

- [481] MENO: It seems to me to be as you say.
- [482] SOCRATES: And have we agreed that this subject, of which there were neither teachers nor learners, is not teachable?
- [483] MENO: We have agreed.
- [484] SOCRATES: Then of virtue there appear to be no teachers anywhere?
- [485] MENO: That is so.
- [486] SOCRATES: And if no teachers, then no learners?
- [487] MENO: It appears not.
- [488] SOCRATES: Therefore virtue could not be something teachable?
- 96D [489] MENO: It's not likely, if we were looking at it correctly. So that I really wonder, Socrates, whether perhaps there are no good men, or what could be the way of generation for good men to come to be?
- [490] SOCRATES: There is a danger, Meno, that I and you are both sort of worthless men, and that Gorgias has not sufficiently educated you, nor Prodicus me. So that, above all, we should apply our minds to our very selves, and seek whoever will make us better in some one particular way: and I say this, first focusing my gaze on the search just made, how ridiculously it has escaped us that it is not only when knowledge is directing that human beings act rightly and well in their affairs, and perhaps that is why knowing in what sort of way men become good has also escaped us.
- 96E [491] MENO: How do you mean this, Socrates?
- [492] SOCRATES: In this way: that good men are required to be beneficent; we have agreed rightly that this could not be otherwise. Is that not so?
- 97A [493] MENO: Yes.
- [494] SOCRATES: And that they will be beneficent whenever they direct our affairs rightly, I suppose we were right in agreeing to this too?
- [495] MENO: Yes.
- [496] SOCRATES: But that it is not possible to direct rightly, if

- one is not prudent, in this we are like those who have not rightly agreed.
- [497] MENO: How, indeed, do you mean "rightly"?
- [498] SOCRATES: I'll tell you. If someone who knows the road to Larissa, or any other place you want, went there and directed others, would he not direct them rightly and well?
- [499] MENO: Certainly.
- [500] SOCRATES: And what if someone is right in his opinion about what the road is, but has not gone there, nor knows the road, would he not also direct them rightly?
- [501] MENO: Certainly.
- [502] SOCRATES: And just as long as he would have right opinion about those things of which another has knowledge, himself supposing what is the truth, but not prudently knowing it, he will be no worse a guide than he who prudently knows it.
- [503] MENO: No worse, I agree.
- [504] SOCRATES: True opinion, therefore, is no worse a guide to right action than prudence. And this is what just now we were leaving aside in our examination about what sort of thing virtue might be, when we said that only prudence directs action rightly, whereas true opinion does so too.
- 97C [505] MENO: That is likely.
- [506] SOCRATES: Right opinion, therefore, is no less beneficial than knowledge.
- [507] MENO: To this extent, Socrates, that he who has knowledge would always hit the mark, whereas he who has right opinion would sometimes hit it, and sometimes not.
- [508] SOCRATES: How do you mean that? Would not he that always has right opinion always hit on it, just so long as his opinions were right?
- [509] MENO: Necessarily, it appears to me. So that I wonder, Socrates, this being so, that knowledge is always so much more honored than right opinion, and why one of them is so different from the other.
- 97D [510] SOCRATES: Do you know then why you wonder, or should I tell you?

- [511] MENO: Certainly, tell me.
- [512] SOCRATES: Because you have never applied your mind to the statues of Daedalus. But perhaps there are none among you.
- [513] MENO: With a view to what do you say this?
- [514] SOCRATES: Because if they have not been tied down, they make their escape and run away; but if they are tied down, they stay put.
- [515] MENO: Well, what about it?
- [516] SOCRATES: To have acquired one of his works that has been let loose is not worth very much, like acquiring a runaway slave, for he does not stay put; but one that is tied down is worth a great deal. For his works are very beautiful. With a view to what, then, do I say this? With a view to true opinions. For true opinions too, for as long a time as they should stay put, are a fine thing and accomplish all kinds of good things. Yet much of the time they are not willing to stay put, but run away out of the human soul, so that they ~~are not worth much~~ until someone should bind them with causes by reasoning. And this, my comrade Meno, ^{is} ~~is~~ recollection, as we agreed before. And whenever they ^{have been bound, first they become knowledge and then} ~~is~~ steadfast. And this is why knowledge is worth more than right opinion, and, by its binding, knowledge differs from and excels right opinion.
- [517] MENO: By Zeus, Socrates, it is like something of this sort.
- [518] SOCRATES: And yet, I too speak, not as one who knows, but as one who makes images and conjectures. But I certainly do not think I am making images or guessing this, that right opinion and knowledge are different things. But if there is anything I could affirm that I know, and there are few I could affirm—one of those, at any rate, which I could set down that I know is this.
- [519] MENO: And you are right, Socrates, in saying this.
- [520] SOCRATES: What then? Is the following not rightly said, that true opinion directing the work of each action brings it to completion no worse than knowledge?
- [521] MENO: In this, too, you seem to me to speak the truth.
- [522] SOCRATES: Then right opinion will be no worse, nor less

- beneficial, in actions than knowledge, nor the man having right opinion than the one having knowledge.
- [523] MENO: That is so.
- [524] SOCRATES: And we did agree that the good man is beneficent.
- [525] MENO: Yes.
- [526] SOCRATES: Now then, since not only through knowledge can men be good and beneficial to their cities, if they would, but also through right opinion; and neither of these two is natural to human beings, neither knowledge nor true opinion, nor are they acquired—or does it seem to you that either of them is by nature?
- [527] MENO: Not to me.
- [528] SOCRATES: Then since they are not by nature, neither could the good men be such by nature.
- [529] MENO: Surely not.
- [530] SOCRATES: Since they are not such by nature, we looked next into whether it is something teachable.
- [531] MENO: Yes.
- [532] SOCRATES: Then did it not seem to be teachable, if virtue is prudence?
- [533] MENO: Yes.
- [534] SOCRATES: And if it should be something teachable, it would be prudence?
- [535] MENO: Certainly.
- [536] SOCRATES: And if there should be teachers, it would be teachable, but if there are not, not teachable?
- [537] MENO: Quite so.
- [538] SOCRATES: But surely we have agreed that there are no teachers of it?
- [539] MENO: That is so.
- [540] SOCRATES: We have agreed, therefore, that it is neither teachable nor prudence?
- [541] MENO: Certainly.
- [542] SOCRATES: But surely we agree that it is a good thing?

[543] MENO: Yes.

[544] SOCRATES: And what directs rightly is beneficial and good?

[545] MENO: Certainly.

[546] SOCRATES: And these two things only direct rightly: true opinion and knowledge, which the human being who directs rightly has. For things which turn out rightly from some sort of chance do not come about through human direction. But those things, through which a human being is a director to what is right, are these two, true opinion and knowledge.

[547] MENO: This is the way it seems to me.

[548] SOCRATES: Then since it is not something teachable, virtue indeed does not come into being consequent to knowledge?

[549] MENO: It appears not.

[550] SOCRATES: Therefore of two things which are good and beneficial, one of them has been let off, and in political action it could not be knowledge that directs.

[551] MENO: It seems not, to me.

[552] SOCRATES: It is not, therefore, by any wisdom or by being wise that such men direct their cities, Themistocles and those like him and those about whom Anytus here was just speaking. And, indeed, this is why they are unable to make others such as they are themselves, inasmuch as it is not through knowledge that they are the kind of men they are.

[553] MENO: It is likely to be just as you say, Socrates.

[554] SOCRATES: Then if not by knowledge, what remains, indeed, comes to be by good judgment based on opinion, which is what political men use when they straighten out their cities. They are not in a different situation with respect to prudent understanding than soothsayers or inspired diviners. For these, too, when they are inspired, do say true things, very many of them, but they do not know what they say.

[555] MENO: It probably is that way.

[556] SOCRATES: Then, Meno, do these men deserve to be called

divine who, having no intelligence, set straight many great matters in the things that they do and say?

[557] MENO: Certainly.

[558] SOCRATES: We could, therefore, rightly call divine those about whom we were just now speaking, soothsayers and diviners and all poetic people; and the political people are not least of those whom we might affirm to be divine and divinely inspired, being inspired and possessed by the god, whenever by their speaking they set straight many great affairs, without knowing those things about which they speak.

[559] MENO: Certainly.

[560] SOCRATES: And women too, surely, Meno, call good men divine. And the Laconians, whenever they praise any good man, say, "This man's divine."

[561] MENO: And it appears, Socrates, that they speak rightly. And yet, perhaps Anytus here is annoyed with you for speaking this way.

[562] SOCRATES: That doesn't matter to me. We will, Meno, indeed converse with him again. But now, if we in this whole account both searched rightly and were speaking rightly, virtue would be neither by nature, nor something teachable, but has come by divine dispensation without intelligence in those to whom it might come, unless there should be that sort of man among the political men who could also make someone else politic. And if there should be one, he could almost be said to be among the living what Homer said Tiresias was among the dead, saying about him that "he alone of those in Hades has his wits about him, but the others flit about as shadows." The same would hold here too, such a man would be as a true thing alongside shadows, in regard to virtue.

