of the notion of *isostheneia* has also made use of the *CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts* made available by the Université Catholique de Louvain, which contains virtually the entirety of the texts published in the *Corpus Christianorum*.

The use of these electronic resources and software reading techniques for identifying passages which seem to have to do with the development of the notion of *isostheneia*, as it *appears* in the texts of the Imperial period, has been confined to searching only for occurrences of words from the roots ισοσθεν- and *aequipollen-*. Searching for other literary expressions which might identify the notion of *isostheneia* most likely would have produced additional information with which to chart the course of the underground river of Pyrrhonism in the Imperial period. The product of the searches which at the moment seems to have no direct relationship with the *development of the notion* are included in *Appendix A* and *Appendix B*.

32. The Methodists: Constriction and Dilation

Asclepiades (later first century B.C.) practised medicine in Rome. He seems to have accepted the atomic theory of Epicureanism

rejecting all explanation in terms of natural ends, and he emphasized the importance of phenomenal appearances consistent with what would later be identified as Aenesidemian Pyrrhonism. He appears to have avoided the use of the theory of humours in physiology, and to have accounted for vitality in terms of the unhindered movement of the bodily corpuscles. His treatments consisted in diet rather than in pharmacological substances. Themison of Laodicea (later first century B.C., early first century A.D.), a student of Asclepiades, is usually credited with having been the founder of the Roman school of methodical medicine.

In general the Methodists seem to have been uncomfortable with the theoretical and therapeutical practice of both the Rationalists and Empiricists. They appear to have believed that all disease was the result of what they called constriction or dilation, and that the appropriate response to make was to counter the one with the other. Apparently the recognition of the imbalance of the one or the other was made possible with some limited training. The states themselves are reasonably accomodated to direct observation.

The Methodists can be seen as moving toward the articulation of a notion of homeostasis, according to which a kind of physiological balance is maintained in living organisms. In addition it seems that the uniqueness of the individual was a significant element in their approach to both the construction of an explanatory account

of a particular patient's problem and the therapeutic intervention which they proposed.

This avoidance of theoretical discussion about what they could not observe directly, and their insistence on treatment that did not appear to aggravate the patient's condition, seems to have been more amenable to later Pyrrhonists than the theory and practice of either the Empirical or Dogmatic physicians.[1] With respect to this feature of Methodism Edelstein notes:

> In the Dogmatist schools of medicine, Dogmatic philosophy came to fruition, and, in the Empiricist school, academic skepticism... Methodism exploited Aenesidemean Skepticism, thereby absorbing the last Hellenic philosophy into medicine.[2]

Methodical medicine for the most part remained a Roman school of the Imperial period, as empirical medicine had been based in Alexandria and developed during the Hellenistic period, and as Hippocratic medicine had arisen in the Greece of the Classical period.

33. Philo Judaeus: the Metaphor of the Balance

This author has been thought to be the earliest source for an account of the ten modes of Aenesidemus.[1] In addition there is a passage in his *De Specialibus Legibus* which seems to indicate that

[1] *P* I: 236.
[2] Ludwig Edelstein, "The Methodists", page 187.
[1] See above page 162n11.

Philo had knowledge of the sceptical notion *isostheneia*.

> **114** τί γὰρ μᾶλλον τῷ μάρτυρι καθ' ἑτέρου διεξιόντι ἢ τῷ καταγουμένῳ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ λέγοντι συναινετέον; ἄριστον δ' ὡς ἔοικεν ἐπέχειν, ἔνθα μηδὲν ἐνδεῖ μηδὲ ὑπερβάλλει.[2]
>
> **114** For why should the statement of a witness made in accusation of another be accepted in preference to the words of the accused spoken in his own defense? Where there is neither deficiency nor excess it is clearly best to suspend judgement.[3]

The image of the balancing of the scales finds its way into much of Philo's writing about the problems of adjudicating between incompatible and equally attractive alternatives. Mansfeld has commented on this feature of Philo's writing:

> What is at any rate certain is that the metaphor of the balance in relation to human ratiocinative processes is not his own idea. We may assume he borrowed it from Stoicizing sources, or from the common philosophical jargon of his time.[4]

It has been argued that the metaphor of the balance is derived from Stoic sources. Colson's translation of **114** contains a note bearing on the issue:

> **114.1** Heinemann remarks on these words that both the expression and the thought are derived from the Stoics, who, while combatting the sceptical doctrine that certain knowledge was unattainable and ἐποχή was universally necessary (*cf.* the sceptical sections in *De Ebr.* 171-205), allowed that there were cases where for want of evidence ἐποχή was necessary.[5]

The arguments which support this view cite passages from Sextus (*M*

[2] Philo Judaeus, *De Specialibus Legibus* IV: 54.
[3] F.H. Colson, *The Special Laws*, page 41.
[4] Jaap Mansfeld, "Philosophy in the service of Scripture: *Philo's exegetical strategies*", page 101.
[5] [85] 430.

VII: 37 and 442) in which he speaks of the scales when dealing with Stoic theory of knowledge. A passage in Plutarch's *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis* 23 (1045C) also locates the metaphor of the balance in the thought of Chrysippus.

34. Celsus and the History of Empirical Medicine

Of the life of Celsus (later first century B.C., early first century A.D.) practically nothing is known. Whether he was a practicing physician or not is a disputed question--Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.) puts Celsus among the *auctores* rather than among the *medici*. Celsus wrote an encyclopaedia discussing agriculture, military science, medicine, rhetoric, and perhaps philosophy and law. Most of the non-medical work has not survived, but the medical books are preserved.

Sources of Celsus' *De medicina* are the Hippocratic *Corpus*, the lost works of Asclepiades, Heracleides (early second century B.C.), Erasistratus (third century B.C.), and Meges of Sidon (later first century B.C.). The *prooemium* to the *De medicina* is a summary of the history of medicine, dealing with dogmatic, empiric and to a limited extent with methodic schools, and maintaining a balance between dogmatism and empiricism.

In a passage it is possible to identify the philosophical contribution of the Hellenistic Academics in respect of the

practice of argument *in utramque partem*. The mention of rhetorical skill with it should be noted:

> **115** Et in omnibus eiusmodi cogitationibus utramque partem disseri posse; itaque ingenium et facundiam uincere, morbos autem non eloquentia sed remediis curari.[1]
>
> **115** In all theorising over a subject it is possible to argue on either side, and so cleverness and fluency may get the best of it. However it is not by eloquence, but by remedies, that diseases are treated.[2]

The prominence given to the role of disagreement, emphasized throughout Academic philosophy in the Hellenistic period, and summarized by Aenesidemus, is indicated in this passage:

> **116** Non posse vero conprehendi patere ex eorum, qui de his disputarunt, discordia, cum de ista re neque inter sapientiae professores, neque inter ipsos medicos conveniat.[3]
>
> **116** That nature cannot be comprehended is in fact patent, they say, from the disagreement among those who discuss such matters; for on this question there is no agreement, either among professors of philosophy or among actual medical practitioners.[4]

This final passage is taken to be a reflection of the equal persuasiveness of opposed accounts maintained to exist everywhere by the Sceptics.

> **117** Cum haec per multa volumina perque magnas contentionis [disputationes] a medicis saepe tractata sint atque tractentur, subiciendum est, quae proxima vero videri possint. Ea neque addicta alterutri opinioni sunt, neque ab utraque nimium abhorrentia, sed media quodammodo inter diversas sententias; quod in plurimis contentionibus deprehendere licet sine

[1] Celsus, *De Medicina*, Prooemium 39.
[2] W.G. Spencer, *Celsus: De Medicina*, volume I, page 21.
[3] *De Med.* Prooemium 28.
[4] Spencer [17] I: 17.

ambitione verum scrutantibus: ut in hac ipsa re.[5]

> 117 Since all these questions have been discussed often by practitioners, in many volumes and in large and contentious disputations, and the discussion continues, it remains to add such views as may seem nearest to the truth. These are neither wholly in accord with one opinion or another, nor exceedingly at variance with both, but hold a sort of intermediate place between divers sentiments, a thing which may be observed in most controversies when men seek impartially for truth, as in the present case.[6]

Celsus' books on Hippocratic, empirical and methodical medicine contain passages which seem to indicate an acquaintance with the articulate notion which has only appeared previously in Cicero, and there 83 only in one passage.

35. Agrippa and the Five Tropoi

Very little is known about the details of Agrippa's life. It must be assumed that because he is identified by Diogenes Laertius as the source of the five modes which appear in Sextus, that he lived before Sextus. The list of Sceptics reproduced in Diogenes Laertius doesn't mention Agrippa.[1] But it is commonly supposed that he lived after Aenesidemus, since Sextus claims that the five modes are derived rrom the later Sceptics.[2] Diogenes Laertius credits Agrippa with the five modes.[3] There are two sources for

[5] *De Med.* Prooemium 45.
[6] Spencer [17] I: 25.
[1] *Vit. phil.* IX: 116.
[2] *P* I: 164.
[3] *Vit. phil.* IX: 88.

the modes: Sextus Empiricus[4] and Diogenes Laertius.[5] The mode which informs the study of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* is the first based on disagreement. Sextus described this mode as follows:

> **118** καὶ ὁ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς διαφωνίας ἐστὶ καθ' ὃν περὶ τοῦ προτεθέντος πράγματος ἀνεπίκριτον στάσιν παρά τε τῷ βίῳ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις εὑρίσκομεν γεγενημένην, δι' ἣν οὐ δυνάμενοι αἱρεῖσθαί τι ἢ ἀποδοκιμάζειν καταλήγομεν εἰς ἐποχήν.[6]
>
> **118** According to the mode deriving from dispute, we find that undecidable dissension about the matter proposed has come about both in ordinary life and among philosophers. Because of this we are not able either to choose or to rule out anything, and we end up with suspension of judgement.[7]

The first mode appears in Diogenes Laertius as follows:

> **119** ὁ μὲν οὖν ἀπὸ τῆς διαφωνίας ὃ ἂν προτεθῇ ζήτημα παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἢ τῇ συνηθείᾳ, πλείστης μάχης καὶ ταραχῆς πλήρες ἀποδεικνύει...[8]
>
> **119** The mode arising from disagreement proves, with regard to any inquiry whether in philosophy or in everyday life, that it is full of the utmost contentiousness and confusion.[9]

While the equal persuasiveness of opposed arguments is not specifically mentioned, the achievement of suspension of judgment as a result of the review of a certain number of positions in persistent disagreement with one another is the dominant feature of the first mode ascribed to Agrippa. And this first mode along

[4] *P* I: 164-177.
[5] *Vit. phil.* IX: 88-89.
[6] *P* I: 165.
[7] Annas and Barnes [116] 41.
[8] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 88.
[9] Hicks [34] II: 501.

with the third on relativity gives in compressed form expression to the ten tropes which Aenesidemus had described some time earlier.

36. Plutarch and the Academic Heritage

Plutarch speaks of statements being contrary to one another and yet equal in a passage from *Adversus Colotem* where he compares Arcesilas' habit of suspending judgement with the practice of men to make claims which are in conflict with one another and equal in the scales (recall the court-room metaphor of Chrysippus).

> **120** τοῦ γὰρ ἐναντία λέγειν ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀντικείμενα τὸ μηδέτερον, ἀλλὰ ἐπέχειν περὶ τῶν ἀντικειμένων ἧττον ἄν τις θαυμάσειεν.[1]
>
> **120** Compared with this making of statements clean contrary to each other and equal in the scales, a refusal to make a statement either way, and suspension of judgement about the opposing arguments is less surprising.[2]

A second passage from *De Primo Frigido* also contains an appearance of the sceptic notion, not yet named *isostheneia:*

> **121** Ταῦτ', ὦ Φαβωρῖνε, τοῖς εἰρημένοις ὑφ' ἑτέρων παράβαλλε· κἂν μήτε λείπηται τῇ πιθανότητι μήθ' ὑπερέχῃ πολύ, χαίρειν ἔα τὰς δόξας, τὸ ἐπέχειν ἐν τοῖς ἀδήλοις τοῦ συγκατατίθεσθαι φιλοσοφώτερον ἡγούμενος.[3]
>
> **121** Compare these statements, Favorinus, with the pronouncements of others: and if these notions of mine are neither less probable nor much more plausible than those of others, say farewell to dogma, being convinced as you are that it is more philosophic to suspend

[1] *Col.* 28 (1124A).
[2] Einarson and De Lacy [101] 291.
[3] Plutarch, *De Primo Frigido* 23 (955C).

judgement when the truth is obscure than to take sides.'

An early *appearance* of a word from the root ἰσοσθέν- in the Imperial period is to be found in Plutarch's *Isis and Osiris:*

> **122** Μεμειγμένη γὰρ ἡ τοῦδε τοῦ κόσμου γένεσις καὶ σύστασις ἐξ ἐναντίων· οὐ μὴν ἰσοσθενῶν δυνάμεων, ἀλλὰ τῆς βελτίονος τὸ κράτος ἐστίν...[5]
>
> **122** the fact is that the creation and constitution of this world is complex, resulting, as it does, from opposing influences, which, however, are not of equal strength, but the predominance rests with the better.[6]

Several of the titles of lost works in the catalogue of Lamprias relate to the subject at hand, and indicate that Plutarch was interested in problems arising out of Academic Scepticism. Number 45 is Περὶ τῆς εἰς ἑκάτερον ἐπιχειρήσεως Βιβλία ε *On Arguing Both Sides of A Question in five books.* Number 63 is Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος Ἀκαδημίαν *On the Unity of the Academy Derived from Plato.* Number 64 is Περὶ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν Πυρρωνείων καὶ Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν *On the Distinction Between the Pyrrhonists and Academics.* Number 158 is Περὶ τῶν Πύρρωνος δέκα τόπων *On the Ten Modes of Pyrrho.*

37. Favorinus and Pyrrhonism

Favorinus (c.90-150 A.D.) was a student of Plutarch (recall 121) towards the end of the latter's life, and seems to have been influenced by his teacher's interest in Academic Scepticism.

[4] Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold, *Plutarch's Moralia,* volume XII, page 285.

[5] Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 49 (371A).

[6] Frank Cole Babbitt, *Plutarch's Moralia,* volume V, page 121.

Galen in *De Optima Doctrina* tells us that:

> **123** τὴν εἰς ἑκάτερα ἐπιχείρησιν ἀρίστην εἶναι διδασκαλίαν ὁ Φαβωρῖνός φησιν. ὀνομάζουσι δ' οὕτως οἱ Ἀκαδημαικοὶ καθ' ἣν τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις συναγορεύουσιν... Ἀλκιβιάδῃ τοὺς Ἀκαδημαικοὺς ἐπαινεῖ συναγορεύοντας μὲν ἑκατέρῳ τῶν ἀντικειμένων ἀλλήλοις λόγων...[1]
>
> **123** Favorinus says that argument pro and contra is the best teaching. This is the name the Academics give to argument in which they speak in favour of opposite sides... in his... *Alcibiades* he praises the Academics for, on the one hand, speaking in favour of both sides in opposing arguments...[2]

In addition to his supposed interest in the method of the Hellenistic Academy, Favorinus appears to have been influential with authors of the second sophistic.

38. Menodotus and the Empirical Physicians

Menodotus of Nicomedia (thought to have lived in the second half of the second century A.D.), a physician, is also thought to have been a Pyrrhonian Sceptic, and influential in the empirical school of medicine. There is some evidence for his having practiced in Pergamum. He was a voluminous author of whose work only fragments survive, and is often referred to by Galen. Tarrant argues that Menodotus was an opponent, and not an ally, of Sextus.[1]

[1] Galen, *De Optima Doctrina* I.
[2] Long and Sedley [236] I: 444.
[1] [295] 75-77.

39. Authors of the Second Sophistic

Lucian

Lucian relied on rhetoric in his experience as a travelling lecturer. At about the age of forty he moved to Athens and renounced rhetoric for philosophy. During this later period of his life he wrote the dialogues, among which is *Philosophers for Sale*. In this piece is found the following passage:

> **124** ΑΓΟΡΑΣΤΗΣ Ὦ τῆς ἀπορίας. τί δὲ σοι τὰ σταθμία ταυτὶ βούλεται; ΠΥΡΡΩΝ Ζυγοστατῶ ἐν αὐτοῖς τοὺς λόγους καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἴσον ἀπευθύνω, καὶ ἐπειδὰν ἀκριβῶς ὁμοίους τε καὶ ἰσοβαρεῖς ἴδω, τότε δὴ τότε ἀγνοῶ τὸν ἀληθέστερον.[1]
>
> **124** BUYER Oh, what a state of doubt? But what are these scales of yours for? SCEPTIC I weigh arguments in them and make them balance one another, and when I see they are precisely alike and equal in weight, then, ah! then I do not know which is the truer.[2]

This is pretty clear evidence of the fully articulate notion.

Apuleius

In Apuleius' (born c.132 A.D.; date of death unknown) *Florida*, thought to have been composed between 160 and 170, there are passages which seem to reflect familiarity with the notion which is the object of this study:

> **125** quod utinam pari exemplo philosophiae edictum

[1] Lucian, *Vitarum Auctio* 27.
[2] A.M. Harmon, *Lucian*, volume II, pages 507 and 509.

> ualaret, ne qui imaginem eius temere adsimularet...[3]
>
> **125** And would that philosophy could issue a like proclamation, that should have equal weight, forbidding unauthorized persons to reproduce her likeness...[4]

And see also:

> **126** nonne uobis uidentur haec sophistarum argumenta obuersa inuicem uice spinarum, quas uentas conuoluerit, inter se cohaerere, paribus utrimque aculeis, simili penetratione, mutuo uulnere?[5]
>
> **126** Does not the opposition of these sophistic arguments remind you of brambles, that the wind has entangled one with another? They cling together; thorns of equal length on either side, each penetrating to an equal depth, each dealing wound for wound.[6]

The authors of the second sophistic appear to have been familiar with the fully articulate sceptical notion, although the name it would receive from variants of the root ἰσοσθεν- does not yet seem to have entered the vocabulary of the literature.

40. Galen and Isostheneia in Medical Discourse

Galen was born in Pergamum in 129 A.D., and died in Rome. The traditional date of his death is 199 A.D., and is now thought not to have occurred before 210.[7] His early education was obtained in Pergamum, Corinth and Alexandria. Later he ministered to the

[3] Apuleius, *Florida* VII: 9.
[4] H.E. Butler, *The Apologia and Florida of Apuleius of Madaura*, pages 168-169.
[5] *Flor.* XVIII: 20.
[6] Butler [8] 204.
[7] [45] XIX.

wounds of the gladiators in his native city (157-162 A.D.). With the exception of three years (166-169) he spent the balance of his life in Rome, where he was personal physician to the family of emperors and knew many of those included in the second sophistic.

The dating of Sextus Empiricus and Diogenes Laertius has long relied on the appearance in Hippolytus' *Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (IV: 1-7, and X: 6.2-8) of passages which were thought to be transcriptions from Sextus' *Adversus Mathematicos* (V and X: 310-319). On the strength of this Sextus was dated to the generation before Hippolytus and after Galen. On the basis of the reference to Sextus in Diogenes' *Vitae Philosophorum* (IX: 116), Diogenes was dated to the generation after Sextus. But Janácek's stylistic analysis supports the view that both Sextus and Hippolytus were copying from the same source, and that the latter's transcription is likely to have been more faithful to the original because Sextus was "fond of variations and eager to improve his own style."[6] If Janácek's analysis reflects what actually transpired, then the tradition for dating Sextus and Diogenes has broken down. This would probably not provide for the possibility that Sextus preceded Galen, since the latter seems to have been reasonably conscientious in identifying those with whom he disagreed. But it does make the traditional dating of late second-early third century for Sextus, and of mid-third century for Diogenes Laertius, both insecure.

[6] Karel Janácek, "Hippolytus and Sextus Empiricus", page 19.

The following passage attests to Galen's knowledge of the notion. A word from the root ἰσοσθεν- does not figure in his description:

> **127** ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἰσάζοιεν πως ἀλλήλαις αἱ κρίσεις ὡς πρὸς πίστιν, ἐπέχειν ἀναγκαῖον ἡμᾶς ἔσται περὶ τῆς τοῦ πράγματος ὑπάρξεως, εἰ δ' ἡ ἑτέρα φαίνοιτο μακρῷ πιστοτέρα, συγκατατίθεσθαι μὲν καὶ πράττειν γέ τι κατὰ τὴν συγκατάθεσιν, οὐκ ἀπερισκέπτως δέ, καθάπερ εἴ καί τις τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀγαθὸν οἰόμενος ὑπαχθείη ἔχοι τι βραχὺ περιέλκον εἰς τοὐναντίον ἢ εἰ μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν ὑπολαμβάνων ὅμως ἔτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἀντισπῶσαν ἑτέραν ὑπόληψιν ἔχοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ διατεταμένως πιστεύειν ἢ εἰ καθάπερ ὁ Πύρρων, ἀμφοτέρας ὁμοτίμως τιθέμενος ἐπέχοι περὶ τῆς ἀποφάσεώς τε καὶ συγκαταθέσεως.[3]
>
> **127** If the judgments should be of more or less equal credibility, we must withhold decision about the truth of the matter, but if one of them should appear far more convincing, we must assent to it and perform some act in accordance with our assent, not, however, without circumspection: for example, one who thinks that pleasure is good may nevertheless have some minor thing that draws him toward the opposite view, or the person who makes the supposition that only the honorable is good may himself have yet another supposition that pulls against his trusting it earnestly; or someone may, like Pyrrho, assign equal value to both and withhold his decision about assertion and assent.[4]

This is from early in Galen's career: De Lacy advises that:

> Galen wrote the first six books of PHP during his first stay in Rome (A.D. 162-166). He wrote the last three books during his second stay, in the interval between his return to Rome (169) and the Emperor's return from the German campaign (176).[5]

With respect to medical theory Galen has been called an eclectic, borrowing theoretical accounts and therapeutic methods from all of

[3] *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* V 4.12-13. Jaap Mansfeld notes [242] 99n48 that this "text is not included by F. Decleva Caizzi, although it agrees with T67 and T68 in her *Pirrone Testimonianze...*"

[4] De Lacy [48] 315-317.

[5] [48] 46.

the medical schools. But he is significant in the account of the development of the sceptical notion because of the twenty-eight appearances of ἰσοσθένεια in his anatomical and physiological writing identified in *Appendix A: Other Appearances of Isostheneia*. With respect to the conception of equilibrium which finds its way into his accounts of these processes, Sambursky notes:

> Galen is inclined to see equilibrium as a limiting case of the general one where one of the opposing forces is stronger than the other, thus resulting in a movement in the direction of the stronger force. The dynamical aspect of equilibrium leads him to an explanation in terms of tensional motion. He prefers to regard rest in this case as a purely phenomenological description of a rapid succession of movements in opposite directions which occur at such speed that to the observer the body seems to be in a state of rest. Rest is in fact regarded here as rapid oscillation round the point of equilibrium.[2]

By way of reflection on the comment by Sambursky, it is of interest with respect to the purpose of this study to point out the association of equilibrium with rest, which association appears to be reflected in the connection between the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* and the goal sought by the ongoing inquiry of those who think of themselves as Sceptics, namely relief from disturbance or *ataraxia*.

41. Sextus Empiricus and the Basis of Scepticism

Sextus Empiricus was a physician, thought to be of the Empirical school notwithstanding his comment in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*

[2] [278] 33.

that the convictions of the methodical doctors were more congenial for those who found scepticism attractive.[1] He is thought to have lived for a part of his life in Alexandria and Rome. The dating of late second-early third century A.D. may now be considered uncertain.

Of his writings we have one group consisting of the three books of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. These works are thought to have been the earliest. A second group of writings combined under the general title *Against the Dogmatists* contains two books *Against the Logicians*, two books *Against the Physicists*, and one book *Against the Ethicists*. These are thought to have been written in a middle period of production. Finally a group of six books united under the general title *Against the Professors*, and including *Against the Grammarians*, *Against the Rhetoricians*, *Against the Geometers*, *Against the Arithmeticians*, *Against the Astrologers*, and *Against the Musicians*, are believed to have been produced in his third and latest period of writing. Other writings by Sextus Empiricus on medicine have not survived.

There are twenty five instances of the word ἰσοσθένεια in the writing of Sextus which survives. Twelve of these are found in the early books of the *Outlines*. Eleven instances are found in those books of the group *Against the Dogmatists* thought to have been written in the middle period. And two instances of the word are found in the books *Against the Professors* of the latest period

[1] *P* I: 236-238.

of composition.

In all the instances in which Sextus uses the word ἰσοσθένεια he is referring to the sceptical notion of equal persuasiveness between incompatible accounts. There are other places in his text in which he discusses this notion in alternate language: Sextus seems to have sought for a kind of stylistic elegance.

This passage occurs early in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* as Sextus discusses the nature of scepticism generally:

> **128** Ἔστι δὲ ἡ σκεπτικὴ δύναμις ἀντιθετικὴ φαινομένων τε καὶ νοουμένων καθ' οἱονδήποτε τρόπον, ἀφ' ἧς ἐρχόμεθα διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις πράγμασι καὶ λόγοις ἰσοσθένειαν τὸ μὲν πρῶτον εἰς ἐποχήν, τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἀταραξίαν.[2]
>
> **128** Scepticism is an ability to set out oppositions among things which appear and are thought of in any way at all, an ability by which, because of the equipollence in the opposed objects and accounts, we come first to suspension of judgement and afterwards to tranquillity.[3]

Brochard paraphrases this passage as follows:

> **128.1** Le scepticisme consiste à comparer et à opposer entre elles, de toutes les manières possibles, les choses que les sens perçoivent, et celles que l'intelligence conçoit. Trouvant que les raisons ainsi opposées ont un poids égal (ἰσοσθένεια), le sceptique est conduit à la suspension du jugement (ἐποχή) et à l'ataraxie.[4]

This piece of text forms part of the same introductory passage with **128**:

> **129** ἰσοσθένειαν δὲ λέγομεν τὴν κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν ἰσότητα,

[2] *P* I: 8.
[3] [116] 4.
[4] [150] 332.

ὡς μηδὲν μηδενὸς προκεῖσθαι τῶν μαχομένων λόγων ὡς πιστότερον.

129 By 'equipollence' we mean equality with regard to being convincing or unconvincing: none of the conflicting accounts takes precedence over any other as being more convincing.[5]

In this passage Sextus is describing what might be called the sceptical way, and finds that at the basis or ἀρχὴ of this way is the ability which they seem to have had of being able to oppose to every claim another equal claim:

130 Ἀρχὴν δὲ τῆς σκεπτικῆς αἰτιώδη μέν φαμεν εἶναι τὴν ἐλπίδα τοῦ ἀταρακτήσειν· οἱ γὰρ μεγαλοφυεῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ταρασσόμενοι διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀνωμαλίαν, καὶ ἀποροῦντες τίσιν αὐτῶν χρὴ μᾶλλον συγκατατίθεσθαι, ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὸ ζητεῖν τί τε ἀληθές ἐστιν ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τί ψεῦδος, ὡς ἐκ τῆς ἐπικρίσεως τούτων ἀταρακτήσοντες. συστάσεως δὲ τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ μάλιστα τὸ παντὶ λόγῳ λόγον ἴσον ἀντικεῖσθαι· ἀπὸ γὰρ τούτου καταλήγειν δοκοῦμεν εἰς τὸ μὴ δογματίζειν.[7]

130 The causal principle of scepticism we say is the hope of becoming tranquil. Men of talent, troubled by the anomaly in things and puzzled as to which of them they should rather assent to, came to investigate what in things is true and what false, thinking that be deciding these issues they would become tranquil. The chief constitutive principle of scepticism is the claim that to every account an equal account is opposed; for it is from this, we think, that we come to hold no beliefs.[8]

In this passage Sextus deals with the objection, probably familiar to Sceptics in antiquity, that they are doing physics or logic or ethics, when their position seems to require that they have nothing to say about these subjects. And here the sceptical notion which is the subject of this study finds its way into the

[5] *P* I: 10.
[6] Annas and Barnes [116] 5.
[7] *P* I: 12.
[8] Annas and Barnes [116] 5-6.

discussion:

> **131** Παραπλήσια δὲ λέγομεν καὶ ἐν τῷ ζητεῖν εἰ φυσιολογητέον τῷ σκεπτικῷ· ἕνεκα μὲν γὰρ τοῦ μετὰ βεβαίου πείσματος ἀποφαίνεσθαι περί τινος τῶν κατὰ τὴν φυσιολογίαν δογματιζομένων οὐ φυσιολογοῦμεν, ἕνεκα δὲ τοῦ παντὶ λόγῳ λόγον ἴσον ἔχειν ἀντιτιθέναι καὶ τῆς ἀταραξίας ἁπτόμεθα τῆς φυσιολογίας. οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ λογικὸν μέρος καὶ τὸ ἠθικὸν τῆς λεγομένης φιλοσοφίας ἐπερχόμεθα.[9]
>
> **131** We say something similar again when investigating the question of whether Sceptics should study natural science. We do not study natural science in order to make assertions with firm conviction about any of the matters on which scientific beliefs are held. But we do touch on natural science in order to be able to oppose to every account an equal account, and for the sake of tranquillity. This is also the spirit in which we approach the logical and ethical parts of what they call philosophy.[10]

In this passage Sextus describes the Sceptic's purpose. Originally and unsophisticatedly he speaks of the inquirer seeking to be relieved from uncertainty ἀταρακτῆσαι by making reliable judgments about things of sense. This led to the experience of the sceptical notion, that of being confronted by a disagreement διαφωνίαν in which the incompatible accounts of the things sensed were of equal persuasiveness ἰσοσθενῆ, and between which it was not possible to exercise judgement ἐπικρῖναι. The experience of the notion on many occasions led the inquirer to suspend the use of judgment ἐπέσχεν and the relief ἀταραξία he had originally sought to achieve through the agency of judgment was secured by abandoning judgment. The sceptical notion turns out to be the basis of the sceptical way to calmness and confidence.

> **132** ἀρξάμενος γὰρ φιλοσοφεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ τὰς φαντασίας ἐπικρῖναι καὶ καταλαβεῖν τίνες μέν εἰσιν ἀληθεῖς τίνες δὲ ψευδεῖς, ὥστε ἀταρακτῆσαι, ἐνέπεσεν εἰς τὴν ἰσοσθενῆ διαφωνίαν, ἣν ἐπικρῖναι μὴ

[9] *P* I: 18.

[10] Annas and Barnes [116] 7-8.

δυνάμενος ἐπέσχεν· ἐπισχόντι δὲ αὐτῷ τυχικῶς παρηκολούθησεν ἡ ἐν τοῖς δοξαστοῖς ἀταραξία.

132 For Sceptics began to do philosophy in order to decide among appearances and to apprehend which are true and which false, so as to become tranquil; but they came upon equipollent dispute, and being unable to decide this they suspended judgement. And when they suspended judgement, tranquillity in matters of opinion followed fortuitously.[12]

Later in the first book of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* Sextus discusses the expression "not more this than that", and in his discussion produces a gloss on the Sceptic's understanding of the notion at the basis of the way:

133 δηλοῖ δὲ τὸ "οὐ μᾶλλον τόδε ἢ τόδε" καὶ πάθος ἡμέτερον, καθ' ὃ διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν ἀντικειμένων πραγμάτων εἰς ἀρρεψίαν καταλήγομεν, ἰσοσθένειαν μὲν λεγόντων ἡμῶν τὴν ‹ἰσότητα τὴν› κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ἡμῖν πιθανόν, ἀντικείμενα δὲ κοινῶς τὰ μαχόμενα, ἀρρεψίαν δὲ τὴν πρὸς μηδέτερον συγκατάθεσιν.[13]

133 'No more this than that' makes clear our feelings: because of the equipollence of the opposed objects we end in equilibrium. (By 'equipollence' we mean equality in what appears plausible to us; by 'opposed' we mean in general conflicting; and by 'equilibrium' we mean assent to neither side.)[14]

Sextus discusses the details of the claim made for the sceptical notion in a textual passage devoted to the treatment of the expression "I suspend judgment."

134 Τὸ δὲ "ἐπέχω" παραλαμβάνομεν ἀντὶ τοῦ οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν τίνι χρὴ τῶν προκειμένων πιστεῦσαι ἢ τινι ἀπιστῆσαι, δηλοῦντες ὅτι ἴσα ἡμῖν φαίνεται τὰ πράγματα πρὸς πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν. καὶ εἰ μὲν ἴσα ἐστίν, οὐ διαβεβαιούμεθα· τὸ δὲ φαινόμενον ἡμῖν περὶ αὐτῶν, ὅτε ἡμῖν ὑποπίπτει, λέγομεν. καὶ ἡ ἐποχὴ δὲ εἴρηται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπέχεσθαι τὴν διάνοιαν ὡς μήτε τιθέναι τι μήτε ἀναιρεῖν διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν

[11] *P* I: 26.
[12] Annas and Barnes [116] 10.
[13] *P* I: 190.
[14] Annas and Barnes [116] 47.