[563] MENO: You have spoken most beautifully, it seems to me, Socrates.

[564] SOCRATES: Then from this reasoning, Meno, virtue appears to have come to us by divine dispensation, for those to whom it may come. But we shall know what is clear about it when, before we seek whatever way virtue comes to human beings, we will first undertake to seek what virtue, itself in itself, is. Now it's time for me to go, but you persuade your guest-friend Anytus here too

about those very same things that you yourself have been persuaded, so that he may be more gentle: for if you do persuade him, you will also confer upon the Athenians a benefit.

NOTES

The subtitle (*Or, About Virtue: Testing*) and the list of characters (Meno, Socrates, Meno's [Slave] Boy, Anytus) for this dialogue may be later editorial additions to Plato's manuscript. See Alfred Molin and Robert Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek* (3d ed.; Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1997), p. 309. See, also, Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, III, 59-60.

The dramatic action of the dialogue is said to take place a few years before the prosecution, conviction, and execution of Socrates (in 399 BCE). See Molin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 377. See, also, the notes for Speeches 156 (78D), 412 (90A) and 412 (90B).

Plato was born in about 429 and died in 347 BCE. His parents were Athenians of distinguished lineage.

The endnotes which follow are keyed to Speech numbers accompanied by Stephanus numbers, as are the cross-references among the endnotes.

MENO AND SOCRATES

1 (70A). "Virtue" translates *aretê*. *Aretê* is a very broad word in classical Greek. For example, Thucydides, in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, writes of "the virtue of the soil" of certain parts of Greece. (I, ii, 4) Plato, early in the extensive discussion of human virtue in his *Republic*, writes of the virtue of a dog (the first mention of "virtue" in that dialogue), of a horse, and of a pruning-knife. (335B, 352D-353E, especially 353B) Whenever anything, natural being or artifact, excels at the work it is constituted by nature or by art to do, it is said to possess its proper virtue, its specific excellence. The virtue of a living body, or of a body part is health, for example, of an eye, to see well. The more complicated that living beings are, the more complicated is likely to be the inquiry into their virtues and into what might be their commanding, or fundamental, virtue. See Speech 11 (72A) of this dialogue. The word *aretê* is said to be derived from the name of the god of war, *Ares*, or, more fittingly, from the verb *arasthai*, "to fit together", or "to be fitting". See, on the relation between the beautiful and the virtuous, the notes for Speeches 113 (77B) and 404 (89C).

"Something teachable" translates *didaktion*, a neuter verbal adjective which can also mean "something taught". If the feminine rather than the

neuter form had been used, the word "virtue" [*aretē*] would have been its unambiguous antecedent, and there would have been no need for the word "something". The same neuter forms are used in this speech of Meno's for the words referring to practice and learning. See, on Meno as "acquisitive", the notes for Speeches 113 (77B) and 469 (95C). See, also, the note for Speech 526 (98D).

"Something... from practice" translates *askēton*, from the verb *askēin*. Practice here is used in the sense of practicing the piano, exercising, training, discipline. It is the word from which the English word "ascetic" is derived. (The modern English word has shifted the emphasis to what is renounced, away from the discipline and its goal for the sake of which ordinary pleasures and pastimes are given up.) The repetitive applications of practice are apt to form habits. But there is an ambiguity here: good practice forms good habits, bad practice forms bad habits. That there are only a few explicit references to habit in this dialogue should not be taken as an index of its importance. See Speeches 2 (70B), 70 (75A), 106 (76D), 197 (82A), and especially 356 (86D). See, also, the note for Speech 355 (86C-D). See, as well, the notes for Speeches 274 (83E-84A) and 282 (84B-C).

2 (70A). "Thessaly, a district of northern Greece... [M]ountain barriers impede communication by land with neighboring areas... Owing to the extent of its plains, Thessaly was richer in grain, horses, and cattle than other parts of Greece... A few baronial families gradually became supreme... in the sixth century [BCE]. The rivalries of aristocratical houses and the [Persian sympathies] of the Aleuadae soon caused a decline, which was intensified during the fifth century by social unrest, as the urbanization of this backward district gradually broke down baronial domination." *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1961), p. 900. (Most of the dates in these endnotes are taken from *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.)

See the note for Speech 2 (70B).

2 (70B). "Wisdom" translates *sophia*, sometimes in the sense of theoretical wisdom, the deepest and most comprehensive understanding. It usually suggests the precision of expertise, a knowledge that is based on clear insight into the causes and reasons that constitute the evidence for that knowledge. The word *philosophia*, "philosophy" (*philo*—"love of" *sophia*—"wisdom") suggests that *sophia* is the goal sought by philosophers. It is frequently connected to and distinguished from *phronēsis*, "practical wisdom". See the notes for Speeches 26 (73A), 382 (88B), and 396-399 (89A). See, on the Sophists, the note for Speech 322 (85B).

"Responsible" translates *aitios*. See the note for Speech 516 (98A). Gorgias, of Leontini (c. 483-376 BCE), was one of the most prominent of those men called Sophists. He is a major character in the Platonic dialogue named after him. See Aristotle, *Politics* 1260a27, 1275b75; Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1414b31, 1416a1, 1418a33, 1419b3. See, also, Speech 467 (95C) and the note for Speech 11 (72A). See, as well, the notes for Speeches 322 (85B), 426 (92A), and 469 (95C).

The city referred to is Larissa, the chief city of Thessaly. It lies about one hundred and forty miles from Athens, in a northerly direction. (The sea voyage from Athens to Larissa could require more than two hundred miles.) See Speeches 498-503 (96A-B). See, also, Aristotle, *Politics* 1275b27. "Larissal" was the first Thessalian city to strike coins, and its earliest issues, struck on the Persian standard, reflect both the [Persian sympathies] of the Aleuadae and their influence over the Larissians. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 480. See the note for Speech 170 (79A). The Aleuadae were the ruling family in Thessaly. See the notes for Speeches 2 (70A), 104 (76E) and 116 (77C). See, on Aristippus, the note for Speech 156 (78D). See, on the general reputation of Thessalians with respect to wisdom, Plato, *Crito* 53D-54A.

2 (71A). Compare Speech 437 (92E). Compare, also, Speech 469 (95C).

2 (71B). "Cognizance" translates *gignōskēin*. It is the kind of knowing one gets through perception, acquaintance, or recognition. Consider the use of words with the same root, *gignō-*, in the first chapter of Aristotle's *Physics*. See Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), pp. 42, 84-85. See, also, the note for Speech 204 (82D). See, as well, the note for Speech 162 (78E).

"At all" translates to *παμπάν*, which can also mean "altogether". The term is used three times by Socrates in Speech 2 (71A-B). See, on Socrates' first speech in the *Meno*, George Anastaplo, *On Trial: From Adam & Eve to O.J. Simpson* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, forthcoming), Chap. 6-A (adapted from *The Great Ideas Today* [Encyclopedia Britannica], vol. 1997, pp. 4-9 [1997]). See, on nature as a guide for human action, Anastaplo, *But Not Philosophy: Seven Introductions to Non-Western Thought* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2002), pp. 303-43, 387 (index). See, also, the notes for Speeches 2 (71B), 474 (95E-96A) and 526 (98D).

8 (71C-D). "Remembering", *mnēsis*, is distinguished from "reminding", or "recollecting", *anamnēsis*. The Greek word *ana* is the preposition "up" or "upwards"; as a prefix it can mean "up", or "back", or "again", like the English prefix "re-". Prefixing *ana-* to the ordinary word for memory or remembering suggests setting out to recall, or to bring something back up to memory. "Remind me" translates *anamnēson ... me*. See the note for Speech 194 (81C).

10 (71D). The phrase translated as "fortunate falsehood" could also mean "so that I have been deceived by a most fortunate deception".

The first of the dozen oaths in the dialogue is in this speech. A listing of these oaths may be found in Appendix A of this volume.

11 (71E). The minimal meaning of "freeman" is someone who is not owned by another, as a slave is. A further meaning is suggested by Socrates in Speech 356 (86D). See, also, the note for that Speech. See, as well, the note for Speech 26 (73A).

11 (72A). "Difficultly" translates *aporía*. See the note for Speech 162 (78E).

"Task" translates *ergon*. *Ergon* can also be translated, in different contexts, as "function", "work" or "deed". Compare Plato, *Republic* 335D, 352D-353E.

"Good" translates *agathos* (as in Speech 32 [73B]). Its opposite, "bad" or "evil", *kakos* is used here. The opposite to the word translated "virtue", *areté* (see the note for Speech 1 [70A]), is derived from *kakos*, namely, *kakia*, translated as "vice". Both *kakos* and *kakia* are used in Speech 11 (71E-72A).