ζητουμένων.[15]

> **134** We use 'I suspend judgement' for 'I cannot say which of the things proposed I should find convincing and which I should not find convincing', making clear that objects appear to us equal in respect of convincingness and lack of convincingness. Whether they are equal we do not affirm: we say what appears to us about them, when they make an impression on us. Suspension of judgement gets its name from the fact that the intellect is suspended so as neither to posit nor to reject anything because of the equipollence of the matters being investigated.[16]

On this passage Annas and Barnes attach the following gloss on ἐποχή:

> **134.1** ἐποχη, 'suspension of judgement', comes from ἐπέχειν 'to hold back', 'to check' (used of e.g. holding your breath, suspending payment).[17]

In another passage Sextus discusses the Sceptic's expression "all things are non-apprehensible" and uses the notion of equal persuasiveness as its basis:

> **135** Οὕτω δὲ φερόμεθα καὶ ὅταν λέγωμεν "πάντα ἐστὶν ἀκατάληπτα"· καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάντα ὁμοίως ἐξηγούμεθα καὶ τὸ ἐμοί συνεκδεχόμεθα, ὡς εἶναι τὸ λεγόμενον τοιοῦτον "πάντα ὅσα ἐφώδευσα τῶν δογματικῶς ζητουμένων ἀδήλων φαίνεταί μοι ἀκατάληπτα." τοῦτο δὲ ἐστιν οὐ διαβεβαιουμένου περὶ τοῦ τὰ παρὰ τοῖς δογματικοῖς ζητούμενα φύσεως εἶναι τοιαύτης ὡς εἶναι ἀκατάληπτα, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ πάθος ἀπαγγέλλοντος, καθ' ὅ, φησίν, ὑπολαμβάνω ὅτι ἄχρι νῦν οὐδέν κατέλαβον ἐκείνων ἐγὼ διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων ἰσοσθένειαν· ὅθεν καὶ τὰ εἰς περιτροπὴν φερόμενα πάντα ἀπόδοτα εἶναι δοκεῖ μοι τῶν ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἀπαγγελλομένων.[18]

> **135** Our attitude is similar when we say 'Everything is inapprehensible': we explain 'everything' in the same way, and we supply 'to me'. Thus what is said is this: 'All of the unclear matters investigated in dogmatic fashion which I have inspected appear to me inapprehensible.' This is not to make an affirmation

[15] *P* I: 196.
[16] Annas and Barnes [116] 49.
[17] [116] 49n197.
[18] *P* I: 200.

> that the matters investigated by the Dogmatists are of such a nature as to be inapprehensible; rather it is to report our feeling 'in virtue of which', we say, 'I suppose that up to now I have not apprehended any of these things because of the equipollence of their opposites.' Hence everything brought forward to turn us about seems to me to be at variance with what we profess.[19]

In this passage from *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* Sextus specifies that argument is intended to be understood as supporting a statement about what cannot be perceived:

> **136** Ὅταν δὲ λέγωμεν "παντὶ λόγῳ λόγος ἴσος ἀντίκειται," παντὶ μὲν λέγομεν τῷ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διεξωδευμένῳ, λόγον δὲ φαμεν οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἀλλὰ τὸν κατασκευάζοντά τι δογματικῶς, τουτέστι περὶ ἀδήλου, καὶ οὐ πάντως τὸν ἐκ λημμάτων καὶ ἐπιφορᾶς ἀλλὰ τὸν ὁπωσοῦν κατασκευάζοντα. ἴσον δὲ φαμεν κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν, τό τε ἀντίκειται λαμβάνομεν ἀντὶ τοῦ μάχεται κοινῶς, καὶ τὸ "ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνεται" συνεκδεχόμεθα.[20]
>
> **136** When we say 'Opposed to every account there is an equal account', we mean by 'every' every one we have inspected; we speak not of accounts in an unqualified sense but of those which purport to establish something in dogmatic fashion (i.e. about something unclear)--which purport to establish it in any way, and not necessarily by way of assumptions and consequence; we say 'equal' with reference to convincingness and lack of convincingness; we take 'opposed' in the sense of 'conflicting' in general; and we supply 'as it appears to me'.[21]

To their translation of this passage Annas and Barnes append the following gloss on the rendering of λόγος here by 'account':

> **136.1** The word λόγος sometimes means 'argument': by alluding to the Stoic definition of an argument (see II 135), Sextus indicates that here he is taking the word λόγος in a more general sense--for any consideration in favour of a dogmatic claim you can find an equally convincing consideration in favour of something

[19] Annas and Barnes [116] 50.
[20] *P* I: 202.
[21] Annas and Barnes [116] 51.

conflicting with it.[22]

Here in this passage Sextus takes pains to describe in what sense the claim is made about the basis of the sceptical way:

> **137** ὅταν οὖν εἴπω "παντὶ λόγῳ λόγος ἴσος ἀντίκειται," δυνάμει τοῦτό φημι "παντὶ τῷ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ἐξητασμένῳ λόγῳ, ὃς κατασκευάζει τι δογματικῶς, ἕτερος λόγος κατασκευάζων τι δογματικῶς, ἴσος αὐτῷ κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν, ἀντικεῖσθαι φαίνεταί μοι," ὡς εἶναι τὴν τοῦ λόγου προφορὰν οὐ δογματικὴν ἀλλ' ἀνθρωπείου πάθους ἀπαγγελίαν, ὃ ἔστι φαινόμενον τῷ πάσχοντι.[23]
>
> **137** Thus when I say 'Opposed to every account there is an equal account', I am implicitly saying this: "To every account I have scrutinized which purports to establish something in dogmatic fashion, there appears to me to be opposed another account, purporting to establish something in dogmatic fashion, equal to it in convincingness and lack of convincingness'. Thus the utterance of this remark is not dogmatic but a report of a human feeling which is apparent to the person who feels it.[24]

And later he expresses the same reticence about making a claim in other words, as seems to have been his stylistic preference:

> **138** Προφέρονται δέ τινες καὶ οὕτω τὴν φωνὴν "παντὶ λόγῳ λόγον ἀντικεῖσθαι τὸν ἴσον," ἀξιοῦντες παραγγελματικῶς τοῦτο "παντὶ λόγῳ δογματικῶς τι κατασκευάζοντι λόγον δογματικῶς ζητοῦντα, ἴσον κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν, μαχόμενον αὐτῷ ἀντιτιθῶμεν," ἵνα ὁ μὲν λόγος αὐτοῖς ᾖ πρὸς τὸν σκεπτικόν, χρῶνται δὲ ἀπαρεμφάτῳ ἀντὶ προστακτικοῦ, τῷ ἀντικεῖσθαι ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀντιτιθῶμεν.[25]
>
> **138** Some utter the phrase in the form 'There is to be opposed to every account an equal account', making the following exhortatory request: 'To every account purporting to establish something in dogmatic fashion let us oppose an account which investigates in dogmatic fashion, equal in convincingness or lack of convincingness and conflicting with it.' For they mean what they say to be directed to the Sceptics, though they use the infinitive 'to be opposed' for the

[22] [116] 51n205.
[23] *P* I: 203.
[24] Annas and Barnes [116] 51.
[25] *P* I: 204.

imperative 'let us oppose'.[27]

Refutation of a dogmatic position is not to be undertaken in anxiety to support a sceptical position, but in a leisurely manner by reviewing opposed arguments.

> **139** λοιπὸν δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀντίρρησιν χωρῶμεν, οὐκ ἀνύπαρκτον δεῖξαι τὸ ἐνδεικτικὸν σημεῖον πάντως ἐσπουδακότες, ἀλλὰ τὴν φαινομένην ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν φερομένων λόγων πρός τε τὴν ὕπαρξιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀνυπαρξίαν ὑπομιμησκόμενοι.[28]
>
> **139** now let us move to our counterargument, not endeavouring to show that indicative signs are unreal, but recalling the apparent equipollence of the arguments brought in favour of their reality and unreality.[29]

And later Sextus points out that an exhaustive review is not always necessary:

> **140** Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὀλίγα ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἀρκέσει νῦν εἰρῆσθαι πρὸς ὑπόμνησιν τοῦ μὴ εἶναι σημεῖον ἐνδεικτικόν· ἑξῆς δὲ καὶ τὰς ὑπομνήσεις τοῦ εἶναί τι σημεῖον ἐκθησόμεθα, ἵνα τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν ἀντικειμένων λόγων παραστήσωμεν.[30]
>
> **140** These few points, taken from many, will suffice here to suggest that there are no indicative signs. Next we shall set out the suggestions that there are signs, so that we may establish the equipollence of the opposed accounts.[30]

Here again Sextus points out the simplicity of the way which proceeds by reviewing incompatible accounts.

> **141** Καὶ τοιούτους τινὰς ἀθροίσας ὕθλους συνάγει τὰς ὀφρῦς, καὶ προχειρίζεται τὴν διαλεκτικήν, καὶ πάνυ σεμνῶς ἐπιχειρεῖ κατασκευάζειν ἡμῖν δι' ἀποδείξεων συλλογιστικῶν ὅτι γίνεταί τι καὶ ὅτι κινεῖταί τι καὶ ὅτι ἡ χιὼν ἐστι λευκὴ καὶ ὅτι κέρατα οὐκ ἔχομεν, καίτοι γε ἀρκοῦντος ἴσως τοῦ τὴν ἐνάργειαν αὐτοῖς ἀντιτιθέναι πρὸς

[28] Annas and Barnes [116] 52.
[27] *P* II: 103.
[28] Annas and Barnes [116] 93.
[29] *P* II: 130.
[30] Annas and Barnes [116] 100.

τὸ θραύεσθαι τὴν διαβεβαιωτικὴν θέσιν αὐτῶν διὰ τῆς ἐκ τῶν φαινομένων ἰσοσθενοῦς αὐτῶν ἀντιμαρτυρήσεως.[31]

141 Having accumulated rubbish of this sort, he frowns and takes out his dialectic and solemnly tries to establish for us by deductive proofs that some things come into being, and that some things move, and that snow is white, and that we do not have horns--although if we set in opposition to these arguments what appears evidently, that is no doubt enough to shatter their positive affirmation with the equipollent disconfirmation given by what is apparent.[32]

And here in this passage from the third book of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* is demonstrated how the dogmatic claims can be no more supported than undermined.

142 ἡμεῖς οὖν ἐκθέμενοι τὴν ἀντίρρησιν τῶν τε εἶναι κίνησιν ὑπολαμβανόντων καὶ τῶν μηδὲν εἶναι κίνησιν ἀποφαινομένων, ἐὰν τὴν διαφωνίαν εὑρίσκωμεν ἰσοσθενῆ, μὴ μᾶλλον εἶναι ἢ μὴ εἶναι κίνησιν λέγειν ἀναγκασθησόμεθα ὅσον ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις.[33]

142 We shall set out the counterarguments of those who suppose that there is such a thing as motion and of those who assert that motion is nothing, and, if we find the dispute equipollent, we shall be compelled to say that, so far as what is said goes, there no more is than is not such a thing as motion.[34]

Not only are the rival accounts both incompatible with one another and of equal persuasiveness, but the claims made with respect to proof and criteria of truth are subject to the same kind of sceptical way:

143 οὔτε τίνες μὲν εἰσιν ἀληθεῖς τίνες δὲ ψευδεῖς ὀυνατὸν καταλαβεῖν διά τε τὴν ἰσοσθενῆ διαφωνίαν καὶ τὴν ἀπορίαν τὴν κατὰ τὸ κριτήριόν τε καὶ τὴν ἀπόδειξιν.[35]

[31] *P* II: 244.
[32] Annas and Barnes [116] 135.
[33] *P* III: 65.
[34] Annas and Barnes [116] 161-162.
[35] *P* III: 139.

> **143** Nor is it possible to apprehend which are true and which false, both because of the equipollent dispute and because of the impasse with respect to standards and proofs.[36]

Sextus points out the fate of those who had become comfortable with the basis of scepticism:

> **144** καθὰ γὰρ ἐπὶ ταύτην ἦλθον πόθῳ τοῦ τυχεῖν τῆς ἀληθείας, ἰσοσθενεῖ δὲ μάχης ἀτοπαλίᾳ τῶν πραγμάτων ὑπαντήσαντες ἐπέσχον, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μαθημάτων ὁρμήσαντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἀνάληψιν αὐτῶν, ζητοῦντες καὶ τὸ ἐνταῦθα μαθεῖν ἀληθές, τὰς δὲ ἴσας εὑρόντες ἀπορίας, οὐκ ἀπεκρύψαντο.[37]
>
> **144** For just as they approached philosophy with the desire of attaining truth, but, when faced by the equipollent conflict and discord of things, suspended judgement,--so also in the case of the Arts and Sciences, when they had set about mastering them with a view to learning here also the truth, they found difficulties no less serious, which they did not conceal.[38]

In this passage from his book *Against the Grammarians* Sextus mentions that the sceptical notion finds it's way into the issue which Plato addressed in his *Cratylus*:

> **145** πόθεν γὰρ γραμματικῇ παχύτητι διαγινώσκειν πότερον φύσει ἢ θέσει τὰ ὀνόματα, ἢ τινὰ μὲν οὕτως τινὰ δὲ ἐκείνως; ὅτε οὐδὲ τοῖς ἐπ' ἄκρον ἥκουσι φυσιολογίας εὐμαρὲς εἰπεῖν διὰ τὰς ἑκατέρωθεν ἰσολογίας.[39]
>
> **145** for how could the Grammarians' stupidity decide whether names are due to nature or to convention, or some to the one and some to the other, when even for those who have attained the summit of natural science it is no easy matter to settle because of the equipollence of the arguments on either side?[40]

[36] Annas and Barnes [116] 180-181.
[37] Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Grammarians* 6.
[38] R.G. Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, volume IV, pages 5 and 7.
[39] *M* I: 144.
[40] Bury [118] 87.

This passage from *Against the Rhetoricians* mentions rhetorical arguments in connection with *isostheneia*.

> **146** εἰς ἐποχὴν δὲ καὶ ἀπορίαν ἀλθόντες οἱ δικασταὶ διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν ῥητορικῶν λόγων ἀμφοτέρους ἐξέβαλον τοῦ δικαστηρίου, ἐπιφωνήσαντες τὸ "ἐκ κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ᾠόν."[41]
>
> **146** The judges then, thrown into a state of suspense and perplexity owing to the equipollence of the rhetorical arguments, drove them both out of the court, crying "A bad egg from a bad crow!" [42]

Here from the first book of *Against the Logicians* is a gloss on *isostheneia*:

> **147** λεκτέον ἄρα διὰ ταῦτα πάντα μὴ πάσας τὰς φαντασίας εἶναι ἀληθεῖς καὶ πιστὰς, καὶ μὴν οὐδὲ πάσας ψευδεῖς διὰ τὰς ἀναλόγους αἰτίας· ἰσοδυναμεῖ γὰρ τῷ πάσας εἶναι ἀληθεῖς καὶ τὸ πάσας εἶναι ψευδεῖς."[43]
>
> **147** For all these reasons, therefore, one must declare that not all presentations are true and credible, and indeed, for analogous reasons, that not all are false. For the statement "all are false" is equipollent with "all are true."[44]

Here Sextus seems to be pointing to the difficulty of supporting universal categorical propositions, and this in terms of language which uses the words persuasive or trustworthy.

> **148** ἔνεστι δὲ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἐνταυθοῖ διδάσκειν ὅτι ἐναργεῖς σχεδόν εἰσι τῶν φαντασιῶν αἱ διαφοραί, καθ' ἃς αἱ μὲν ἐπισπῶνται ἡμῶν τὴν συγκατάθεσιν αἱ δ' ἀποκρούονται καὶ οὔτε ἅπασαι ἐπισπῶνται κοινῶς οὔτε ἅπασαι συλλήβδην ἀποκρούονται, ἐπεί τοι μηδεμιᾶς οὔσης τῆς διαφορᾶς, ἀλλὰ πασῶν ἐπ' ἴσης ἀπίστων οὐσῶν ἢ πιστῶν, οὔτε τέχνη ποτ' ἂν οὔτε ἀτεχνία καθειστήκει, οὐκ ἔπαινος, οὐκ ἐπιτίμησις, οὐκ ἀπάτη· ἐνοιεῖτο γὰρ ἡ μὲν τέχνη καὶ ἀποδοχὴ καὶ τὸ ἀνεξαπάτητον κατὰ τὰς ἀληθεῖς φαντασίας, ἡ δὲ ἀπάτη καὶ ἐπιτίμησις κατὰ τὰς ψευδεῖς. οὔτε οὖν πάσας ἀληθεῖς εἶναι ῥητέον

[41] Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Rhetoricians* 99.
[42] Bury [118] 237.
[43] *M* VII: 398.
[44] Bury [117] 213.