Aristotle approves of Meno's (and Gorgias') way of enumerating the virtues. See his *Politics* 1259b21-1260b7, especially 1260a25-28. Compare Plato, *Theaetetus* 146C sq.

Seth Bernardete has suggested that Meno said here that "virtue consists in doing one's job well." *The Argument of the Action: Essays on Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 302. See, also, the note for Speech 24 (73A). See, as well, Plato, *Republic* 433 sq.

12 (72A). "Seeking" translates *zēlōn*, which is a form of the verb *zēlein*, meaning "to seek", "to search for", or "to inquire". Its fuller meaning is explored throughout this dialogue. See Speeches 41 (73D), 42 (73D), 52 (74A), 53 (74A), 174 (79D), 176 (79D), 184 (80D), 185 (80D), 186 (80E) (four times), 194 (81E), 352 (86B-C), 354 (86C), 356 (86D), 420 (90E), 490 (96D-E), 562 (99E), 564 (100B). See, especially, the notes for Speeches 66 (74E) and 194 (81E).

12 (72B). "Very being" translates *ousia*, a word probably derived from the feminine participle *ousa*, of the verb *einai*, "to be", that without which a thing would cease to be what it is. Our word "essence" would be an adequate translation for anyone who remembers that the Latin *essentia* is derived from the Latin verb *esse*, "to be".

14 (72C). The final question in this speech could also be translated, "You could, surely, have something to say to me?"

16 (72C). "Form" translates *eidos*, which is often translated as "idea". *Eidos* is also sometimes translated as "class", as "character", and as "pattern". The elementary meaning of the word is "looks", that by which someone or something is recognized as being who or what he, she, or it is. It is connected to the verb *eidenai*, "to know", the original meaning of which is "to have seen". The sense of the word is that one knows what one has seen. Consider the familiar saying, "Seeing is believing." See the note for Speech 81 (75C).

Immanuel Kant argued, "Even if sight is no more indispensable than hearing, it is still the noblest of the senses. For it is furthest removed from the sense of touch, the most limited condition of perception: it not only has the widest sphere of perception in terms of space, but it is also the sense in which we are least aware of the organs being affected (since otherwise it would not be merely sight). So sight comes closest to a *pure intuition* (an immediate representation of the given object, with no admixture of sensation noticeable in it)." *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Mary J. Gregor, trans. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), S 19, p. 35.

An important question for Plato and Aristotle is how the elementary notion of "sensible looks" becomes transmuted into the idea of "intelligible (*noetic*) looks". It has something to do with the fact that that by virtue of which a being is what it is, is also that by virtue of which it belongs to a class. When we say, "This is a dog," we also mean, "This belongs to the class of dogs." What gives a being its character has the attribute of a class character.

"That to which the question 'What is?' points is the *eidos* of a thing, the shape or form or character or 'idea' of a thing. It is no accident that the term *eidos* signifies primarily that which is visible to all without any particular effort or that which one might call the 'surface' of the things." Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 123. See, also, *ibid.*, pp. 120f; Plato, *Phaedo* 98 sq.

24 (73A). "Manage" translates *dioikein*, which means literally "to manage a household (*oikia*) thoroughly" (*dia-*). It is metaphorically extended to the managing and governing of larger institutions like cities. Meno, in defining the virtue of a woman, had used the verb *oikein*, "manage a household", but for the virtue of a man, he had used *praittein*, "to carry on the affairs of". Socrates does not repeat here what Meno was saying; rather, he seems, by the implications of his language, deliberately to be blurring the differences in what had been asserted by Meno in Speech 11 (71E). See the note for Speech 11 (72A). See, also, the note for Speech 153 (78C).

26 (73A). *Sôphrosunê* has variously been translated as "moderation", "temperance", "soundness of mind", "self-control", "discretion", "sobriety", and "modesty". The *sô-* part of the word means "saving", "preserving", or "soundness of", the *phro* is the *phron* of the word *phronêsis*. (See on prudence and practical wisdom, the notes for Speeches 2 [70B], 382 [88B], and 396-399 [89A]). This word, with its two parts together, suggests soundness of practical intelligence or practical thoughtfulness. It seems to be the virtue preparatory to, and culminating in, practical wisdom. See Plato, *Cratylus* 411E-412A; Plato, *Republic* 431C-D, 432A.

In the *Republic*, where moderation is described and defined, Plato has Socrates speak of human beings as masters of, or in control of, themselves. *Republic* 430D-432B. What the phrase wants to say, and is generally understood to say, is, according to Socrates, that in every human being the soul has a better and a worse part: self-mastery or self-control, as a term of praise, means the control of an inferior part by the part that is by nature superior. On an ordinary level that means ruling one's desires, pleasures and pains with respect to food, drink and sexual gratification. *Republic* 389D-E. Moderation, when it rises above mere self-control, becomes, however rarely, "adhering to those simple and measured desires, pleasures and pains which are both accompanied by intelligence and guided by the reasoning of right opinion." *Republic* 431C. See the note for Speech 356 (86D).

Moderation, unlike two of the other cardinal virtues, courage and wisdom, which are each virtues of some special part of the soul (namely, spiritedness and reason), is found in an order of relations extending over and between all the different parts of the soul. (Wisdom may be either *sophia* or *phronêsis*. The fourth cardinal virtue is justice. See the note for Speeches

45-46 [73D-E] and 51 [74A]. On the highest level, moderation as a goal is defined as that beautiful order, "concord and harmony of the naturally inferior and superior as to which of them ought to rule both in the city and in each individual." *Republic*, 432A-B. This disposition or state of the soul is a necessary precondition for practical wisdom, *phronēsis*, which, when it is added to moderation in its fullest sense, makes for what Aristotle calls (in the final chapter of Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*) governing, or authoritative, virtue.

Moderation is the principal topic of Plato's *Charmides*. Although none of the definitions offered there is shown to be successful standing alone, there is never an attempt to pull them all together. Whether moderation in the highest sense is attainable for human beings is touched on in Plato's *Phaedrus* 246E sq., especially 247E-248B.

45-46 [73D-E]. The sense in which justice might be thought to be virtue is examined in Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*, V. i. Both Plato (especially in his *Republic* and in his *Gorgias*) and Aristotle (in Book V of his *Nicomachean Ethics* and Book III of his *Politics*) speak of justice both as an order between the parts of the souls of individuals and as an order of different kinds of persons within the whole of political society, the two orders being mutually interdependent. It becomes difficult to distinguish part of what is said about justice within individual souls from what is said about moderation. See the notes for Speeches 26 (73A) and 170 (79A).

51 (74A). See, on the cardinal virtues (three of which are listed here [justice is omitted]), the note for Speech 26 (73A). See, on those virtues and on the virtue of magnificence, Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books III-V.

60 (74C). See, on color, the notes for Speeches 78 (75B-C) and 81 (75C).

66 (74E). Jacob Klein speaks of Socrates' "painstakingly precise" manner of "seeking, and finding" in this part of the dialogue. *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, p. 57. The dialogue is not clear about whether, in its discussion of "round" and "straight", it is referring to surfaces or lines: both are encompassed by shape or figure. In Speech 64 (74D) Socrates refers to the fact that we use one word, "shape", to refer to figures that are sensibly and manifestly different, even in some respects opposite to one another. Furthermore, these words might refer not to sensible manifestations, lines, and surfaces, but rather to the forms or ideas of shape, of roundness, and of straightness. In Speech 53 (74A-B), Meno speaks of his inability to understand Socrates' way of seeking. (Compare the note for Speech 357 [87C].) Socrates seems to be providing here an exercise which, through ordinary language, attempts to show Meno that he has been dealing with forms and ideas all his speaking life. The precision referred to by Klein lies in the spelling out of general ideas, and how they relate to the ideas and things encompassed by them. Classes that are mutually exclusive may share intelligible characteristics that make for their being subsumed under one and the same more general class.

In Speeches 64-65 (74D-E) Socrates and Meno agree that something which is round is no more a shape or figure than something which is straight is a shape or figure. Socrates, in Speech 66 (74E), in order to illustrate how classes or their ideas which are opposite to one another have relations to one another that are different from the relations they both have to the general idea under which they are subsumed, tries out the argument of Speech 64 (74D-E) with ideas of opposites to show that there it fails. The obvious assumption is that the round is "more" round than the straight, and that the straight is "more" straight than the round. So when Socrates asks (in Speech 66 [74E]) whether Meno would affirm that the "no more" argument of Socrates' previous speech applies—that is, "that the round is no more round than straight and the straight no more straight than round"—Meno correctly responds, "Certainly not" (Speech 67 [74E]). Consider, as illustrative of the approach here, the observation that although even numbers are not numbers "more" than odd numbers are numbers, it is not the case that even numbers are not more even than odd numbers are, nor is it the case that odd numbers are not more odd than even numbers are.

What both modern readers and ancient companions seem to find puzzling is Socrates' insistence upon precise analysis of the "perfectly obvious".

72 (75B). "Gratify" seems to mean here, to spare Meno the work of "serious practice". See also Speeches 92-93 (76C).

78 (75B-C). Jacob Klein argues that the complementarity of color and shape here suggests the complementarity of knowledge and virtue. He refers to a proportion that can be put thus:

color : shape :: knowledge : virtue : soul.

See *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 59-60. That is, virtue is not identical with knowledge, but we never find virtue without finding knowledge and we never find knowledge without finding virtue: they are "coextensive". See, also, the note for Speech 356 (86E-87B). See, as well, the note for Speech 81 (75C).

81 (75C). "Know" translates *eidenai*, the original meaning of which is "to have seen". See the note for Speech 16 (72C).

"Is at a loss about it" translates a verbal form of the word discussed in the note for Speech 162 (78E).

The word translated here as "color" includes the white and the black, in the sense of visible surface. Meno's statement here has the collateral meaning: "Suppose someone should affirm that he has not seen color, or has not seen a visible surface..." Consider Speeches 60-63 (74C-D).

82 (75C). "A bent for strife" translates *eristikos*. *Eris* is the goddess *Strife*. See Homer, *Iliad*, IV, 440-45, XI, 1-14. See, also, the notes for Speeches 82 (75D) and 194 (81D).

82 (75C-D). "More dialectical" translates *dialektikoteron*; the infinitive form *dialegesthai* is translated by "to have a discussion", "to have a conversation", "to converse". The related word *diacritic* from the Greek *diakritikḗ* is referred to as a "studium" (*mathēsis*) and as a "pursuit" (*methodos*—a hunting word) in Plato's *Republic* 534E, 533C. The English "dialogue" is from the related Greek word *dialogos*. The *lek-*, *leg-*, and *log-* in these words are derived from the infinitive *legen* and its noun *logos*. *Legem* is usually translated by "say", or by "mean" (see Speech 114 [77B]); but it can also mean "to gather", "to select", "to count." It may be seen in the English words "collect", "elect", and "select". It is, therefore, not mere talking, but rather thoughtful, meaningful, selected speaking. The infinitive *dialegem* means "to divide", "to distinguish", or "to pick" and "to sort out".

The word *dia*, connected to the word for "two" (*duo*), in compositions like this, signifies connections between two or more separated things. For example, the word *brinein* means "to walk", the word *diabrinein* means "to cross a bridge". A dialectical conversation attempts to bridge the gaps of understanding between participants.

In Plato's *Republic* (511B), Socrates speaks of "the power of dialectic" (where *dialegesthai* pulls together both meanings: "to converse" and "to sort out"), that power by which "rational discourse" (*logos*) engages in that highest form of inquiry which ascends toward first principles. Dialectic is there contrasted with the hypothetical method of mathematics and its kindred arts, which cannot rise to first principles, because of its inability to rise above its assumptions. See Speech 356 (86D-87C) and the note for Speech 356 (86E).

See, on "Dialectic and Recollection in Plato's *Meno*," Laurence Bems, *Politics, Nature, and Piety* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, forthcoming); Bems, "Socratic and Non-Socratic Philosophy," *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 28, p. 85 (1974).

82 (75D). Aristotle wrote a book on false, or sophistical, refutations, in which "contentious arguments" are defined as arguments "which reason or seem to reason from opinions which appear to be, but are not really, generally accepted." *Sophistical Refutations*, II, 165b8-9. See, also, the first chapter of Aristotle's *Topics*.

82 (75E). Prodicus of Ceos was a Sophist known for his great interest in the exact meanings of words. See, e.g., Plato, *Protagoras* 337A, 340C-341C, 358A-E.

"Fancy" translates *poikilon*, which also means "multicolored".

86 (76A). Here, as Klein puts it, "Socrates, following Meno, has abandoned the colloquial meaning of *schēma* ["shape", "figure"] altogether. In the definition [Socrates] has just given, the word does not mean 'closed surface of a visible thing' but a geometrical entity, 'figure', as defined [later], for example, in Euclid: 'Figure is that which is contained by any boundary or boundaries,' where 'boundary', in turn, is defined as the limit (*peris*) of something. *Schéma* in Socrates' second definition is a 'technical' word signifying a 'bounded surface area'..." *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, p. 65 (citing Euclid,

Elements I, Def. 14, Def. 13). Klein notes that *peris* ("limit") is not defined in Euclid. *Ibid.*, p. 65 n. 31. See, also, *ibid.*, pp. 63-67.

Meno does not ask here, as he in effect had about color, "What is a solid?" Is this partly because Socrates had just taken the rhetorical precaution of asking in advance whether there was something that Meno called a solid?

88 (76A). "Outrageous" translates a variant of the now-fashionable word *hubris*, which, according to context, can also mean "wanton violence", "insolence", "bullying", "running riot", "maliciousness", "insulting", "overbearing", and "licentious". A shameless and boastful exulting seems to accompany the insulting activities of the hubristic man or woman. There was at Athens a "law of hubris" to punish serious injuries resulting from malicious assault. See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (*hubris*).

90 (76B). "Handsome" translates *kalos*, the masculine form for the adjective "beautiful". See the notes for Speeches 113 (77B) and 404 (89C).

92-93 (76C). See the note for Speech 72 (75B).

96 (76C). Empedocles of Acragas in Sicily (c. 493-c. 433 BCE) is traditionally associated with the Pythagoreans. He presented his corporealist philosophy of nature in poetic form. All things are governed by the "mingling [Love] and separation [Strife]" of elemental Fire, Water, Earth and Air. The bodily senses are "the way" (*poros*) to "understanding" (*noēsan*). See Hermann Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, fragments 17 and 3, I, pp. 315-18, 310-11. See, also Richard S. Bluck, *Plato's Meno* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961) pp. 251-52; John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London and Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1892), chap. V; Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 51-69.

98-104 (76C-D). See, on Empedocles' effluences, Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, pp. 252-53.

104 (76D). Pindar (518-438 BCE), the great lyric poet of Boeotia, was born in Cynoscephalae, near Thebes. A large number of his epinician (victory-celebrating) odes and fragments survive. His first commission for an epinician ode came from the powerful Alenadae family of Thebes. See *The Odes of Pindar* (Loeb Classical Library, 1946), p. ix. See, also, the note for Speech 2 (70B).

See, on the sources of the words here attributed to Pindar Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 68-70; Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, pp. 251-52. Bluck writes, about Socrates' reference to Pindar here, "In the present passage they add to the general air of mock-profundity." *Ibid.*, p. 251.

108 (76E). "Tragical", that is, high-flown and deep-sounding.

110 (76E). The dialogue, until Speech 354 (86C), might be considered to be an examination of why Socrates thinks "the other one" (which other?) is the better answer. Consider Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 65f; Plato, *Republic* 619B-D.

110-111 (76E-77A). The *Mysteris* alluded to are probably the Lesser *Mysteris* celebrated at Eleusis, a place near Athens. See Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, p. 254. They were in honor of Demeter and Persephone, attracting the pious (as well as the curious?) from all of Greece. See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, pp. 313, 593-94. See, on Persephone, the note for Speech 194 (81B-C). See, also, the note for Speech 562 (100A).

112 (77A). There is a strange proliferation of strong "buts" in this speech.

113 (77B). The word for "beautiful", *kalis*, can be translated "noble" (in the sense of "beyond the call of duty") in ethical and political contexts. But "noble", in the sense of ethical beauty, of beauty of character, or of beauty of actions should be distinguished from "noble" in the sense of distinguished birth, for which there is another word in Greek (*gennion*). See the notes for Speeches 404 (89C) and 494 (97A).

The poet referred to here may be Simonides of Ceos (c. 556-468 BCE).

In the otherwise unknown line of poetry that Meno quotes, the term "to be capable" (*dunasthai*) is usually supplemented by an infinitive specifying what the capability refers to. Supplements are frequently inferred according to context. Here it might be "capable of recognizing (or understanding) beautiful things." Meno immediately interprets it as "capable of acquiring." *Dunasthai*, without supplement and taken absolutely, could mean "to dominate", "to be a master over", or "to be proficient in". The poet's quotation, left to itself, is open to all of these interpretations. See, on Meno as *acquisitive*, the notes for Speeches 1 (70A) and 469 (95C). See, also, Robert Stenfeld and Harold Zyskind, *Plato's Meno: A Philosophy of Man as Acquisitive* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978); Book Review, *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 32, p. 773 (1979) (at p. 775, 1.34, "It is not true" should read, "But is it not true?"). See, as well, the note for Speech 526 (98D).