καὶ πιστὰς οὔτε πάσας ψευδεῖς καὶ ἀπίστους.[45]

148 And in the same fashion one may here show that the differences in presentations are well-nigh self-evident, owing to which some attract our assent while others repel it, and neither all alike attract nor all without exception repel, since, to be sure, if no difference existed but all were equally untrustworthy or trustworthy, there would exist no art nor lack of art, no praise, no blame, no deceit; for art and approval and lack of deceit are conceived through true presentations, but deceit and blame through false ones. One ought not, then, to assert either that all are true and trustworthy or that all are false and untrustworthy.[46]

Here in this passage from *Against the Logicians* Sextus goes into greater detail on the issue of supporting criteria of truth:

149 ῥητέον δὲ πρὸς μὲν τὸ πρῶτον ὅτι σκεπτικόν ἐστιν ἔθος τὸ τοῖς πεπιστευμένοις μὴ συνηγορεῖν, ἀρκεῖσθαι δ' ἐπ' αὐτῶν ὡς αὐτάρκει κατασκευῇ τῇ κοινῇ προλήψει, τοῖς δὲ ἀπίστοις εἶναι δοκοῦσι συναγορεύειν καὶ εἰς ἰσοσθένειαν αὐτῶν ἕκαστον ἀνάγειν τῇ περὶ τὰ παραδοχῆς ἠξιωμένα πίστει. τοίνυν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος οὐκ ἀναιροῦντες τὸ κριτήριον τοὺς κατὰ τούτου χειρίζομεν λόγους, ἀλλὰ βουλόμενοι δεῖξαι ὅτι οὐ πάντως πιστὸν ἐστι τὸ εἶναι κριτήριον, διδομένων εἰς τοὐναντίον καὶ τῶν ἴσων ἀφορμῶν. εἶτα κἂν τῷ ὄντι συναναιρεῖν δοκῶμεν τὸ κριτήριον, δυνάμεθα εἰς τοῦτο οὐχ ὡς κριτηρίῳ χρῆσθαι τῇ προχείρῳ φαντασίᾳ καθ' ἣν τοὺς προσπίπτοντας ἡμῖν πιθανοὺς λόγους τιθέντες εἰς τὸ μηδὲν εἶναι κριτήριον ἐκτιθέμεθα μέν, οὐ μετὰ συγκαταθέσεως δὲ τοῦτο ποιοῦμεν διὰ τὸ καὶ τοὺς ἀντικειμένους λόγους ἐπ' ἴσης εἶναι πιθανούς.[47]

149 But in reply to the first point it should be stated that it is the Sceptic practice not to advocate things that are believed, but in their case to be satisfied with the general presumption as a sufficient ground in itself, but, on the other hand, to advocate the things which seem to be unworthy of belief and to bring each of these into a position of equipollence with the trust accorded to those which are deemed worthy of acceptance. So then, in the present case also, we do not employ the arguments against the criterion by way of abolishing it but with the object of showing that the existence of a criterion is not altogether to be trusted, equal grounds

[45] *M* VII: 400.
[46] Bury [117] 213-215.
[47] *M* VII: 443-445.

> being presented for the opposite view. In the next place, even if we seem to be really helping to abolish the criterion, we are able to use the presentation ready to hand, though not as a criterion; for when we state, in accordance with it, the probable arguments for the non-existence of the criterion that occur to us, we do indeed state them, but when we do this we do not add our assent owing to the fact that the contrary arguments are equally probable.[48]

Here from the second book *Against the Logicians* Sextus describes what is to be understood by the statements the Sceptics make about the way they proceed.

> **150** Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὡς ἐν κεφαλαίοις περὶ τοῦ ὑπὸ τὴν ζήτησιν πίπτοντος σημείου λελέχθω· χρὴ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος διὰ μνήμης ἔχειν τὸ σκεπτικὸν ἔθος. τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τὸ μὴ μετὰ πείσματος καὶ συγκαταθέσεως ἐκτίθεσθαι τοὺς κατὰ τῆς ὑπάρξεως τοῦ σημείου λόγους (ἴσον γὰρ ἦν τὸ τοιοῦτο ποιεῖν τῷ ἀξιοῦν εἶναί τι σημεῖον παραπλησίως τοῖς δογματίζουσιν), ἀλλ' ὥστε εἰς ἰσοσθένειαν τὴν ζήτησιν ἄγειν, καὶ δεικνύναι ὅτι ἐπ' ἴσης ἐστὶ πιστὸν τῷ εἶναί τι σημεῖον τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἢ ἀνάπαλιν ἐπ' ἴσης ἄπιστον τῷ μηδὲν ὑπάρχειν τὸ ὑπάρχειν τι σημεῖον· ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ ἡ ἀρρεψία καὶ ἡ ἐποχὴ γίνεται τῇ διανοίᾳ.[49]
>
> **150** Let this, then, serve as a summary account of the sign now under investigation; and at this point it is right to keep in mind the practice of the Sceptics. This is to set out the arguments against the existence of the sign, but not with conviction or assent (for to do it with assent would be on a par with maintaining, like the Dogmatists, that a sign exists), but so as to bring the inquiry to a position of equipollence, and prove that the non-existence of a sign is equally credible with its existence, or, conversely, that the existence of a sign is equally incredible with its non-existence; for thereby there is produced in the intellect neutrality and suspension of judgement.[50]

And here the arguments of the Sceptics that remain uncontroverted should be understood to mean the arguments of other dogmatic

[48] Bury [117] 237-239.
[49] *M* VIII: 159.
[50] Bury [117] 319-321.

philosophers which the Sceptics have opposed to the arguments of the Stoics:

> **151** Πλὴν ἔστω γε καὶ τούτους τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτῶν κομισθέντας λόγους εἶναι σθεναροὺς, μεμενηκέναι δὲ καὶ τοὺς τῶν σκεπτικῶν ἀναντιρρήτους· τί ἀπολείπεται τῆς καθ' ἑκάτερον μέρος προσπιπτούσης ἰσοσθενείας εἰ μὴ τὸ ἐπέχειν καὶ ἀοριστεῖν περὶ τοῦ ζητουμένου πράγματος, οὔτε τὸ εἶναί τι σημεῖον λέγοντας οὔτε τὸ μὴ εἶναι, τὸ δὲ οὐ μᾶλλον εἶναι ἢ μὴ εἶναι μετὰ ἀσφαλείας προφερομένους...[51]
>
> **151** Let it be granted, however, both that the arguments brought forward by the Stoics are strong and that those of the Sceptics remain uncontroverted: what remains for us, with this equipollence of the two parties, except to suspend judgement and avoid definition regarding the matter in question, not affirming either that a sign exists or that it does not exist, but cautiously pronouncing that it is "no more" existent than non-existent?[52]

In this passage Sextus takes up the expounding of the sceptical way in terms of generally opposing sensibles to sensibles, and intelligibles to intelligibles:

> **152** εἰ μὲν γὰρ σύμφωνα εὑρίσκετο τὰ αἰσθητὰ τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς καὶ τὰ νοητὰ τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἐναλλάξ, ἴσως ἂν παρεχωροῦμεν αὐτὰ τοιαῦτα τυγχάνειν ὁποῖα φαίνεται· νῦν δὲ ἐν τῇ συγκρίσει ἀνεπίκριτον εὑρίσκοντες μάχην, καθ' ἣν τὰ ἕτερα ὑπὸ τῶν ἑτέρων ἐκβάλλεται, τῷ μήτε πάντα θεῖναι δύνασθαι διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην μάχην μήτε τινὰ διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων ἰσοσθένειαν, μήτε πάντ' ἐκβαλεῖν διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἔχειν τοῦ φαίνεσθαι πιστότερον, ἐπὶ τὸ ἐπέχειν κατηντήσαμεν.[53]
>
> **152** For if sensibles had been found to be in accord with sensibles and intelligibles with intelligibles, and conversely, we might probably have conceded that they are such as they appear; but now, because on comparing them we find insoluble contradictions, through which some are expelled by others; and because we are unable either to posit all owing to this contradiction, or to posit some owing to the equipollence of the opposites, or to reject all owing to our having nothing more trustworthy than appearance; we have fallen back on

[51] *M* VIII: 298.
[52] Bury [117] 397.
[53] *M* VIII: 362-364.

suspension of judgement.'[54]

Sextus points out that assertion without argument can be similarly opposed by incompatible assertion without argument:

> **153** ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἀναποδείκτῳ χρώμενοι φάσει, ῥᾴδιον φάσιν αὐτοῖς ἀντιθεῖναι, πάντα τὸν λεγόμενον κατὰ διάρτησιν ἀπέραντον λόγον φάσκοντας περαίνειν· εἰ γὰρ ἐκ ψιλῆς φάσεως ἐκεῖνοι δύνανται πιστεύεσθαι, δυνήσονται καὶ οἱ τοὐναντίον λέγοντες εἶναι πιστοί· τὴν ἰσοσθενῆ γὰρ προφέρονται φάσιν.[55]
>
> **153** But if they are employing bare assertion, it is easy to reply with an opposite assertion, which asserts that every argument termed indefinite through inconsistency is definite; for if these men can be trusted on a bare assertion, those too who say the opposite will be able to be trusted; for they utter an equipollent assertion.'[56]

In this passage from *Against the Physicists* Sextus observes that claims about the existence of the Gods can be opposed by equally plausible and incompatible claims:

> **154** οὐ μᾶλλον δὲ εἶναι ἢ μὴ εἶναι θεοὺς διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων λόγων ἰσοσθένειαν ἔλεξαν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως.[57]
>
> **154** And the Sceptics have declared that, owing to the equipollence of the opposed arguments, the Gods are existent "no more" than non-existent.'[58]

This passage is an expansion on that in **154**:

> **155** Οἱ μὲν οὖν κομιζόμενοι λόγοι παρά τε τοῖς στωικοῖς καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων αἱρέσεων εἰς τὸ ὑπάρχειν θεοὺς τοιοῦτοί τινές εἰσι κατὰ τὸν χαρακτῆρα· ὅτι δὲ οὐ λείπονται τούτων ἕνεκα τῆς περὶ τὸ πείθειν ἰσοσθενείας καὶ οἱ τὸ μὴ εἶναι θεοὺς διδάσκοντες παρακειμένως ὑποδεικτέον.[59]

[54] Bury [117] 431.
[55] *M* VIII: 436.
[56] Bury [117] 465-467.
[57] Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Physicists* I: 59.
[58] R.G. Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, volume III, page 35.
[59] *M* IX: 137-138.

> **155** Such, then, in their character are the arguments brought forward by the Stoics, and by those of the other Schools, in favour of the existence of Gods; and in similar fashion we must show that those which maintain the non-existence of Gods do not fall short of the former in respect of their equipollence as regards persuasion.[60]

Sextus speaks about divergent opinions arising from τοῦ κοινοῦ βίου equilibrating with one another on the question of the existence of the gods:

> **156** Ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἀντεπιχειρούμενα παρὰ τοῖς δογματικοῖς φιλοσόφοις εἰς τὸ εἶναι θεοὺς καὶ εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι τοιαῦτά τινα καθέστηκεν. ἐφ' οἷς ἡ τῶν σκεπτικῶν ἐποχὴ συνεισάγεται, καὶ μάλιστα προσγεινομένης αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ βίου περὶ θεῶν ἀνωμαλίας. ἄλλοι γὰρ ἄλλας καὶἀ συμφώνους ἔχουσι περὶ τούτων ὑπολήψεις, ὥστε μήτε πάσας εἶναι πιστὰς διὰ τὴν μάχην μήτε τινὰς διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν, προσεπισφραγιζομένης τὸ τοιοῦτο καὶ τῆς παρὰ τοῖς θεολόγοις καὶ ποιηταῖς μυθοποιήσεως· πάσης γὰρ ἀσεβείας ἐστὶ πλήρης.[61]

> **156** well then, such are the opposing arguments alleged by the Dogmatic philosophers in favour of the existence and of the non-existence of Gods. As a result of these the Sceptic's suspension of judgement is introduced, especially since they are supplemented by the divergency of the views of ordinary folk about the Gods. For different people have different and discordant notions about them, so that neither are all of these notions to be trusted because of their inconsistency, nor some of them because of their equipollence; and this is further confirmed by the mythologizing of the theologians and the poets; for it is full of all kinds of impiety.[62]

From the first book *Against the Physicists* Sextus reiterates the basis of the sceptical way:

> **157** Καὶ δὴ ταῦτα μέν, ὡς κεφαλαιωδέστερον εἰπεῖν, εἰς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος εἴωθε λέγεσθαι παρὰ τοῖς δογματικοῖς· σκοπῶμεν δὲ ἀκολούθως καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἀπορητικῶν λόγους· φανήσονται γὰρ καὶ οὗτοι τοῖς ἐκκειμένοις ἰσοσθενεῖς καὶ ἕνεκα πειθοῦς μὴ διαφέροντες αὐτῶν.[63]

[60] Bury [117] 73-75.
[61] *M* IX: 191-192.
[62] Bury [117] 97-99.
[63] *M* IX: 207.

> **157** Such then, summarily stated, are the arguments customarily adduced on this side by the Dogmatists. Let us consider next the arguments of the Doubters; for these will give expression to arguments just as forcible as those set forth and nowise different from them in point of persuasiveness.[64]

This passage is an additional example of the equal persuasiveness of incompatible accounts:

> **158** οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐὰν μεταστῶμεν τούτων, εὑρεθήσεται ἰσοσθενὴς ὅ τε κατασκευάζων τὸ μὴ εἶναι κίνησιν λόγος καὶ ὁ δεικνὺς ταύτην ὑπάρχειν.[65]
>
> **158** Nevertheless, even if we refrain from pursuing these, the argument which established the non-existence of motion and that which proves its existence will be found to be equipollent.[66]

From the second book *Against the Physicists* Sextus points to the difficulty of providing an account of motion, what appears to be one of the most primitive phenomena underlying the arguments of the physicists:

> **159** καὶ ἄλλα δὲ παμπληθῆ τοιαῦτ' εἰώθασιν οἱ ἐξ ἐναντίας λέγειν ὑπὲρ τοῦ κίνησιν εἶναι. οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς ὡς ἀποχρώσῃ συνηγορίᾳ πρὸς κατασκευὴν τοῦδε τοῦ μέρους ἀρκεσθέντες εἰς τοὐναντίον ἐπιχειρήσομεν. ἐὰν γὰρ ἴσον δειχθῇ κατά τε πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν τῷ εἶναι κίνησιν τὸ μὴ εἶναι κίνησιν, πάντως ἀκολουθήσει τὸ μηθετέρῳ μὲν συναινεῖν, ἐπέχειν δὲ περὶ ἀμφοτέρων.[67]
>
> **159** And there are hosts of similar arguments which those of the opposite side are wont to adduce in support of the existence of motion. And as we, too, are content with these as affording sufficient support for the establishment of this view, we shall now turn to argue for the opposite view. For if it be shown that the non-existence of motion is equal to the existence of motion in respect of probability and improbability, there will

[64] Bury [117] 105.
[65] *M* X: 61.
[66] Bury [117] 241.
[67] *M* X: 69.

> certainly follow assent to neither but suspension of judgement regarding both.[68]

This passage seems to deal with much the same issue as that dealt with in **159**:

> **160** Εἰ οὖν μήτε εἰς ἄπειρον οὔσης τῆς τομῆς μήτε εἰς ἀμερὲς τῆς καταλήξεως, μήτε τινῶν μὲν εἰς ἄπειρον τεμνομένων τινῶν δὲ εἰς ἀμερὲς καταληγόντων, σώζεται ἡ κίνησις, ῥητέον μηδὲν εἶναι κίνησιν, οἷς ἕπεται ἡ ἐποχὴ διά τε τὴν τῆς ἐναργείας καὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων αὐτῇ λόγων ἰσοσθένειαν.[69]
>
> **160** If, then, motion is secured neither when there is a division to infinity, nor when there is a reduction to indivisibles, nor when some things are divided to infinity but others reduced to indivisibles, then one must declare that motion is nothing. And from this there follows suspension of judgement because of the equipollence of the sense-evidence and of the arguments which contradict it.[70]

With respect to the order of creation of the books of Sextus, they are now believed to have been written in the following order: first *P* I-III, then *M* VII-XI, and finally *M* I-VI.[71] In *Against the Ethicists, Against the Geometers, Against the Arithmeticians, Against the Astrologers,* and *Against the Musicians,* there are no instances when words from the root ἰσοσθεν- have found their way into his text. These books are thought to have been written in the later phase of his career as an author. It seems to have been in the books which Sextus wrote earliest that the most fully explicit articulation of the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* occurred.

[68] Bury [117] 245.
[69] *M* X: 168.
[70] Bury [117] 295.
[71] See Brochard's comments on this issue in [150] 318-319.

42. Clement of Alexandria: the Sceptical Notion

Clement was converted to Christianity, and travelled seeking instruction from Christian teachers. He seems to have had a broad knowledge of Greek literature for there are quotations from Platonic and Stoic philosophers in his writings, most of which have been lost. Surviving are Προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας written around 190 A.D. attempting to establish the superiority of Christianity to the pagan religions and philosophies, Παιδαγωγός an exposition of the moral basis of the teachings of Christ written between 190 and 195 A.D., and eight books of Στρωματεῖς thought to have been written between 200 and 202 A.D., seven of which deal with the inferiority of Greek to Christian philosophy, and the eighth with logic.

There are three appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in the surviving writing of Clement. From his Στρωματεῖς is the following passage:

> **161** τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀρχικωτάτων τῆς ἐποχῆς τὸ μὲν ἀβέβαιον τῆς διανοίας γεννητικόν ἐστι διαφωνίας, ἡ δὲ διαφωνία προσεχὲς αἴτιον τῆς ἐποχῆς, ὅθεν πλήρης μὲν ὁ βίος δικαστηρίων τε καὶ βουλευτηρίων καὶ ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ καθόλου τῆς περὶ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ αἱρέσεως ‹καὶ φυγῆς›, ἅπερ ἠπορημένης ἐστὶ διανοίας καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων πραγμάτων ἰσοσθένειαν μετοκλαζούσης τεκμήρια.[1]
>
> **161** Of these things and of the principles of suspension of judgment themselves, on the one hand the unreliability of judgment is productive of disagreement, and on the other hand disagreement is an immediate cause

[1] *Strom.* VIII: VII.22,3-4.

> of suspension of judgment, from which reason the (world) life of both the law courts and the council chamber and the assembly, and in general of the school (and place of refuge) concerning good and bad things being said, is infected (with disagreement), which very things are the proofs of the puzzlement of the understanding and of its constant changing of stance toward (confronted with) the equal strength of things opposed (antithetical) (to one another).

This passage, and an additional passage **96** which has been introduced in *§23. Chrysippus and Defending Opposite Sides,* are the first appearances found of the sceptical notion named with a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- to which a reliable date can be assigned. This suggests the hypothesis that at least some of the early work of Sextus Empiricus (perhaps *PH* I-III, and the *M* VII-XI books in which most of the appearances of the notion being named *isostheneia* occur) had been written before Clement produced his Στρωματεῖς at the end of the second century.

Another instance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- is identified in *Appendix A. Other Appearances of Isostheneia.* These seem to have been common in the language in the literary life of Alexandria in the second half of the second century. Perhaps Galen learned the word in the period in his life (before 157) when he spent some time in Alexandria obtaining his early education.

43. Diogenes Laertius and Hellenistic Philosophy

Diogenes Laertius is thought to have lived in the third century of

the Christian era, but his dates may now be considered uncertain if the comments of Janácek are to be sustained.[1]

There are four appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in Diogenes' ninth book which has to do with philosophers who are thought to have been part of the Pyrrhonian tradition. In this passage the sceptical notion is fully articulate:

> **162** ἀναιροῦσι δ' οἱ σκεπτικοὶ καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν "Οὐδὲν μᾶλλον" φωνήν· ὡς γὰρ οὐ μᾶλλόν ἐστι πρόνοια ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ Οὐδὲν μᾶλλον οὐ μᾶλλόν ἐστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστι. σημαίνει οὖν ἡ φωνή, καθά φησι καὶ Τίμων ἐν τῷ Πύθωνι, "τὸ μηδὲν ὁρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἀπροσθετεῖν." ἡ δὲ Παντὶ λόγῳ φωνὴ καὶ αὐτὴ συνάγει τὴν ἐποχήν· τῶν μὲν γὰρ πραγμάτων διαφωνούντων, τῶν δὲ λόγων ἰσοσθενούντων ἀγνωσία τῆς ἀληθείας ἐπακολουθεῖ· καὶ αὐτῷ δὲ τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ λόγος ἀντίκειται, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ τὸ ἀνελεῖν τοὺς ἄλλους ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ περιτραπεὶς ἀπόλλυται, κατ' ἴσον τοῖς καθαρτικοῖς, ἃ τὴν ὕλην προεκκρίναντα καὶ αὐτὰ ὑπεκκρίνεται καὶ ἐξαπόλλυται.[2]
>
> **162** But the Sceptics even refute the statement "Not more (one thing than another)." For, as forethought is no more existent than non-existent, so "Not more (one thing than another)" is no more existent than not. Thus, as Timon says in the Pytho, the statement means just absence of all determination and withholding of assent. The other statement, "Every saying, etc.," equally compels suspension of judgement; when facts disagree, but the contradictory statements have exactly the same weight, ignorance of the truth is the necessary consequence. But even this statement has its corresponding antithesis, so that after destroying others it turns round and destroys itself, like a purge which drives the substance out and then in its turn is itself eliminated and destroyed.[3]

This second passage from later in Book IX is also a standard formulation of the sceptical notion in the language διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν λόγων which appears so often in Sextus. Here it

[1] [205] and above on page 186.
[2] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 76.
[3] Hicks [34] II: 489-491.

appears in a discussion of ethical subjects, while the word was wholly absent from Sextus' *M* XI *Against the Ethicists*.

> **163** Φύσει τε μὴ εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν· εἰ γάρ τί ἐστι φύσει ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακόν, πᾶσιν ὀφείλει ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακὸν ὑπάρχειν, ὥσπερ ἡ χιὼν πᾶσι ψυχρόν· κοινὸν δ' οὐδὲν πάντων ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν ἐστιν· οὐκ ἄρα ἐστὶ φύσει ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν. ἤτοι γὰρ πᾶν τὸ ὑπό τινος δοξαζόμενον ῥητέον ἀγαθὸν ἢ οὐ πᾶν· καὶ πᾶν μὲν οὐ ῥητέον, ἐπεὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑφ' μὲν δοξάζεται ἀγαθόν, ὡς ἡ ἡδονὴ ὑπὸ Ἐπικούρου· ὑφ' οὗ δὲ κακόν, ὑπ' Ἀντισθένους. συμβήσεται τοίνυν τὸ αὐτὸ ἀγαθόν τ' εἶναι καὶ κακόν. εἰ δ' οὐ πᾶν λέγομεν τὸ ὑπό τινος δοξαζόμενον ἀγαθόν, δεήσει ἡμᾶς διακρίνειν τὰς δόξας· ὅπερ οὐκ ἐνδεξόμενόν ἐστι διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν τῶν λόγων. ἄγνωστον οὖν τὸ φύσει ἀγαθόν.[4]
>
> **163** There is nothing good or bad by nature, for if there is anything good or bad by nature, it must be good or bad for all persons alike, just as snow is cold to all. But there is no good or bad which is such to all persons in common; therefore there is no such thing as good or bad by nature. For either all that is thought good by anyone whatever must be called good, or not all. Certainly all cannot be so called; since one and the same thing is thought good by one person and bad by another; for instance, Epicurus thought pleasure good and Antisthenes thought it bad; thus on our supposition it will follow that the same thing is both good and bad. But if we say that not all that anyone thinks good is good, we shall have to judge the different opinions; and this is impossible because of the equal validity of opposing arguments. Therefore the good by nature is unknowable.[5]

The following passage indicates that the practice of the Pyrrhonian Sceptics of following appearances must have come under attack from the philosophical schools in the Imperial period. And here in this text a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears:

> **164** ἔστιν οὖν κριτήριον κατὰ τοὺς σκεπτικοὺς τὸ φαινόμενον, ὡς καὶ Αἰνεσίδημός φησιν· οὕτω δὲ καὶ Ἐπίκουρος. Δημόκριτος δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων, τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι. πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ κριτήριον τῶν φαινομένων οἱ δογματικοί φασιν ὅτι ὅτ' ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν διάφοροι προσπίπτουσι φαντασίαι, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ πύργου ἢ στρογγύλου ἢ τετραγώνου, ὁ σκεπτικὸς εἰ μὲν οὐδετέραν προκρινεῖ, ἀπρακτήσει· εἰ

[4] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 101.
[5] Hicks [34] II: 513.

δὲ τῇ ἑτέρᾳ κατακολουθήσει, οὐκέτι τὸ ἰσοσθενές, φασί, τοῖς φαινομένοις ἀποδώσει. πρὸς οὓς οἱ σκεπτικοί φασιν ὅτι ὅτε προσπίπτουσιν ἀλλοῖαι φαντασίαι, ἑκατέρας ἐροῦμεν φαίνεσθαι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὰ φαινόμενα τιθέναι ὅτι φαίνεται.[6]

164 Therefore the apparent is the Sceptic's criterion, as indeed Aenesidemus says; and so does Epicurus. Democritus, however, denied that any apparent fact could be a criterion, indeed he denied the very existence of the apparent. Against this criterion of appearances the dogmatic philosophers urge that, when the same appearances produce in us different impressions, e.g. a round or square tower, the Sceptic, unless he gives the preference to one or other, will be unable to take any course; if on the other hand, say they, he follows either view, he is then no longer allowing equal value to all apparent facts. The Sceptics reply that, when different impressions are produced, they must both be said to appear; for things which are apparent are so called because they appear.[7]

There is a fourth passage **2** from Book IX in which Diogenes uses the Greek word which names the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* in a discussion of Homer as in some sense expressing a sceptical theme. In Book X Diogenes Laertius uses a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- at **73** to describe Epicurus' belief that sense perceptions are equally reliable.

It seems that well into the third century the Pyrrhonian Sceptic's discussion of *isostheneia* was known widely. For Diogenes cannot be considered to be a scholar of the discipline as such, but rather a chronographer of its past controversies.

[6] *Vit. Phil.* IX: 106-107.
[7] Hicks [34] II: 517.

44. Augustine and Contra Academicos

The publication of Augustine's *Contra Academicos* occurs in 387 A.D., the date which is often taken to mark the end of the period of ancient philosophy. In Book I of the work Augustine addresses the questions: is the search for truth sufficient for happiness? what is error? what is wisdom? In Book II he discusses the doctrine of the Academy, and the nature of the probable.

It is in book III that he addresses the issue of the Academic policy of suspension of judgement, and here as Kirwan notes:

> there was another Academic argument for withholding assent apparently unknown to Augustine, namely "from the conflict of arguments"...[1]

In this regard there is a passage at III: 39 in which the author of *Contra Academicos* claims that Carneades abandoned what Augustine claims was Arcesilaus' quibbling sophistry which consisted in contradicting everything for the sake of showing off.

It seems that here in this text at the end of the collection concerned with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* the status of the practice of opposing to any account another of equal persuasiveness as the basis of the sceptical way had been forgotten.

[1] Christopher Kirwan, "Augustine Against the Skeptics", page 212.

45. Appearances of the Notion in Imperial Period

It appears from the records which have come down to us, some of which have found their way into the pages above, that it is in the Imperial period that the sceptical notion, which is the object for the understanding of which this collection has been undertaken, first *appears*.

The surviving literature seems to indicate that the use of words from the Greek root ισοσθεν- began to be used to name the notion at the basis of what became the sceptical way after the end of the Hellenistic period, and beyond the echoes of the controversies of the Athenian schools.

From the beginning of the Imperial period in Alexandria the notion seems to have been *articulate*, for it *appears* in a text **114** of Philo Judaeus. In the writing of Celsus at **117** is to be found a formulation of the notion as *media quodammodo inter diversas sententias*. By the time of Plutarch's death in 120 A.D., a word from the root ισοσθεν- enters the literature **122** in something approximating the way the later Pyrrhonians would employ it. It is clear from **120** that Plutarch was familiar with the sceptical notion; whether or not he knew of the name which would later be used for it is not apparent from the texts consulted.

Later in the second century it seems that words from the root ισοσθεν- were not being used to name the notion. Authors of the

second sophistic, including Lucian at **124** and Apuleius at **125** seem to have unequivocal knowledge of the sceptical notion, but do not seem to have seen the name for it which Sextus would later use. Equal weight is expressed by ἰσοβαρεῖς in the passage from Lucian.

In Galen **127** the notion appears in language other than that which Sextus would later use to name it. There are also twenty-eight instances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in his texts which have been included in the electronic data bank of the *Thesauraus Linguae Graecae*. But all these appearances are used in medical literature; much of Galen's philosophical writing may have been destroyed in a fire in the last decade of the second century.

With Sextus Empiricus the description of the basis of the sceptical way uses words from the root ἰσοσθεν- to name the notion for the first time, and it is from the writing that Sextus has preserved for us that nearly all of our knowledge of how the Pyrrhonians understood *isostheneia* comes. There are twenty-five instances of the word in the texts of Sextus which have been included in texts in the electronic data bank of the *Thesauraus Linguae Graecae*.

Clement of Alexandria's Στρωματεῖς contains **96** and **161** the first two appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- used for naming the sceptical notion which it is possible to date with some confidence. On this basis one can suppose that the work of Sextus Empiricus originated in the latter part of the second century. It

seems clear that by the time Diogenes Laertius compiled his *Vitae Philosophorum* that the expression was established in the literature.

Towards the end of the Imperial period Augustine, who does not appear to have been able to read Greek, seems to have been unaware of the importance of opposing incompatible accounts of equal persuasiveness to one another, for supporting the Academic policy of withholding assent.

Conclusion

Ἡ ῥητορικὴ ἐστιν ἀντίστροφος τῇ διαλεκτικῇ· ἀμφότεραι γὰρ περὶ τοιούτων τινῶν εἰσὶν ἃ κοινὰ τρόπον τινὰ ἁπάντων ἐστὶ γνωρίζειν καὶ οὐδεμιᾶς ἐπιστήμης ἀφωρισμένης. διὸ καὶ πάντες τρόπον τινὰ μετέχουσιν ἀμφοῖν· πάντες γὰρ μέχρι τινὸς καὶ ἐξετάζειν καὶ ὑπέχειν λόγον καὶ ἀπολογεῖσθαι καὶ κατηγορεῖν ἐγχειροῦσιν. (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1354a1-6)

Rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectic. Both alike are concerned with such things as come, more or less, within the general ken of all men and belong to no general science. Accordingly all men make use, more or less, of both; for to a certain extent all men attempt to discuss statements and to maintain them, to defend themselves and to attack others. (W. Rhys Roberts)

The Origins and Development of the Sceptical Notion

This *collection of texts* constituting an exploration of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia in Greek scepticism* has found it's beginnings in the source of all Classical literature, and under the auspices of Calliope, the muse of fine speaking. Homer was thought to have been a descendant of her son Orpheus, and the poems whose authorship is attributed to him find themselves infused with her grace. The original pre-literate models of the appropriate ways in which life may be conducted may have also been based on accounts of opposition recognised as components endemic to human existence for Greeks in the Archaic period. These elements, opposition and fine speaking, are themes which found themselves, woven through the collection of texts dealing with the sceptical notion in ancient philosophy.

In the Classical period the *origins* of the notion of *isostheneia* were identified in the thinking of the physicists and the speculation of the physicians. Most significant for the *development* of the notion has been the emergence in Greek experience of a distinction between rhetoric and dialectic, fashioned under the pressure of the Sophists, and elaborated by Plato. The medical communities have produced a paradigm of balance between opposed elements as the ideal basis of vitality and health. Democritus, whom Pfeiffer identifies as "an ingenious

innovator of philosophical language"[1] is quoted 10 in the fifth century A.D., now, it is thought, anachronistically, with the first appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-. From the end of the Classical period, Aristotle *anticipated* the sceptical notion most adequately in his description 67 of perplexity as "a state of equality between contrary reasonings" and in his practice of knowledge gathering, out of which seems to have arisen the beginnings of scholarship.

In the Hellenistic period the vitality of the creative spirit of Plato and Aristotle seems to have been attenuated, and the reliance on dialectic appears to have been gradually displaced by the power of persuasion. From the texts collected it is in the argument of Arcesilaus that the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* first becomes *articulate* as the basis of suspension of judgment, if the testimony of later authors is to be relied upon. And with Carneades the practice of arguing both for and against any proposition, and relying heavily on rhetoric, may be the model on which the sceptical way would later be fashioned. As well the development of scholarship provided those who sought for more adequate accounts the records of previous attempts to reduce anxiety in the discovery of the truth. But by the end of the Hellenistic period the philosophical schools of Athens may have lost the will to continue the disputation which had been waged for almost three hundred years, and eclecticism tended to blur distinctions rather than elaborate them. Fraser mentions in this

[1] [263] 43.

regard that:

> The development of the Hellenistic monarchies led inevitably to a decline in interest in public life in Greek cities, and by a natural process to a corresponding decline in those branches of traditional creative activity rooted in democratic life.[3]

With the Imperial period the sceptical notion becomes present in the literature. It first *appears* in the text of Philo Judaeus. Clearly by the time that Plutarch writes *Adversus Colotem* the notion had become fully articulate. Later in the second century, authors of the second sophistic also appear to have been comfortable with the notion at the basis of the sceptical way. And the Greek words from the root ἰσοσθεν- which would later be used to name it are beginning to find their way into the texts from the beginning of the period. Galen uses the word on many occasions to describe anatomical and physiological details. In at least one of his texts is also to be found an *appearance* of the notion of *isostheneia*. Sextus Empiricus compiles the arguments of the Pyrrhonians sometime after the end of the second century mostly from as yet unknown sources, and uses words from the root ἰσοσθεν- to identify the notion. In addition it is in his books that the materials describing the operation of the grounds for suspension of judgment come to us. Later in the period the Greek word finds its way into a variety of different kinds of writing, and at the end of period Augustine seems to be unaware that the equal persuasiveness of incompatible accounts was the basis for withholding assent.