Jonathan Edwards, at the outset of his 1765 essay "The Nature of True Virtue", brings together in this way the "beautiful" and the "virtuous": "Whatever controversies and variety of opinions there are about the nature of virtue, yet all (excepting some skeptics who deny any real difference between virtue and vice) mean by it something *beautiful*, or rather some kind of *beauty* or excellency. 'Tis not *all* beauty that is called virtue; for instance, not the beauty of a building, of a flower, or of the rainbow; but some beauty belonging to beings that have *perception* and *will*. 'Tis not all beauty of *mind* that is called virtue; for instance, not the external beauty of the countenance, or shape, gracefulness of motion, or harmony of voice; but it is a beauty that has its original seat in the mind. But yet perhaps not *everything* that may be called a beauty of mind is properly called virtue. There is a beauty of understanding and speculation. There is something in the ideas and conceptions of great philosophers and statesmen that may be called beautiful, which is a different thing from what is most commonly meant by

virtue. But virtue is the beauty of those qualities and acts of the mind that are of a *moral* nature, i.e. such as are attended with desert or worthiness of *praise* or *blame*. Things of this sort, it is generally agreed, so far as I know, are not anything belonging merely to speculation, but to the *disposition* and *will*, or (to use a general word, I suppose commonly well understood) to the 'heart'. Therefore I suppose, I shall not depart from the common opinion when I say that virtue is the beauty of the qualities and exercises of the heart, or those actions which proceed from them. So that when it is inquired, what is the nature of true *virtue*? this is the same as to inquire, what that is which renders any habit, disposition, or exercise of the heart truly *beautiful*? A *Jonathan Edwards Reader*, John E. Smith, Harry S. Stout, and Kenneth P. Minikema, eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 244. See the note for Speech 113 (77B).

Consider, also, an observation recorded in Chapter 40 of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*: "There certainly was some great mismanagement in the education of those two young men. One has got all the goodness, and the other all the appearance of goodness." Do we not yearn for a reliable correspondence among the Good, the True, and the Beautiful? See the note for Speech 138-140 (78A). See, also, the note for Speech 404 (89C).

114 (77B). "Mean" translates *leggin*. See the notes for Speeches 82 (75C-D) and 186-187 (80E-81A).

116 (77C). "My very good man" translates *ôriste*, which is a contracted form of the vocative *ô aristê* (Speech 176 [79D]), which could also be translated "best of men". There is an echo here of the Thessalian aristocracy with whom Meno is associated. See the notes for Speeches 2 (70A) and 2 (70B). See, also, the note for Speech 156 (78D).

124 (77C). This speech could perhaps be more accurately translated as, "What do you mean by 'desiring'? That it should become his?"

131 (77E). "Probably do" translates *kindunenousin*, which is connected to the word for "danger". It has a secondary meaning of "are in danger of".

136 (78A). The word for "ill-fated", *kakodainôn*, also means "unhappy" or "wretched". The word literally means "being possessed (or attended) by an evil spirit (or deity)". Consider also the notes for Speeches 386 (88C) and 396-399 (89A).

138-140 (78A). Consider, on "wishing", Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1111b19-29. The word translated as "to desire" *epithymeti*, is strong. Literally "to set one's heart (*thymos*) on (*epi*)". "Wishing", *bolasthai*, is more general: "to set one's heart for what one desires, but one can also wish for something which one regards as impossible and hence which one cannot truly set one's heart on. See Leo Strauss, "Plato's Political Philosophy: The *Meno*" Course Transcript (The University of Chicago, Spring 1966), Lecture 6, p. 3. (The Leo Strauss course transcripts, which are being processed in a program financed by the Reim Foundation, should become available in electronic form.)

Consider the implications of the opening lines of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, about everyone's inclination being toward the good. A modernist version of this hopeful insight is the observation by Jean Renoir (*The Rules of the Game*), "You see, in this world, there is one awful thing, and that is that everyone has his reasons." See the notes for Speeches 113 (77B) and 404 (89C). See, also, Speech 130 (77E).

141 (78B). See, on "I dare say", the note for Speech 131 (77E).

142 (78B). See Speech 113 (77B), and following.

148 (78B-C). Socrates, with Meno's agreement, has reduced one of Meno's speeches about virtue (Speech 113 [77B]) to (1) desiring good things and (2) having power to provide good things for oneself. Since virtue is taken to be an excellence which distinguishes one person from another (Speech 146 [78B]), and since all human beings equally partake in the desire for good things (Speech 144 [78B]), only (2) remains. Would Meno's original formulation of (1), "to desire beautiful things" (Speech 113 [77B]), have fallen prey to this argument?

153 (78C). Roslyn Weiss observes in her commentary on the *Meno*: "The Meno of our dialogue craves power and money. As he seeks to define virtue, his definition initially embraces the virtues of men, women, children, slaves, and old men; but when he is pressed to find a single virtue—the virtue common to all instances of virtue—his definition narrows to exclude all but the virtue associated with men, namely, that of ruling others (M. 73c9-d1); and in his final attempt to define virtue, he designates gold and silver, along with political honor and office, as the great goods that the man of virtue has the power to acquire (M. 78c7-8). Is Meno a bad man? Or [was George] Grote right to say [in 1888] that 'there is nothing in the Platonic dialogue to mark that meanness and perfidy which the Xenophonic picture indicates'?" Weiss, *Virtue in the Cave: Moral Inquiry in Plato's Meno* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 20 (notes omitted). See the notes for Speeches 11 (72A), 156 (78D) and 194 (81A-B). See, also, the notes for Speeches 1 (70A) and 24 (73A). See, as well, the note for Speech 412 (90B).

156 (78D). "The Great King" referred to here is the Persian ruler, the most powerful and most wealthy monarch of those times. Does Meno's family owe this honor, its hereditary relation to the Great King, to its having welcomed to Thessaly the Persian invaders of Greece during the Persian War (more than a half-century before)? See Mollin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 339. Xenophon, a student of Socrates, reports that Meno betrayed his Greek comrades to the Persian king and was subsequently tortured to death by him (in Persia) in about 401 BCE. *Anabasis*, II, vi, 28-29. See, also, the notes for Speeches 2 (70A) and 2 (70B).

"According to Xenophon, it was owing to Meno's relationship with Aristippus that Meno was given command of the [substantially Greek] mercenaries whom Cyrus [the Younger, the brother of the Persian king] had loaned to Aristippus and who took part, with Meno, in... the unsuccessful

attempt [by Cyrus] on the Persian throne in 401 BC." Weiss, *Virtue in the Cave*, p. 18 n.4. See, on Aristippus, Speech 2 (70A-B). See, also, the note for Speech 153 (78C).

158 (78D). See, on "vice", the note for Speech 11 (72A). Vice had been introduced by Meno in that speech.

160 (78E). See the note for Speech 170 (79A).

162 (78E). "Lack of provision" translates *aporia*. *Aporia* can also mean "lack of means", "lack of resource", "lack of a way", as well as "perplexity", "difficulty", "impasse", "poverty". Socrates is playing with "two etymologically dissimilar but vocally similar Greek words" (Mollin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 339, note 3): *poros*, "way", "passageway", (introduced in Speeches 98, 100 [76C-D]), "resource", "means", "a providing"; *ekporizein*, "to provide thoroughly", "to procure". See the notes for Speeches 179 (80A) and 184 (80C). In Plato's *Symposium*, the father of "Love", *Eros*, is said to be "Resource", *Poros*; his mother, "Poverty", *Penia* (203B-204A). Compare "share the poverty", *sun-peniamai*, in Speech 2 (71B) of the *Meno*.

170 (79A). "Change it into small coin" translates *kernatizein*. In Speech 172 (79C), "change it into pieces of small change" translates *kathkernatizein*... *morin*. In Speech 153 (78C), Meno, in speaking of "gold" and "silver", uses diminutive forms (-*ion* at the end of a word), *chrision* and *argurion*, which can also mean "a piece of gold" and "a piece of silver". Socrates goes along with that usage in Speech 156 (78D). In Speeches 160 (78E), 166 (79A), 170 and 172 (79A-C), Socrates picks up on Meno's use of the diminutives, using himself the word *morion* translated "piece" (plural *morion*), which could also mean "portion" or "small portion". See, on the coinage of Larissa, the note for Speech 2 (70B).

Mollin and Williamson ask about Speech 160 (78E), "Are *dikaosune* [justice], etc., related to *arête* [virtue] as small coin to gold?" *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 339. One might also ask, Are justice, moderation, piety, etc., related to virtue more like two, three, four and five are related to number, or more like the organs of a living body are related to the whole living body? See the notes for Speeches 26 (73A) and 45-46 (73D-E).

172 (79B). The sentence "Why then do I say this?" has been given to Meno in some texts. But John Burnet (Oxford), Alfred Croiset and Louis Robin (Budé), and our translation give it to Socrates. E. Seymer Thompson and Richard S. Bluck break up the sentence and give the first part to Meno: "Well, and what then?" and the second part to Socrates, making it the beginning of the next sentence: "I say this because when..."

174 (79D). See Speeches 82-83 (75C-D). See, also, Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 82-87.

179 (80A). "State of perplexity" translates the verb form of the word *aporia*. See the note for Speech 162 (78E).