[3] P..M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria,* volume I, page 306.

The collection of texts indicates that *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* took place under pressure from several different sources. In the first place the tension between dialectic and rhetoric which began to be noticed in the fifth century B.C., finds itself present in the disputes of the philosophical schools down to the end of the Hellenistic period. It is perhaps the strong presence of oratory in Hellenistic controversy which contributed to the development of eclecticism, and a kind of resignation with respect to the possibility of truth manifested during the Imperial period, and there especially by the resurgence of sophism.

The tendency to produce accounts in antithetical terms, or in opposition to one another seems to have been present from the earliest epic literature. It finds it's expression in the confrontation of counter claims within the public arenas of the Classical period, and in the historical and dramatic literature of that time. As the period comes to a close Aristotle opposes his predecessors' views to one another, and is later credited with the first use of argument *in utramque partem,* forms of which Arcesilaus and Carneades employed so effectively against the Stoic opposition. The modes of Aenesidemus are based on the vitality of διαφωνία or disagreement. Perhaps the recognition of the pervasiveness of this element in attempts to articulate adequate accounts of the objects of inquiry led the Pyrrhonians of the Imperial period to support their way with *isostheneia.*

A review of the texts suggests that the development of the notion was also assisted by the requirement within the medical tradition to bridge the gap between a general account of disease based on theoretical physiology and the unique problem of the individual patient coming to them for some therapeutical intervention by means of which health and vitality might be restored. From within the practice of physicians then comes this confrontation of the scientific description with its object. The recognition of this as problematic may have originated in Aristotle's difficulty with explaining how that which is the most real can at the same time be the object of knowledge. This may have provided a model which later inquirers would use, and by which they would oppose dogmatic philosophy with incompatible accounts of individual contraindications.

An additional element in the developement of the notion which originated in the difficulties of medical practice was the recognition that the intermediate position between two extremes serves to enhance health and vitality most effectively. This belief in the appropriateness of balance appears to have been recorded first in a passage 16 from Alcmaeon, and later in the Empedoclean regulation of the four elements by love and strife. The balance of opposites figures prominently in the Hippocratic literature, and in the practice of the Hellenistic Academics who sought to support suspension of judgment by balancing off Stoic claims against incompatible counter claims. Finally the balancing of equally persuasive and incompatible arguments one against the

other appears in the collection of texts as the very heart of the topic of this study, and is reflected in the literature of the Sophists of the second century and the writing of Sextus Empiricus.

After the end of the period usually understood to be defined as that in which ancient philosophy was created there continued to be authors using words from the Greek root ἰσοσθεν-, and the latin root *aequipollen-*. Some identification and discussion of these may be found in *Appendix A: Other Appearances of Isostheneia* and *Appendix B: Logical Equivalence and Aequipollens*.

Interesting Things Having Been Seen

One of the sources for the vitality of the sceptical notion may have been their difficulty in arriving at the kind of solutions we take to be adequate to the problems they were struggling with. Nine of the ten modes of Aenesidemus have as their central focus problems of evaluating knowledge of the physical universe. One of the modes has to do with practical difficulties relating to the regulation of conduct based on conflicting custom or ethical problems. The solutions to many of the problems which the Greeks formulated in terms of opposites were unavailable until recent developments in the chemical sciences.[1] So it remained the case that the Sceptics were able to point to persistent disagreement

[1] [232] 83.

among those who made claims with respect to the solutions of these problems. And because the methods of observation and experimentation were relatively undeveloped and not applied to the solution of the problems, the tension between dialectic and rhetoric became the locus in which the claims of rationality could be evaluated.

There seems to have been some anachronism with respect to the notion of *isostheneia* in antiquity. The notion is attributed to Classical and Hellenistic authors by others living many centuries later without any collateral textual evidence from the Classical and Hellenistic periods supporting its explicit recognition. For example with respect to Classical figures Diogenes in **2** speaks of Homer and *isostheneia*; Stobaeus in **10** claims that Democritus used a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-. On the other hand the surviving texts also attribute the notion of *isostheneia* to Hellenistic authors, including Pyrrho by the anonymous commentary **84** on Plato's *Theaetetus* 151e4-5, Arcesilaus by a passage **85** in Sextus, Chrysippus in a passage **96** from the Στρωματεῖς of Clement of Alexandria, and Carneades by Numenius quoted in **101** Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*. The first explicit articulation of the notion seems to have occurred in **83** Cicero's *Academica* written at the end of the Hellenistic period. One of the services of a study of the history of the development of a notion is that it can sometimes identify instances where the notion is attributed to an ancient author before it had been explicitly articulated.

Materials have been found suggesting a third century controversy between Epicureans and Stoics concerning the possible difficulties which might ensue for acts of assent from the theory of comprehensive reliability of sense impressions. The problem the Stoics raised seems to have been focused on how to decide between opposed and incompatible accounts, if for both of which there was equally strong evidence. The metaphor of the balance and the court of law analogy in the texts attributed to Chrysippus may be reflections of this difficulty. It is possible that this model was borrowed by the Academics to support their third century practice of arguing against all claims after Arcesilaus, or later and perhaps alternatively arguing both for and against any particular claim in the way of Carneades. This may be the primitive *articulation* of the elusive notion of *isostheneia* sought for in this collection of texts.

Another of the interesting things having been seen is what appears to have been the ongoing development of the sceptical way in the Imperial period. It has already been noted that some of the common instances of disagreement were identified by Aristotle, and later more completely compiled by unknown authors whose summary seems only to exist in the passages quoted from Aenesidemus' books. But it is puzzling why there is no mention of the notion of *isostheneia* at the basis of suspension of judgment in the latter's texts if it had been current in the Hellenistic Academy of his predecessors. The development of the sceptical notion seems to have become fully *articulate* only early in the Imperial

period, and appears so in 114 the *De Specialibus Legibus* of Philo Judaeus. It can also be found in 120 Plutarch's *Adversus Colotem*, in 216 Lucian's *Vitarum Auctio*, and in 127 Galen's *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, all of which appeared in the second century A.D. This is the period in which the Empirical medicine of Alexandria is thought to have been influenced to some extent by what came to be known as Pyrrhonian uncertainty, and the time in which the authors of the second sophistic became influential in the political life of their cities and the Empire itself. It is the time of Menodotus and Favorinus and Galen, all of whom were more familiar with the sceptical way than we appear to be able to say. This period in the first centuries of the Christian era has been thought to be relatively uneventful in terms of philosophical activity, but may have interesting details to reveal on closer examination.

Places to Look for More

One of the issues which has been raised in this collection of texts having to do with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* has to do with the possibility raised by Janácek[1] that Hippolytus and Sextus may have been copying from the same unknown source, rather than the former copying the latter as has been supposed. If this should be adequately supported, the dates commonly accepted for both Sextus and Diogenes Laertius based on

[1] [205].

the known date for Hippolytus, must be abandoned. One of the places to look for more may be in the texts which both Sextus and Hippolytus have in common. It has already been established that there are no appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in Hippolytus. Perhaps a close examination of the language of the passages in question will provide clues which may enlighten us as to the relation of these authors to their sources and to each other. To these considerations should also be added some evaluation of the implications of the presence of the notion named *isostheneia* in the text **96** and **161** of Clement of Alexandria.

Another of the issues which seems to invite further research is the connection between the medical uses of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in Galen's texts identified in (A3) of *Appendix A: Other Appearances of Isostheneia,* and the absence of the word used to name the notion in the passage from *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis.* It should be of interest to secure the dating of the composition of the medical texts. Galen did spend some time in Alexandria in the early part of his life. How might Sextus have come upon this word and found such extensive use for it? And might there have been a relationship with Clement of Alexandria which could be identified?

From the passages identified in *Appendix A: Other Appearances of Isostheneia* it seems that Pyrrhonian scepticism was a phenomenon of the Greek East in the Imperial and early Medieval periods. It should be worthwhile to use the electronic searching techniques to

identify the presence of the sceptical notion formulated in alternative language as it may have appeared in the textual resources of these periods. This may reflect some of the history of the sceptical way prior to its rediscovery by the Latin West in the Renaissance, and may account for what appears to have been some disregard for the notion of *isostheneia* at the basis of scepticism by those thinkers who found the books of Sextus Empiricus of the first importance in the early years of the period of Modern philosophy.

The Hellenistic controversy between Epicureans and Stoics concerning the outcome for opposed accounts from the thesis that all sense impressions are equally trustworthy may be approached through examination of the resources which are available. Some research on this theme might illuminate features of the method of Hellenistic Academics which are difficult to reconstruct from the available testimonial evidence. This topic may be most rewarding for the project of collecting a textually based account of the *origins and development of the notion of isostheneia*.

Closing Remarks

This *Collection of Texts* assembled for the purpose of providing some reflection of the development of the basis of the Sceptic's way has been drawn out of those Greek and Roman literary resources which have survived for us to read. The passages in the

collection come from medical, historical and philosophical books, and are found in the Classical, Hellenistic, and Imperial periods of antiquity. They represent a kind of roadmap on which the way of the Sceptic is traced in two dimensions: across disciplines and through time. The compilation of details which the texts supplies on the basis of scepticism is in some respect unique, and has not appeared in other studies of the subject. In this respect this work represents a contribution to ongoing inquiry.

The sources which the collection of texts locates as *origins*, and the paths it describes for the *development* of the notion of *isostheneia*, are not drawn in great detail. Much that was written which could enhance the *Collection of Texts* has been lost, and some of what remains has yet to be identified. This anthology if not complete, yet achieves some measure of comprehensiveness, including most passages that were widely familiar to scholars, and some that were not so well known. There remains work to be done. But the outline which this study provides is a responsible reflection of the resources on the subject. It may attract others to add textual detail to phases of our knowledge of *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* presented here only in outline. May it also serve as a resource for those whose interest is the scholar's analysis of the conceptions at the basis of ancient scepticism. Should it do either of these things it would have made a contribution to the study of the subject.

The *Collection of Texts* has drawn attention to some features of

the intellectual experience of ancient thinkers which are not widely recognised as being significant for an enriched account of Greek scepticism. It seems to have been a common characterization of the method practiced by Hellenistic Academics, and as found in the books of Sextus Empiricus, that Pyrrhonism was a kind of negative dialectic or antilogy, whose impact was destructive of positive effort to provide a more adequate account of experience. This study reflects recent scholarly attention to the enhanced significance which rhetorical considerations came to occupy alongside dialectic in the Sceptic's evaluation of the claims of the Dogmatists. Out of this change in focus the study finds the description of the Sceptics as those who persist in the continuation of their inquiry to be a more positive representation grounded in their committment to ongoing research. In this regard the study makes a contribution to the ongoing effort to extend our knowledge of ancient thought.

In the *Introduction* it was suggested that one of the sources of *Interest and Value of the Research* might turn out to be the ways in which the history of ideas approach to the subject has assisted in illuminating some of the resources of ancient scepticism. This approach has identified phases of the development of the notion of *isostheneia* which might have escaped the attention of one pursuing research on the subject within another model. Perhaps the most significant result in this regard is the generation of the suggestion that the controversy between the Epicureans and Stoics over the problem of how to decide between incompatible and yet

simultaneously attractive accounts produced from equally reliable sensory impressions, is at the root of the *articulation* of the notion of *isostheneia*. A second result obtained from this method has been the suggestion that the confrontation between the philosopher's production of theoretical accounts and the physician's requirement to deal with individual existents has contributed to the elaboration of the sceptical way. The use of the history of ideas method to deal with such a subject as this has resulted in these and other hypotheses which should be accounted as a contribution to the research on the topic.

Finally this study has used electronic search techniques which have only recently been available for examing ancient texts. One of the ways that these have made a contribution to this study lies in their support of the suggestion that words from the root ἰσοσθεν- had not been used to name the sceptical notion before Sextus Empiricus. This supposition combined with the identification of a location in which the notion is so named from the text of Clement of Alexandria, for which a date is established, provides some new evidence for the dating of Sextus. This supported hypothesis and other similar suggestions derived from the electronic examination of the philological record, and the use of new search techniques to fashion innovative if yet still tentative solutions to old problems, represent a contribution to knowledge in the dimensions of both method and product. This *Collection of Texts* should then be acknowledged as having responded in some measure to the promises of *Interest and Value* made for it in the *Introduction*.

Appendix A: Other Appearances of Isostheneia

Many of the appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- which occur in the surviving literature do not seem to have to do with the sceptical notion of *isostheneia* with which this study is concerned. Although no relationship between the texts in which these appearances of the words occur and the subject can at the moment be described, it seemed to be worthwhile to identify them. Some reader may yet find materials here to add to the collection of texts above. Some appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- occurring in the Imperial period after 387 A.D., and in the Medieval period are included here which do have to do with the notion of *isostheneia*. The justification for including an identification of these passages in this *Collection of Texts* seemed obvious.

> (A1) Asclepiodotus is thought to have been a student under Posidonius. His *Tactica* probably largely reproduced a lost work of Posidonius known as Τέχνη τακτική; but some of the material in the text may go back through Posidonius to Polybius (c.200-c.118 B.C.). These two instances of words in *Tactica*, at III: 2, and III: 4, from the root ἰσοσθεν- are the first records we have of it for which a reliable date can be obtained. In both of the passages the word is used to deal with subjects outside epistemology. Oldfather mentions that Asclepiodotus is the earliest source for many of the technical military terms of the Hellenistic period.[1] In a list of these terms ἰσοσθενέω is found glossed as *be equally strong.*[2]

[1] William Abbott Oldfather, "Notes on the text of Asklepiodotos", page 140.

[2] [258] 143.

(A2) Severus Iatrosophista (first century A.D.) was a physician, in whose *De Instrumentis infusoriis seu clysteribus ad Timotheum* XXVII a word from the Greek root ἰσοσθεν- appears. This is the first instance found of a medical use for a word formed from the root of ἰσοσθεν-.

(A3) There are twenty-eight appearances of ἰσοσθένεια in the anatomical and physiological writing of Galen. Among these texts are to be included passages from *Ars Medica* XXII; *De Causis Pulsuum* II: 8; *De Compositione Medicamentorum per Genera* II: 14; *De Difficultate Respirationis* II: 7; *De Febrium Differentiis* II: 8, and II: 14; *De Motu Musculorum* I: 9; *De Sanitate Tuenda* III: 9 and IV: 9; *De Semine* II: 2; *De Symptomatum Causis* II: 2; *De Totius Morbi Temporibus* IV; *De Tremore, Palpitatione, Convulsione et Rigore* VI and VIII; *De Usu Partium* I: 19, VII: 14, VII: 19 and XII: 13; *In Hippocratis Epidemiarum* I: 2 (25) and III: 1 (4); and *In Hippocratis Prognosticum* II: 28. Two additional passages **94** and **95** from Galen's *De Motu Musculorum* have been introduced in *§23. Chrysippus and Defending Opposite Sides.*

(A4) One appearance of the word can be found in the *Paedagogus* I: 8 (71.3-72.1) of Clement of Alexandria.

(A5) There is some uncertainty concerning the identity of the author of the text in which is to be found an appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- at *Halieutica* II: 464-466. On the one hand the author may have been an Oppian of Cilicia (later second century A.D.) who also wrote *Cynegetica;* on the other hand the author of *Halieutica* may have been another Oppian from Syria who lived early in the third century A.D. This passage appears at about the time that Sextus Empiricus is thought to have lived, if contemporary dating for him is not to be re-evaluated in view of the questions about the nature of the source of Hippolytus' quotations raised by Janácek. Oppian of Cilicia would have been a younger contemporary of Galen. It is worthy of note that this instance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- is used in an anatomical description, after the fashion which may have been initiated by Galen.

(A6) There is a passage in the pseudepigraphic literature attached to Galen's authority, and thought to have been written in the third century A.D. In *De Victus Ratione in Morbis Acutis ex Hippocratis Sententia* IV, there is an appearance of a word from the

root ἰσοσθεν- used to indicate equal strength.

(A7) Origen was born of Christian parents in Alexandria and lived at a time when the persecution of Christians was continuing. We are indebted to Eusebius whose sixth book of his *Ecclesiastical History* is the source of most of our knowledge of him. Origen was banished from Alexandria and spent the latter part of his life in Palestine, where he was subjected to repeated torture in the Decian persecution of 250-251 A.D. He wrote voluminously on textual criticism of the Bible, in exegesis, and in theological matters. Only a small portion of his work has survived for us to read. One passage, at *Selecta in Psalmos* XLIX: 2 contains an instance in which a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears.

(A8) Alexander of Aphrodisias (later second-early third century A.D.) lived most of his life in Athens, and taught there from the end of the second century. He seems to have been uninfluenced by the mystical themes developed in some of the philosophical writing of his contemporaries, and to have denied the immortality of the soul and the reality of time. But most of his writing was devoted to an explanation of the views of Aristotle. In this regard Sorabji notes that his commentaries "represent the fullest flowering of the Aristotelian tradition. To his successors Alexander was The Commentator *par excellence*."[3] In a passsage from one of these commentaries, the *In Librum de Sensu Commentarium* at II: 64, is found an appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-. This passage indicates that the use of these words was widespread at the end of the second century, for here it appears in philosophical literature in Athens, as it has in the Christian texts of Origen in Alexandria, and in the medical writings of Galen in Rome.

(A9) Didymus Caecus (c. 313-c.398 A.D.) lived in Alexandria, and wrote Christian theological texts. In his *De Trinitate* at I: 36, II: 5, III: 1 and III: 2, in *Contra Manichaeos* at IX and XIV, in *Fragmenta in Psalmos* at VIII: 6, and in *Commentarii in Zachariam* at II: 258, passages are found in which words from the root ἰσοσθεν- appear. These appearances of the Greek word attest to its continued presence in the writing originating in Alexandria.

(A10) Oribasius (c.320-c.400 A.D.) was born in Pergamum and studied medicine in Alexandria. The *Collectiones*

[3] Richard Sorabji, "The Commentators", page 130.

Medicae consist of a compilation of excerpts from earlier medical writers. Of the 70 (or 72) books of this work only 25 survive. The lost books can be partly reconstructed from the *Synopsis ad Eustathium*, and the *Ad Eunapium*, both of which are summaries of the longer *Collectiones Medicae*, in several passages of which at VI: 11 (7-8), XLIV: 2 (7), *Libri Incerti* LXII: 23, *Libri Incerti* LXII: 26 and *Libri Incerti* LXII: 43, words from the root ἰσοσθεν- appear. And in *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* at VI: 23 (8), and VIII: 15 (4), additional appearances are to be located.

(A11) Basil of Caesarea (330-379 A.D.) having studied at Constantinople and Athens, organized monastic communities after his baptism in 356 A.D., for which he composed rules. He spent the last nine years of his life involved in controversy as Bishop of Caesarea. In his written work Basil appears to have a broad knowledge of Classical culture. A word from the root ἰσοσθεν- is located in *De Spiritu Sancto* XXV: 59 (177A). This appearance of the Greek word which names the sceptical notion seems to be the last one in the literature of the period of what has come to be known as ancient philosophy.

(A12) John Chrysostom (c.354-407 A.D.) became Bishop of Constantinople. In two of his devotional works a word from the Greek root ἰσοσθεν- appears. The first from a text titled *In Acta Apostolorum* II. The second appearance of the Greek word is found in *Fragmenta in Job* XL. These appearances occur almost immediately after the writing of Augustine's *Contra Academicos*.

(A13) The passage 35 in Stobaeus' ἐκλογῶν is preserved as a quotation from the writing of Democritus, and is included here as most likely an instance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- improperly attributed to the presocratic author, and probably more appropriately included as an appearance from the fifth century A.D.

(A14) The textual record of the *Concilium universale Ephesenum anno 431* has included a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- at I: 1 (7:77).

(A15) Syrianus, one of the Aristotelian commentators who lived in the 5th century A.D., has included a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- in his *In Metaphysica Commentaria* IV: 3 (870b1-7).

(A16) Hesychius is thought to have lived in Alexandria

in the fifth century A.D.; there is one entry in his *Lexicon*, under iota 980.1, in which an appearance of ἰσοσθεν- is to be found. Opposite this entry is ἰσοδύναμον.

(A17) Ammonius (435/445-517/526 A.D.) taught in Alexandria and included words from the root ἰσοσθεν- in his discussion of Aristotle's *de Interpretatione* at VII (95r), and XIV (204r-204v). Westerink notes "the claim that Plato himself was a sceptic, [was] a subject frequently discussed in the school of Ammonius."[7]

(A18) John Philoponus (c.490-570 A.D.) was the student and literary executor of Ammonius. From early in his life, and in the main from notes of Ammonius' lectures, Philoponus published commentaries on Aristotle's texts. In these commentaries are included nine words from the root ἰσοσθεν-. They are located at *In Aristotelis de Anima Commentaria* at II: 5 (5r54-5v1) and III: 12 (4r22-23); *In Aristotelis de Generatione et Corruptione Commentaria* at I: 5 (22v34-36); *In Aristotelis Meteorologicum Commentarium* at A: IV (91v43-45), and A: IV (91v51-54); *In Aristotelis Physicorum Commentaria* at I: 5 (6v14-16); III: 5 (15v26-28); IV: 6 (7v28-31) and V: 4.5 (228b26). With Philoponus the Alexandrian school became Christian.

(A19) Simplicius (early sixth century A.D.) was a member of the school of Alexandria and an Aristotelian commentator. His commentaries on the *De Caelo, Categories, Physics,* and *De Anima* contain many fragments of pre-Socratic philosophers. His writing contains appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν-. Among these are *In Aristotelis Categorias Commentarium* at VI (36r7-9); VII (49v26-29); XI (105r52-105v2) and at XI (105v36-38). Several instances of the word are to be found in passages from his *In Aristotelis de Caelo Commentaria* at I: 3 (78b25-29); I: 3 (78b29-34); I: 4 (68b22-33); I: 4 (68b35-39); I: 4 (70b35-39); I: 4 (70b35-39); I: 6 (43r19-21) and I: 4 (89b11-15). The last instances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- are to be found in passages from his *In Aristotelis Physicorum Commentaria* at I: 5 (39v24-26); I: 5 (39v37-40); III: 5 (110v52-54) and at III: 5 (111r3-8). There are nineteen instances of these words in commentaries of Simplicius; only in the texts of Galen and Sextus Empiricus is the word used more frequently.

(A20) Olympiodorus (early sixth century A.D.) of the

[7] XXXIV.

Alexandrian school wrote commentaries on Plato's *Alcibiades, Gorgias* and *Phaedo,* and on Aristotle's *Categories* and *Meteora,* the latter of which has been dated with certainty after 565 A.D.[5] Two instances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- are found in Olympiodorus' commentary *In Aristotelis Meteora Commentaria* at I: 4 (9v13-14) and at II: 6 (43r19-21).

(A21) Elias (sixth century A.D.) was a student of Olympiodorus, and wrote commentaries on Porphyry's (232-305 A.D.) *Isagaoge* and on Aristotle's *Categories.* A word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears in *In Porphyrii Isagogen Commentaria* at V (402.3-6) and *In Aristotelis Categorias Commentaria* at VI (262v). These are the last found appearances of the word used to name the sceptical notion in the commentaries written by authors from the school in Alexandria.

(A22) Aëtius Amidenus (sixth century A.D.) was a physician in whose medical writing two words from the root ἰσοσθεν- appear. These are to be found in *Iatricorum* at V: 82 and at VI: 38. These passages seem to reflect continued interest in the medical usage of the word used by Pyrrhonians to name the sceptical notion of *isostheneia.*

(A23) Paulus of Aegineta (seventh century A.D.) was a physician in whose medical books there are two passages in which words from the root ἰσοσθεν- appear. These are to be found in *Epitomae Medicae* at II: 34 and at III: 20. Again the word is found to be useful in medical descriptions.

(A24) Joannes Damascenus lived in the seventh century and has included a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- in one of his devotional texts, *Epistula de Hymno Trisagio* at XV.

(A25) Stephanus Atheniensis was a physician (seventh century A.D.), perhaps born in Athens and identified as an Athenian in the handbooks, but taught in Alexandria. His *Scholia in Hippocratis Prognosticon* at III: 1 contains a passage in which a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears. This text reflects the use of the word to describe equal strength or balance.

(A26) Theophilus Protospatharius (seventh century A.D.) was a physician in whose book *De Corporis Humani Fabrica* at II a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- appears. There are also appearances of the word in *De Febrium*

[5] [7] XIII.

Differentia at XLVIII, XLIX and L; a text written with Stephanus Atheniensis (seventh century A.D.). These are the latest Greek medical texts in which appearances of the word have been found.

(A27) Photius was Patriarch of Constantinople from 858-867 A.D., and for a later second period extending from 878-886. He is also considered the best Byzantine scholar of the period, in whose *Myriobiblion* or *Bibliotheca* summaries of some 280 prose works have been preserved. There is a single passage in Photius' *Bibliotheca* at CCXXII (195b24-26) in which an appearance of the word is to be found. Photius also wrote theological and devotional works. From his *Commentarii in Matthaeum* at LVI is drawn this second appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν-. This is one of the later devotional texts found in which the Greek word occurs.

(A28) Georgius Monachus is thought to have lived in Alexandria in the ninth century. There are two passages in his texts in which appearances of *isosthen-* are to be found. One is located in the *Chronicon* at XLVI: A and a second passage is to be found in the *Chronicon Breve* at IV: 431.

(A29) The *Suda Lexicon* is thought to have been produced by many contributors towards the end of the tenth century. There are two passages in the *Lexicon* in which appearances of words from the root ἰσοσθεν- are to be found. In one location under *iota:* 633 the word ἰσοδύναμος is entered opposite Ἰσοσθενής. In a second passage under *omnicron:* 802 there is an interesting gloss on οὐδεν μᾶλλον.

(A30) Michael Ephesius (eleventh or twelfth century A.D.) lived in Constantinople, and wrote a commentary on Aristotle's ethics in which an appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- can be found in *In Ethica Nicomachea Commentaria* at IX (162v1-6). This author is one of the last commentators writing in Greek in which the word used to name the sceptical notion can be found.

(A31) Lucian produced about eighty pieces, most of which are in the form of dialogue. In the *Scholia* to his *Icaromenippus* at XXV one appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- occurs. Later in the *Scholia* to Lucian's *Hermotimus* at LIII a second passage appears. The author(s) of these *Scholia* appear to have found using the Greek word ἰσοσθένεια useful.

(A32) In the *Scholia* to Oppian's *Halieutica* discussed above in (A5) one appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- occurs at CCCCLXVI.

(A33) In the *Scholia* to book three (IX: 2) of Thucydides one appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- occurs.

(A34) There is an additional appearance of a word from the root ἰσοσθεν- in Proclus' (410/412-485 A.D.) *In Platonis Parmenidem* which I have not yet been able to locate.

This brings to an end the report on the data located in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* search for words from the root ἰσοσθεν- which do not seem to have to do with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* for the period under study. For those interested in the fate of the notion of *isostheneia* after 387 A.D., some attention might be directed to the passages of the Alexandrian commentators, especially those of Ammonius (A17) and John Philoponus (A18). In addition the gloss on οὐδεν μᾶλλον from the *Suda Lexicon* (A29) looks as though it would repay some investigation.

Appendix B: Logical Equivalence and Aequipollens

The Latin *aequipollens* appears to be a transliteration of the Greek word *isostheneia*. Electronic searching techniques were used to locate instances of the word in those resources which provided Latin literature in machine-readable format. These included the *Resource of Latin Texts, Papyri and Inscriptions* produced by the Packard Humanities Institute, and the *CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts* created by the Université Catholique de Louvain. The results of the research are tabulated below. The appearances in the surviving literature indicate that *aequipollens* was used in devotional texts, and to denote logical equivalence. There are no instances located in the Latin literature which has been searched of the word being used to name the sceptical notion of *isostheneia*.

> (B1) In addition to the two passages from Apuleius' *Florida* presented in *§39 Authors of the Second Sophistic,* there are three from what is supposed to be the third book of his *De Platone et eius Dogmate,* called Περὶ ἑρμηνείας, whose authorship is not confidently attributed to Apuleius. In these passages are the first four appearances of what seems to be the creation of a new word *aequipollens* to express the logical notion of equal strength of propositions in the Latin philosophical literature, emerging at about the same time as ἰσοσθένεια was beginning to be used to name the sceptic's epistemological notion in the Greek texts. These appearances are found at *Peri Hermeneias* V, IX and XII. This text would have been written, assuming Apuleius' authorship of it, in the third quarter of the second century: Apuleius is thought to have died about 180 A.D. Sullivan in his *Apuleian Logic* claims that it seems to have been innovative in several areas, one of

which may have been the theory of equipollent propositions.[1]

(B2) Some commentators have thought that Galen originated the treatment of logically equipollent propositions.[2] Sullivan observes with respect to this claim by Prantl that Apuleius' Περὶ ἑρμηνείας may have been Galen's source for the discussion of equipollence supposed to have been in his book Περὶ τῶν ἰσοδυναμουσῶν προτάσεων.[3] The uncertainty about the priority of either author's work seems difficult to resolve since the authorship for the book we have is in doubt, and the contents of the other are not available to us now. There is a passage which appears to have to do with the logical notion of equivalence in Galen's *Subfiguratio Empirica* at VIII: 50 (25-51.9). This passage may supply support for the claim that Galen was in fact familiar with the notion of logical equivalence, which was not put forward explicitly in his *Institutio Logica*. On the strength of the apparent absence of other instances of *aequipollens* in the literature of the second and third centuries, it seems possible that the Περὶ ἑρμηνείας might have been written by some unknown author, in later centuries when use of the word is attested.

(B3) Rupert Tuitien (c.1070-1135 A.D.) produced a work entitled *Commentaria in Euangelium Sancti Iohannis* in which are to be found three appearances of words from the root *aequipollen-*. These are to be found at III: 3.13, VIII: 8.26 and XI: 15.13. There are also appearances in his *De Sancta Trinitate et Operibus Eius I: In Genesim* at I: 33, in *De Sancta Trinitate et Operibus Eius XIII: In Exodum* at IV: 2, in *De Sancta Trinitate et Operibus Eius XXV: In Librum Psalmorum* at V, and in *De Sancta Trinitate et Operibus Eius XXXIII: In Euangelistas* at VI.

(B4) Peter Abelard (c.1079-1142 A.D.) produced a devotional work called *Theologia Christiana* in which a word from the root *aequipollen-* occurs at IV: 47.

(B5) John Sarisberry (c.1115-1180 A.D.) produced a work entitled *Metalogicon* in which are to be found three appearances of words from the root *aequipollen-*. These are to be found at I: 15 (843b).

[1] Mark, W. Sullivan, *Apuleian Logic*, page 233.
[2] Carl Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande* I, page 568.
[3] [294] 233n97.

(B6) John of Forda (c.1140-1214 A.D.) produced a devotional work in which an appearance of a word from the root *aequipollen-* occurs in *Sermon* CV.

(B7) Raymond Lulle (c.1235-1315 A.D.) produced a work entitled *Ars Generalis Ultima* in which are to be found six appearances of words from the root *aequipollen-*. These are located at CXXVIII: 4.1 and CXXVIII: 10.82. In addition there are appearances of the word in his *Liber de Investigatione Actuum Divinarum Rationum* at CXVI: 3.451, and in his *Liber Disputationis Petri et Raimundi sive Phantasticus* at CXC: 1.

(B8) Lucan (39-65 A.D.) produced an unfinished poetic account of the war between Caesar and Pompey in ten books, originally titled *Bellum Civile*, and later known as *Pharsalia*. In the scholia to book I of this work three appearances of words from the root *aequipollen-* occur at I: 359, I: 645 and I: 650.

(B9) St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 A.D.) also found use for the word *aequipollens*, in his *In Libros de Caelo et Mundo* at XXVII: A, in *In Libros Peri Hermeneias* at XI: A, XII: A, and at XIII: A. The word also appears in his *Summa Theologiae* at Q.19, A.3, Obj.4.

This brings to an end the brief report on the data located in the search of the *Resource of Latin Texts, Papyri and Inscriptions* and the *CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts* for words from the root *aequipollen-* which do not seem to have to do with *the origins and development of the notion of isostheneia* for the period under study. One of the interesting results of the data is the apparent lack of any surviving text in the groups searched, apart from that attributed to Apuleius (B1), which uses the word to deal with the notion of logical equivalence.

Appendix C: Manuscripts of Sextus Empiricus

The manuscripts used by Mutschmann and updated by Mau in the preparation of the Teubner edition (1912-1914) and (1958-1961) of the works of Sextus Empiricus are included in the following:

(C1) Barber 248. Paper, 31 x 22 cm., 42 ff., 29 lines on each side. Designated Ba by Mutschmann and dated to the 15th century.[1] Contains the first of the *Adversus Mathematicos* books, S.599-697,11 Bekker. Dated to the third quarter of the sixteenth century by Eleuteri.[2]

(C2) Berol. Designated b by Mutschmann. A miscellaneous codex, containing on f.151r to f.162r the first part of *Adversus Mathematicos*, Bekker S.599-625,12.