"Looks" translates *eidos*, rendered elsewhere in our translation as "form" (see the note for Speech 16 [72D]). There is here a rare instance of this key philosophical term used (by Meno) in its elementary non-philosophic sense.

"Drugging" translates *pharmuttein* (noun form, *pharmakon*), which can mean both "to treat with drugs," or "to bewitch with potions". "Torpedo-fish" ("electric ray" or "sting ray") translates *marké*, which can also mean "numbness". The related verb *markhō* translates into "grow numb", "making numb", and "am numb". The English words "pharmacy" and "narcotics" are derived from these words. See, on the torpedo-fish, V. Whittaker, *The Cholinergic Neuron and Its Target* (Boston: Birkhäuser, 1992), pp. 480-89 ("The Torpedo in Literature, Ancient and Modern"). See, also, the cover of this volume.

179 (80B). See the note for Speech 282 (84B-C). See, also, Anytus' Speeches 427 (92A-B) and 459 (94E-95A); Plato *Crito* 45B-C and 53B-54B.

184 (80C). "Well-provided" translates *eu-*: "well"; *poros*, "provided". See the note for Speech 162 (78E).

185-186 (80D-E). See, for a challenging assessment of the teaching central to this dialogue, Alarabi, *Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle*, Mubshin Mahdi, trans. (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), p. 55 (II, ii, 6). See, also, the notes for Speeches 274 (83E-84A) and 282 (84B-C). See, as well, Stewart Umphrey, *Zetetic Skepticism* (Wakefield, New Hampshire: Longwood Academic, Hollowbrook Publishing, 1990), which begins with an extended analysis of these speeches.

186 (80E). See, on "strife", the notes for Speeches 82 (75C), 82 (75C-D) and 82 (75D).

186-187 (80E-81A). "Argument" translates *logos*. See the note for Speech 82 (75C-D). *Logos* can also be translated by "word", "speech", "meaning", "account" (Speech 191 [81A]), "sentence", or "(mathematical) ratio". Our word "logic" comes from another derivative, *logikōs*, which means "fit for *logos*, fit for reasoning, fit for rational discourse".

190-191 (81A). Either Socrates pauses in mid-sentence or Meno interrupts him. Meno does seem, here, to be unable to wait.

193 (81A). Meno seems more passionately interested here than perhaps anywhere else in the dialogue. Compare Speeches 110-111 (76A-77E).

194 (81A-B). "To give an account" translates *logon didonai*. See Plato, *Phaedo* 76B. The teachers of virtue mentioned here are the teachers of the virtue of piety. Is the distinction between male and female transcended? See, e.g., the note for Speech 153 (78C). Are we being prepared here for the final argument about "divine dispensation", *theimnōn*, in Speeches 562-564 (99E-100B)?

194 (81B). "Those from whom" seem to be those who have tried to live as piously as possible.

194 (81B-C). Mollin and Williamson note, "The poem from which Socrates quotes does not survive; many scholars assign it to Pindar ... According to some accounts, Persephone, bride of Hades and Queen of Tartarus, gave birth to the god Dionysus, who was devoured by the Titans. Zeus (who may have been the father of Dionysus and Persephone alike) smote the Titans with lightning in vengeance, and from the ashes sprang man. Thus, man carries in him the stain of an ancient crime, for which he must make reparation." *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 348 n.2. See, also, the notes for Speeches 110 (76E) and 562 (100A).

See on the severely limited intellectual capacity of almost everyone in Hades, Speech 562 (100A).

194 (81C). See, on recollection, the note for Speech 8 (71C-D). See, also, Joseph Cropsey, *Plato's World: Man's Place in the Cosmos* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 54-55; Plato, *Theaetetus* 197A sq.

194 (81D). "Contentious" translates *eristikos*. See the note for Speech 82 (75C).

194 (81E). "Willing ... to seek" translates *zētētikos*, "ready", "able", "fit", or "disposed to seek", or "to search". The word is derived from the verb *zētein*. See the notes for Speeches 12 (72A) and 66 (74E).

The word "zetetic" has been used by Leo Strauss to describe the fundamental characteristic of Socratic philosophizing. He often used Pascal's remark—that we know too much to be skeptics and too little to be dogmatists—to characterize Socrates' position. "[P]hilosophy in the original meaning of the term is nothing but knowledge of one's ignorance.... But one cannot know that one does not know without knowing what one does not know. What Pascal said with anti-philosophic intent about the impotence of both dogmatism and skepticism, is the only possible justification of philosophy which as such is neither dogmatic nor skeptic, and still less 'decisionist', but rather [is] zetetic (or skeptic in the original sense of the term)." Strauss, *On Tyranny*, Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth, eds. (New York: The Free Press/Macmillan, 1991), p. 196. Zetetic, or open skepticism, is thus distinguished from the modern dogmatic skepticism (we know fully that we cannot know) of thinkers such as Hobbes, Descartes and Kant. See the note for Speech 426 (92A).

SOCRATES AND THE SLAVE-BOY

198 (82B). "Exhibit" translates *epitēknumi*, which is the verb from which the notion of *epideictic* rhetoric is derived. See Lane Cooper, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1932), p. 17 (1.3). See, also, Larry Arnhart, *Aristotle on Political Reasoning: A Commentary on the Rhetoric* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981), pp. 49-50, 77-86, 226.

204 (82B). "Know" translates *gignōskein*. See the note for Speech 2 (71B).

The language throughout the Slave-boy scene indicates that Socrates and the Boy are looking at diagrams, probably drawn on the ground or in the sand. We are expected to make diagrams for ourselves in order to follow the discussion. Detailed diagrams, prepared by us, are provided with this translation (see Appendix B of this volume). See also, the notes for Speeches 206 (82C) and 552 (99B).

"Square" translates *tetrágonon*, which literally means "four-angled". "Area" translates *chōrion*, which also means "a place", "a spot", "landed property", "geometric figure". It is connected to the verb *chōreîn*, "to make room for another". See the note for Speech 356 (86E).

205 (82B). The designation PAIS MENONOS, "Boy of Meno", or "Meno's Boy" or "Slave-boy of Meno", could, as determined by the context, also mean "Child of Meno". The relations between Meno and the Boy may be quite complicated. See, e.g., Speech 201 (82B). See also, the notes for Speeches 322 (85B) and 356 (86E).

206 (82C). The figure provided by us here (Figure 1) is the same as the figure just provided for Speech 204 (82B). See for another such immediate duplication, Speeches 234 (83A) and 236 (83B). See, as well, the catalogue of less immediate duplications in Appendix B of this volume.

These figures track the steps in the geometrical development from Speech 204 (82B) through Speech 322 (85B) of the *Meno*. The steps indicated are sometimes no more than a pointing to or a counting of what is already drawn, with the much bolder line(s) provided by us in each instance identifying what is immediately being drawn or referred to. All sixty-four of these figures are drawn to the same scale.

See the note for Speech 204 (82B).

212 (82C). The words for "foot" and "feet" in Greek can be used to measure both lines and areas (that is, both *lineai* and *area units*).

216 (82D). The apparent repetition here does explicitly add "feet" to the "become twice two" of Speech 214 (82D). Is Socrates hinting at the need to distinguish, and yet relate to each other, linear and area measures?

224 (82D). Mollin and Williamson ask why Socrates replaces *posoi* ("how many?"), which refers to numerable quantity, with *peîkê tis* ("how great?" "how large?"), which refers to continuous magnitude. *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 355 n.2.

In our Appendix B diagrams we begin, in each instance of construction, as Socrates may have done, with the base of the figure immediately dealt with.

226 (82E). "Knows" translates *eidenai*. See the notes for Speeches 16 (72C) and 81 (75C).

256 (83C). At this point in their text Mollin and Williamson provide the following note: "The discussion with the slave generally takes the form of question-answer-question-answer. Here Socrates breaks the pattern, asking two questions to which the slave gives a single assenting answer. Some modern editors have seen fit to interject 'PAI. Nai.' [Boy. Yes.] between Socrates' two questions, though there is no support for this in any of the manuscripts. May not Socrates deliberately be conflating two very different kinds of questions (one involving multiples and halves of figures and the other involving [longer and shorter] lines), thus leading the slave to apply carelessly the habits acquired in dealing with the one to the other?" *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 356.

Habit, which may be essential for practice, seems sometimes to get in the way of understanding, or science. See Aristotle, *Politics* 1268b23-1269a28; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, Q. 97, A. 2, ad 1.

258 (83D). "Fine" translates *kalôs*. See the note for Speeches 113 (77B) and 404 (89C).

274 (83E-84A). "Count" translates *arithmein*, the verb derived from the word for number, *arithmos*. (According to Euclid, who is said to have been taught by pupils of Plato and who flourished about 300 BCE, numbers are restricted to what modern mathematicians call positive whole numbers.) The phrase in the text has the sense, "if you don't want to do it arithmetically". Since the square constructed on the two-foot line is too small (Speech 219 (82D)) and the square constructed on the three-foot line is too big (Speech 269 (83E)), one might try to approximate the area sought for by using fractions of units, but these could never be better than approximations. Socrates here hints that the line that would provide the eight-foot square might better be discovered by a "showing", that is, by pointing at some geometrical construction that gives up counting linear-units, but does count area-units.