(C3) Berol. Phill. 1518. Paper, 31.5 x 23.5 cm., 330 ff. Copied by Camillus Bartholomaeus de Zanettis in Venice in 1542. Designated B by Mutschmann. Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C4) Cizensis fol. 70. Paper, 438 ff. Copied by ἐμμανουήλος δηβαιβενὶς ὁ ἐκ μονεμβασίας in 1556. Designated C by Mutschmann and dated 1556.[3] Containing *M* I-XI, and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing.

(C5) Escor. T-1-16. Paper, 33 x 27 cm., 380 ff. The first 100 ff. contain *M* I-VI. The next 250 ff. contain the five books *Adversus Dogmaticos*, *M* VII-XI, and Διαλέξεις is to be found in the final 30 ff. Designated z by Mutschmann.

(C6) Escurial Ψ-IV-16. Paper, 19 x 14 cm., 202 ff. Designated d by Mutschmann and dated to either the late 16th or early 17th century.[4] A miscellaneous codex,

[1] Hermann Mutschmann, "Die Überlieferung der Schriften des Sextus Empiricus", page 249.
[2] Paolo Eleuteri, "Note su Alcuni Manoscritti di Sesto Empirico", page 432.
[3] [253] 246.
[4] [253] 249n1.

containing part of *M* IX beginning on f.38.

(C7) Escurial R-III-6. Paper, 20 x 15 cm., 290 ff. Designated x by Mutschmann and dated to the 16th century.[5] Contains the first of the *Adversus Mathematicos* books, S.599-761 Bekker.

(C8) Escurial R-III-12. Paper, 22 x 16 cm., 288 ff. Designated y by Mutschmann and dated to the 16th century.[6] Contains *PH* I-III.

(C9) Laur. 8.11. Paper, 28 x 29.5 cm., 345 ff., each side with two columns of 30 lines. Copied by Thomas Prodromites, and dated 8 September 1465. Designated Γ by Mutschmann. Contains *PH* I-III and *M* I-XI.

(C10) Laur. 85.19. Paper. 23.5 x 18 cm., 354 ff. Copied by two persons. The first person copied *PH* I-III and the last pages of *M* X, and Διαλέξεις. Each page with 23 lines. Dated to the 16th century by Mutschmann.[7] The second person copied *Adversus Mathematicos*, with many gaps and carelessly written. Each page with 24-27 lines. Designated f by Mutschmann and dated in the 15th century.[8] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις. Eleuteri[9] reports that line 10 on f.345 and line 12 on f.348 contain margin notes by Francesco Filelfo.

(C11) Laur. 85.24. Parchment. 27 x 19 cm., 349 ff., each page from 24 to 30 lines. Designated F by Mutschmann and dated in the 16th century.[10] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C12) Londoninensis. King's Library 16 D III, in the British Museum. With large gaps. Paper, 31.5 x 22 cm., 414 ff., 20-25 lines on each page. Designated L by Mutschmann and dated to the 16th century.[11] From the library of J. Casaubonus. Contains *PH* I-III and *M* I-XI.

(C13) Madrid 10,112. At the Biblioteca Nacional, ff 1-

[5] [253] 248.
[6] [253] 248.
[7] [253] 245.
[8] [253] 245.
[9] [172] 433.
[10] [253] 245.
[11] [253] 248.

30. Schmitt[12] believes that this latin translation was made from a lost Greek original by Niccolò da Reggio, active in Naples 1308-1347. Contains *PH* I-III. Dated to the fourteenth century in Spain. A better version of the Latin translation than (C26) Paris 14,700.

(C14) Marc. Class. IV Nr. 26. Parchment, 30 x 22 cm., 331 ff., each page with 30 lines. Copied by Caesar Strategos. Designated W by Mutschmann, and dated in the 16th century.[13] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C15) Marc. 408. Parchment, 21.5 x 14 cm., 408 ff., 21 lines on each side. Dated to the 15th century by Mutschmann, and designated Ve.[14] Contains *M* I-XI and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing.

(C16) Mertonensis 304. Paper, 33 x 22.5 cm., 168 ff., 30 lines on each side. Dated to the 16th century, and designated M by Mutschmann.[15] Contains *M* I-XI and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing. Eleuteri[16] dates this manuscript to the last quarter of the sixteenth century. This manuscript is listed in *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800-1600, 1A*,[17] numbers 142 and 212.

(C17) Monac. 79. Paper,34.5 x 24 cm., 346 ff., 29 lines per page. Designated m by Mutschmann and dated in the 16th century.[18] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C18) Mutinensis gr. 236 (a H. 6.30) in the Estense Library in Modena. Paper, 29.5 x 21 cm. Designated Mu by Mutschmann and dated to the 16th century.[19] A miscellaneous codex containing on ff.107r to ff.133v the first part of *Adversus Mathematicos*, Bekker S.658,25.

[12] Charles B. Schmitt, "The Rediscovery of Ancient Skepticism in Modern Times", page 243 note 6.
[13] [253] 246.
[14] [253] 247.
[15] [253] 246.
[16] [172] 432.
[17] E. Gamillscheg and D. Harlfinger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800-1600, 1A*, numbers 142 and 212.
[18] [253] 246.
[19] [253] 249.

(C19) Ottobon 21. Paper, 33 x 21 cm., 392 ff., each side with 30 lines. Copied by Nikolaos Murmuris of Naples in 1541. Designated O by Mutschmann. Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-XI, and the first three chapters of Διαλέξεις.

(C20) Paris. 1963. Paper, 33 x 22 cm., 327 ff., each page with 32 lines. Copied by Nikoloas Sophianos in Venice in 1534. Designated A by Mutschmann. Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C21) Paris 1964. Paper, 27 x 29 cm., 279 ff., 2 columns each with 29 lines on each side. Dated to the 15th century and designated E by Mutschmann.[20] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-XI, and the first three chapters of Διαλέξεις.

(C22) Paris 1965. Paper, 33 x 22 cm., 323 ff., 30 lines on each side. Dated to the 16th century, and designated P by Mutschmann.[21] Contains *M* I-XI and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing.

(C23) Paris 1966 and 1967. Paper, 32 x 22 cm. and 34 x 23 cm., 248 ff. and 169 ff., each side with 29 lines and 30 lines respectively. Dated to the 16th century and designated e by Mutschmann.[22] Paris 1966 contains *PH* I-III and *M* I-VII. Paris 1967 contains *M* VII-XI and the first three chapters of Διαλέξεις. A quaternio is missing between 1966 and 1967. Copied by Constantios.

(C24) Paris 2081. Paper, 23 x 15.5 cm., 336 ff., 24 lines on each side, with beginning mutilated. Dated to the 16th century and designated Z by Mutschmann.[23] Contains *M* I-XI and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing.

(C25) Paris 2128. Paper, 16.5 x 11 cm., 144 ff., 20 lines on each side. Designated Y by Mutschmann and dated to the 17th century.[24] Contains the first of the *Adversus Mathematicos* books, S.599-761 Bekker.

(C26) Paris lat. 14700. At the Bibliothèque Nationale, Parchment, 34 x 22 cm. Designated Tr.1. by Mutschmann and dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century.[25]

[20] [253] 247.
[21] [253] 247.
[22] [253] 247.
[23] [253] 247.
[24] [253] 248.
[25] [253] 250.

Eleuteri[26] dates this manuscript to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Schmitt[27] believes that this Latin translation from a lost Greek original is attributable to Niccolò da Reggio, active in Naples 1308-1347. Contains a translation of *PH* I-III in f.83r to f.132r. A description of the manuscript may be found in *Aristoteles Latinus, I,* pages 544-545,[28] and in *Iter Italicum. Accedunt alia itinera,* III, page 235.[29]

(C27) Paris suppl. 133. Paper,16.5 x 11.5 cm., 418 ff., each page with 25 lines. Designated D by Mutschmann and dated in the 17th century.[30] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C28) Paris suppl. 1156. Parchment, 28 x 20 cm., 35 lines each side. Designated Π by Mutschmann and dated to the 10th century.[31] Folios 21 and 22 contain part of PH, Bekker, S.182,8 to S.187,10.

(C29) Regimont. 16 b 12. Parchment, each side with 27 lines. Folios 1-267 contains Sextus' text, and folios 267-272 contain the Διαλέξεις, and conclude with writing on medicine. Designated K by Mutschmann, and containing *M* I-XI, but with *PH* I-III missing.

(C30) Rehdig. 45 in the Breslauer State library. Parchment, 31 x 21 cm., 248 ff. Dated to the end of the 15th century and designated V by Mutschmann.[32] The manuscript is mutilated at the end. Contains *PH* I-III and *M* I-XI, with a latter part missing, continues to Bekker S. 365-366. Eleuteri[33] dates this manuscript to the last quarter of the sixteenth century. This manuscript is listed in *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800-1600, 1A,*[34] number 212.

(C31) Savilianus gr. 1. In the Bodleian library, Oxford. Paper, 36 x 23 cm. On the first 199 ff.

[26] [172] 434.
[27] [285] 243n6.
[28] George Lacombe, *Aristoteles Latina, volume I,* pages 544-545.
[29] Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Iter Italicum, Accedunt alia itinera,* III, page 235, section XIII.
[30] [253] 245.
[31] [253] 249. See also C. Astruc and M.L. Concasty, *Le supplément grec,* pages 318-321.
[32] [253] 248.
[33] [172] 433.
[34] [181] number 212.

Sextus' writings, 36 lines on each side. Dated to the 16th century, and designated S by Mutschmann.[35] Contains *M* I-XI and Διαλέξεις, but with *PH* I-III missing. Eleuteri[36] reports this codex to have been copied by Iakobos Darimplaios, and dated 15 February 1589. This manuscript is listed in *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800-1600, 1A*,[37] number 142.

(C32) Savilianus gr. 11, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Paper, 19.5 x 15 cm., 198 ff., each side with 16 to 28 lines, but customarily 19 or 20 lines. Designated s by Mutschmann and dated to the 16th century.[38] Contains *PH* I-III.

(C33) Taurinensis gr. 12. Paper, 35 x 22 cm., 351 ff. Two columns with each having 30 lines on each page. Designated T by Mutschmann, and dated at the end of the 15th century, or the beginning of the 16th century.[39] On the first sheet there is the inscription: "Ex libris Henrici Stephani Florentiis emptus 1555". Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

(C34) Vatican 217. Paper, 33 x 22 cm., 354 ff., each page with 27-29 lines. Designated r by Mutschmann and dated in the 17th century.[40] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις. For a description of this manuscript see *Codices Vaticani Graeci 1-329*,[41] pages 282-283. Dated by Eleuteri[42] to the third quarter of the sixteenth century.

(C35) Vatican 1338. Paper. In three volumes by four different copyists. The first is responsible for ff.12-17. The second is responsible for ff.18-146, 15 x 9 cm., 20 lines per page. The third copyist completed ff.152-275, 16 x 10 cm., each page containing 20 lines. The fourth person transcribed ff.276-699, 14 x 9 cm., each page containing 20 lines. Designated R by Mutschmann and dated in the 17th century.[43] Contains

[35] [253] 247.
[36] [172] 432.
[37] [181] number 142.
[38] [253] 248.
[39] [253] 246.
[40] [253] 246.
[41] Giovanni Mercati and P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani Graeci 1-329*, pages 282-283.
[42] [172] 433.
[43] [253] 248.

PH I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις. Dated by Eleuteri[44] to the sixteenth century.

(C36) Vatican 2990, paper, ff. 266-381. Of *Adversus Mathematicos* but incomplete, translated into Latin by Giovanni Lorenzi. Dated by Schmitt to about 1485. For a description of this manuscript see *Opere minori,*[45] pages 107-108.

(C37) Venice lat. X 267 (3960), at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, ff. 1-57, containing PH I-III and parts of *Adversus Mathematicos*. Cavini[46] believes that this translation seems to have been made from a lost Greek original by Niccolò da Reggio, active in Naples 1308-1347. Copied by Petr. de Montagnana. A description of the manuscript may be found in *Iter Italicum. Accedunt alia itinera.*[47]

(C38) Vesontinus 408, in the University library at Besancon. Paper, 30 x 22 cm., 164 ff., 29 lines on each side. Dated to the 16th century and designated U by Mutschmann.[48] A miscellaneous codex, the first 100 ff. of which contains *PH* I-III.

(C39) Vesontinus 409, in the university library at Besancon. Paper, 323 ff., each page with 30 lines. Designated H by Mutschmann and dated in the 16th century.[49] Contains *PH* I-III, *M* I-X, and Διαλέξεις.

The text of Sextus Empiricus survived in Constantinople through the Medieval period, and there seems to have been some interest in the writings of Sextus Empiricus on the part of Byzantine

[44] [172] 433.
[45] Giovanni Mercati, *Opere Minori,* volume IV, pages 107-108.
[46] Walter Cavini, "Appunti sulla prima diffusione in occidente delle opere di Sesto Empirico".
[47] Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Iter Italicum, Accedunt alia itinera,* II, page 252.
[48] [253] 248.
[49] [253] 245.

scholars.[50] There was one Latin translation of a small part of *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* in Europe, in a manuscript (C28) dated by Mutschmann to the 10th century.[51] There were also Latin manuscripts (C13)(C26)(C37) of the complete text of PH I-III in Europe from early in the 14th century.[52] They are copies of a translation thought to have been made by Niccolò da Reggio from a lost Greek original.[53] The first Greek manuscript, possibly (C10), to be read in Europe was brought to Italy from either Greece[54] or Constantinople by Francesco Filelfo in 1427.[55] Between 1427 and the appearance of the first Latin edition in 1562 there was little interest in the philosophic component of the text of Sextus Empiricus.[56] Early commentators on the manuscripts, especially on (C26) Paris 14,700, have included Jourdain[57] and Baeumker.[58] Elter[59] and Rademacher[60] discussed Paris 1213, a manuscript by Nicolai

[50] See Johann Albertus Fabricius, *Bibliotheca graeca;* Anton Elter and Ludwig Radermacher, *Analecta graeca;* [250]; and Charles B. Schmitt's brief account of medieval Greek scholarship on Sextus Empiricus in [285] 233-234.

[51] Hermann Mutschmann's comments on Paris suppl. 1156 are in [253] 249-250.

[52] The three manuscripts of the Latin translation are (C26) Paris 14,700, (C13) Madrid 10,112, and (C37) Venice lat. X 267 (3960).

[53] [285] 243n6.

[54] [175] 76.

[55] Charles B. Schmitt, "An Unstudied Fifteenth-century Latin Translation of Sextus Empiricus by Giovanni Lorenzi", pages 245-246.

[56] Charles B. Schmitt, "The Development of the Historiography of Scepticism: From the Renaissance to Brucker", pages 186-187.

[57] Charles Jourdain, "Sextus Empiricus et la philosophie scolastique".

[58] Clemens Baeumker, "Eine bisher unbekannte lateinische Übersetzung der Ὑποτυπωσεων des Sextus Empiricus".

[59] Anton Elter, "Analecta ad historiam litterarum graecarum".

[60] Ludwig Rademacher, "Nicolai Cabasilae κατὰ τῶν λεγομένων περὶ τοῦ κριτηρίου τῆς ἀληθείας εἰ ἐστι παρὰ Πύρρωνος τοῦ καταράτου".

Cabasilae in which an attack on Pyrrhonism is made, and have claimed the source for this manuscript to be a lost medieval manuscript of Sextus Empiricus. Mutschmann's is the first edition of the collection of existing manuscripts on Sextus Empiricus.[61] And Nebe was his contemporary.[62] But there are manuscripts which Mutschmann did not know about early in this century.[63] Schangin has written a paper on a manuscript in the Russian Academy of Sciences.[64] Popkin has written about a Latin manuscript.[65] Cavini has contributed to the research on (C37) Venice lat. 267, and its identification as a third medieval copy of the Latin translation of Niccolò da Reggio.[66] Schmitt[67] and Eleuteri[68] have done much work on the manuscripts of Sextus Empiricus.

[61] Hermann Mutschmann, [253] and "Zur Übersetzertätigkeit des Nicolaus von Rhegium (zu Paris lat. 14,700)".
[62] August Nebe, "Zu Sextus Empiricus", and "Textkritisches zu dem Buch des Sextus Empiricus πρὸς ἀστρολόγους".
[63] [282] 260n40, [265] 252n5, and [175] 84-85.
[64] M. Schangin, "Sextus Empiricus in einer Handschrift der Russischen Akademie der Wissenschaften".
[65] Richard H. Popkin, "A Note on an alleged Translation of Sextus Empiricus".
[66] [154].
[67] See [282], [285], and [284]. Also see Charles Schmitt's "J. Wooley and the first Latin Translation of Sextus Empiricus".
[68] [172].

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