Underlying this conversation between Socrates and the Boy is the great discovery of Incommensurability and the fundamental distinction between discrete (numerable) and continuous quantities. Incommensurability refers to the fact that there are definite magnitudes (lines, surfaces and solids) which do not have to one another the ratio of a number to a number. They are said to be "irrational", *alogoi*, to one another, in that their relation cannot be expressed by a ratio between numbers, or in that both cannot be measured exactly by a common measure of their own kind, although they can be distinguished and ordered in terms of the numerable areas of the squares built upon them (in modern language, in terms of "square roots"). The favorite example of Incommensurability has long been that seen in the relation of the diagonal of a square to the side of the same square. (See, e.g., Figures 58 and 64 in Appendix B of this volume.) The way Euclid puts this is to say that the diagonal and the side are incommensurable in length, but that they are "commensurable in square." That is, the area of the square constructed on the diagonal and the area of the square constructed on the side do have to one another the ratio of a (positive whole) number to a (positive whole) number. See, for the revolution in mathematical thought which allows one to speak of "irrational numbers," Jacob Klein, *Greek*

Mathematical Thought and the Origin of Algebra, Eva Brann, trans. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1992). See also, the note for Speech 82 (75C-D). See, as well, Plato, *Theaetetus* 147D sq.

Is "showing", that is, action, required for exhibiting what virtue is?

See the note for Speech 282 (84B-C).

282 (84B-C). Socrates could not have thought that his description of how the Slave-boy might once ("then") have conducted himself, or even of how he might happen to conduct himself hereafter ("now") really applied to the Boy in his circumstances. Still, what Socrates does here, in making one aware of one's ignorance, can be said to be at the heart of the philosophic enterprise. See Speech 179 (80B). See, on the teaching central to this dialogue, the note for Speeches 185-186 (80D-E). See, also, the notes for Speeches 113 (77B), 274 (83E-84A), and 404 (89C).

288 (84D). The word for "opinions", *doxa*, is connected with the term, *dokēi*, which appears frequently as "it seems so" in the phrases: "Does it seem so to you?" or "It seems so to me." See, e.g., Speeches 257-258 (83D), 285-287 (84C), and 405-406 (89C).

302 (84E-85A). Is the Slave-boy recollecting, or is Socrates simply teaching him? How can one account for Meno's response in Speech 325 (85C)?

322 (85B). The Sophists were professional intellectuals who traveled among the Greek cities, expecting to be paid for exhibiting and transmitting their wisdom, *sophia*. Socrates seems to be exploiting an older use of the word *sophistē*, namely, "sage", "expert". We learn, in Speeches 422-434 (91B-92D), how it is that many, if not most, Athenians used the word, its having for them something of the sense of the American expression "wise guy", if not even of the expression "con man". See, also, the notes for Speeches 2 (70B) and 426 (92A). See, as well, the note for Speech 412 (90B).

"Diagonal" translates *diametros*, literally, "the line that measures across".

The form of the phrase "Meno's boy" is the same as the form of the phrase "son of Alexidemus" in Speech 110 (76E). See the note for Speech 205 (82B).

SOCRATES AND MENO

324-325 (85B-C). See the notes for Speeches 288 (84D) and 302 (84E-85A).

334 (85D). See the note for Speech 502 (97B).

338 (85D). "Knowledge" translates *epistēmē*, "science", that on which (*epi*) one can hold one's place, or can stand (*stēmē*). How would the Boy's opinions become "knowledge"? See, on the fundamental difference between opinion and knowledge, Speeches 498-518 (97A-98B), especially Speeches 516-518 (97E-98B). See, also, the notes for Speeches 78 (75B-C) and 356 (86E-87B). See, as well, the note for Speech 82 (75C-D).

348 (86A). See Plato, *Republic* 614A-621; Plato, *Phaedo* 105E-115A.

355 (86C-D). Compare the question put by Meno at the beginning of this dialogue.

356 (86D). Black notes, "True freedom, of course, presupposes self-mastery." *Plato's Meno*, p. 321. See the note for Speech 26 (73A).

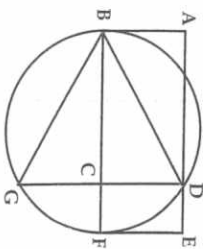
356 (86E). "Hypothetically" translates *ex hypothesēs*; "hypothesis", "something put" or "a putting" (*thesis*), "under" (*hypo*), for a support or a foundation, a "supposition" (*sub-positio*), a "hypothesis".

This method is contrasted with dialectic in Plato's *Republic*. In *Republic* 511 this habit or condition of the mathematicians is spoken of as not being "rational intelligence", or "intellect" (*nous*), as is dialectic, but rather "thinking" (*dianoia*), something in between opinion and rational intelligence. See, also, Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 120-125 and our note for Speech 82 (75C-D).

The word translated here as "figure" (*chōrion*) is that used during the Slave-boy demonstration where we translate it as "area". "Figure" is the more technical translation. See the note for Speech 204 (82B).

356 (86E-87B). There have been dozens of suggestions published about what geometrical problem is being referred to in this passage. A survey of various interpretations may be found in Black, *Plato's Meno* pp. 441-61. See, also, Thomas L. Heath, *A Manual of Greek Mathematics* (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), pp. 178-80; Wilbur Richard Knorr, *The Ancient Tradition of Geometric Problems* (New York: Dover Publications, 1986), pp. 71-74, 92-94; John E. Thomas, *Musings on the Meno* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishing, 1980), pp. 165-70; the note for Speech 357 (87C).

One generally (but not universally) accepted conjecture (developed by S.H. Butcher in 1888) uses this kind of illustration:



"The problem seems to be that of inscribing in a circle a triangle (BDG) equal in area to a given rectangle (ABCD)." W.R.M. Lamb, ed., *Plato Meno* (Loeb Classical Library Edition), p. 325, n. 6. See, also, E. Seymer Thompson, *The Meno of Plato* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1961), pp. 148f; Richard S. Black, *Plato's Meno* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 442-44.

The following relations might usefully be noticed among elements of this illustration: BDG is a "triangular figure" "inscribed in this circle." BDG is equal in area to the rectangular figure ABCD. ABCD is "appl[ie]d" to part

(BC) of the diameter of the circle, BF ("the given line of itself"), "fall[ing] short" by the figure CDEF which is based on the remaining part (CF) of the diameter BF. If BC:CD::CD:CE, figure CDEF is similar to ("like") figure ABCD. If this is indeed so, then one result somehow follows; if not, there is another result.

What more needs to be either conjectured or noticed here? How, if at all, does Socrates' difficult and obscure problem illuminate the difficulties and obscurities found in any inquiry as to how virtue is acquired, used, and transmitted?

Jacob Klein connects the geometric problem used here to the discussion of virtue in this way: "[T]he analogy to be drawn is as follows: the given space is (or is not) 'inscribable' into the given circle, if the area which is equal to the given space has (or has not) the relation of 'similarity' to another area; excellence [virtue] is (or is not) 'teachable'—inscribable into the soul, as it were—if it has (or has not) the relation of 'similarity' or 'likeness' to something else in the soul. What is this 'something else'? It is playfully treated by Socrates as an unknown 'fourth proportional' in his next sentence.... The interrogative twist [87b5]... underscores that what is being considered 'from a suppositor' is the 'likeness', not identity, of *areté* ['virtue'] and *epistēmē* ['knowledge']. *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, pp. 208-09. See, also, the notes for Speeches 78 (75B-C) and 338 (85D). Is knowledge the unknown "fourth proportional" referred to here?

356 (87C). Consider the final sentence of this speech in the light of Speech 348 (86A).

357 (87C). It should be noticed that Meno, who had *not* been reluctant to challenge various suggestions made by Socrates, does not register any protest about the geometrical problem that has just been used. Had Meno been helped by drawings provided by Socrates? See the note for Speech 66 (74E).

364 (87D). Mollin and Williamson note that this phrase, "virtue is a good thing in itself", might also mean, "it [is] a good thing, [namely] virtue", or "[it] is [the] good itself". *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 371, n.3.

366 (87D). For the first alternative, consider Speech 548 (99A) to the end of the dialogue; for the second alternative, consider Speeches 380-388 (88A-D).

374 (87E). Compare Speeches 148-166 (78C-79A).

382 (88B). "Prudence" translates *phronēsis*; the virtue of practical thoughtfulness, good practical judgment, practical intelligence, practical wisdom. ("Prudence" comes from the Latin *prudens*, short for *provvidens*, "looking ahead".) In some contexts, especially ethical and political contexts, "prudence" seems to be indistinguishable from *sophia* (which, in this translation, is rendered as "wisdom")—more in the sense of theoretical wisdom. See the notes for Speeches 2 (70B) and 26 (73A).

384 (88B). Editors differ as to whether the participles "learned" and "trained for" apply to "moderation" and "readiness to learn", or stand by themselves. In accordance with the latter interpretation, the clause after the semicolon can be translated as, "when things are learned" instead of "when they are learned". See Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, pp. 332-33.

386 (88C). "Happiness" translates *eudaimonia*, which means literally "the state of having in one (or being in) a good spirit". Our old-fashioned, somewhat theological, word "felicity" comes close to it. Consider Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1144a7-8, 1144b1-32. Consider, also, the note for Speech 136 (78A).

388 (88D). Notice the shifts in Speeches 382-388 (88B-D) from "knowledge" to "intelligence" to "prudence". See, on prudence, the notes for Speeches 26 (73A) and 384 (88B).

392 (88E). "Mistakenly" translates *hēmarētēnōs*. The word *hēmarētia*, connected with the same verb, means "mistake" or "error". It has also been interpreted, in connection with Aristotle's *Poetics* (e.g., 1453a10), as "tragic flaw", an error of character. It is the word in the Greek Bible which is regularly translated as "sin". See Laurence Berns, "Aristotle's *Poetics*," in Joseph Cropsey, ed., *Ancients and Moderns* (New York: Basic Books, 1964), e.g., pp. 77-79.

396 (89A). E. Seymer Thompson puts the argument in Speeches 388-396 (88C-89A) "in bare syllogistic form":

All the beneficial is prudence.
All the virtue is beneficial.
[Therefore] All virtue is prudence.

The Meno of Plato (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1961), p. 161 (the italicized words in this syllogism are provided in Greek by Thompson). This Thompson edition of the *Meno* (originally published by Macmillan in 1901) includes two hundred pages of detailed commentary on the text of the dialogue. See the note for Speech 490 (96E).

396-399 (89A). However, do not some human beings appear to be naturally prudent? Consider the provisions in Plato's *Republic* for identifying and rearing appropriately the children naturally fitted for virtue. See, e.g., 374E-376C, 485A-487A.

400 (89B). "On the Acropolis" translates *en akropolei*. The Acropolis is the *akros*, "the highest point", of the *polis*, "the city". It is likely to be the best-guarded part of the city, the citadel. In Athens public treasures were safeguarded in temples on the Acropolis. Seals were used to designate public property. Compare 456 (94B) and its note.

402 (89B-C). Is the denial of the hypothetical argument of Speech 400 (89B) sufficient to establish this conclusion?

404 (89C). "Rightly", in this and the next few speeches, translates *kaios*, the adverbial form of the word for "beautiful" and "handsome". See the notes for Speeches 113 (77B) and 494 (97A).

The word *kaios* has a broad range of meanings—from the moral beauty of the noble or honorable, through the deftness of the skillful to the intellectual beauty, as here, of a nice, fine or elegant argument or proof. [O]ften it implies that some simplification (warranted or not) has been made. *Kaios* is a signal that a difficulty has been got around, and that the way of the argument has now been made easier. Seth Benardete, "The Right, the True and the Beautiful," *Gloia* 41, nos. 1-2 (1963): 55-56. The word's opposite, *aistos* or *aisxos*, ranges from "ugly" to "base", "shameful", and "disgraceful". See the notes for Speeches 113 (73B) and 494 (97A). See, also, the note for Speech 113 (77B).

406 (89C). The words heretofore translated by us as "right" and "rightly" [*orthos*], especially in Speeches 378 (88A), 390 (88E), and 392 (88E), adhere more closely here to the notion of "correctness". See the notes for Speeches 494 (97A) and 502 (97B). "Soundness" here translates *hugis*, in Speech 112 (89C) it is translated as "health".

412 (90A). "The reference [to Ismenias and Polycrates] is uncertain; it may be to the bribing of the Theban Ismenias by the wealthy Polycrates to aid [Anytus and the other exiled Athenian democrats] in restoring [in 403 BCE] the Athenian democracy during the oligarchic rule of the "Thirty Tyrants", Mollin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 377 n.7. Compare Plato, *Meno* (Loeb Classical Library Edition), pp. 334-45, nn. 1, 2. See the note for Speech 412 (90B).

SOCRATES AND ANYTUS

412 (90B). Anytus was a leader of the democratic party in Athens. He eventually became one of the three accusers of Socrates. See Plato, *Apology of Socrates*. Meno's social connections elsewhere seem to have been more aristocratic than they seem to be in Athens, where he evidently enjoyed the status of a guest-friend of Anytus. See the note for Speech 116 (77C).

We are introduced in this speech to the theme, shortly to be developed, of fathers educating sons. We never hear, in this dialogue, how well Anytus did as a father, nor about how well Socrates educated his three sons. It has been said that none of their children ever distinguished themselves. See, on father-and-son relations, the note for Speech 429 (92B). See also Speech 460 (95A).

See, on Anytus' presence at this gathering, the note for Speech 552 (99B). A somewhat sympathetic account of Anytus' career is provided in the following entry taken from *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 65:

Anytus (5th-4th c. B.C.), a wealthy Athenian and a democratic leader. General in 409 B.C., he failed to prevent the loss of Pylius, and is said to have escaped condemnation only by bribery. After the [Peloponnesian

War] he was one of the restorers of democracy with Thrasylbulus, proving himself an honest and moderate politician. Plato (*Meno* 90E) introduces him as a well-bred man, but a passionate enemy of the Sophists. He probably did not belong to the circle of Socrates, as some sources hint. He became Socrates' chief accuser, less for private reasons than from an honest belief that he was doing the best for Athens. Accounts about his banishment and murder may be later inventions.

The reader is challenged to assess this perhaps standard scholarly appraisal in the light of the Anytus exhibited in Plato's *Meno*. See the note for Speech 153 (78C). *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* has no separate entry on our *Meno*.

See, on Plato's *Apology of Socrates*, George Anastaplo, *Human Being and Citizen: Essays on Virtue, Freedom and the Common Good* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1975), pp. 8f, 203f.

420 (90E). Some editors reject the phrase "seek to learn from those... the student". We retain it, preferring to try to make sense of the manuscript, rather than adding language in brackets which is said by some scholars to be implied by the manuscript. See, e.g., Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, p. 351.

422 (91A). Some translations understand "guest-friend of ours" as "guest-friend of yours". The Greek is not unambiguous.

"People" translates *anthropoi*, which (in the singular) is translated elsewhere as "human being" or "man". "Man" translates words from the root *andr-*, from which are derived the words for "courage", *andreia*, for "image of a man", or "statue", *andrios*, and for "sculptor", *andriantopos* ("maker of statues"). *Andros* suggests the "manly man", or the "he-man". "Manage" translates *diotkein*. See the note for Speech 24 (73B).

422 (91A-B). The words "in order to learn" here are a well-considered scholarly conjecture, perhaps anticipating "wants to learn" further on in this Speech. See Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, pp. 181, 353.

424 (91B). See, on the Sophists, the note for Speech 322 (85B).

425 (91C). Heracles' career included a period of madness during which he slaughtered his own wife and children. See, for example, Euripides, *Heracles Furens*. See, also, the note for Speech 429 (92B).

Xenos, translated here as "foreigner", is translated elsewhere as "guest-friend" (a special relationship of hospitality between families from different cities) and as "stranger". Consider our word "xenophobia". See, also, Speeches 156 (78D), 422 (91A), and 426-427 (91C-92D), and the note for Speech 156 (78D).

A participial form of "corruption" is used in the official charge against Socrates in 399 BCE. See Plato, *Apology of Socrates* 24B. See, also, Xenophon,

Memorabilia [of Socrates], I, i; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, II, 40. See, as well, the notes for Speeches 412 (90B) and 426 (92A).

426 (91D). Protagoras, of Abdera in Thrace (c. 485-c. 415 BCE), is a major character in the Platonic dialogue named after him. See the notes for Speeches 426 (92A) and 469 (95C).

Protagorean relativism is extensively described, analyzed and retired in Plato's *Theaetetus* 151D-183C. Socrates quotes him as saying, "Man [the human being] is the measure of all things, of the things which are, that they are, and of the things which are not, that they are not." *Theaetetus* 152A. By making "man" the center (in contrast to "nature" or "God"), Protagoras has been said to anticipate the founding of modern philosophy. Socrates' critique of the epistemology, physics, and ontology of Protagorean relativism has thereby been taken to be a critique of modern, as well as of ancient, man-centered relativism. See the note for Speech 194 (81E). See, also, the note for Speech 82 (75C-D).

Phidias, of Athens (c. 490-c. 417 BCE), was said by ancient writers to be the greatest of the mortal sculptors of Greece. He was important in the adornment of the Athenian Acropolis during Pericles' administration. Some of his work is said to survive in the metopes, frieze, and pediment of the Parthenon, which he designed, supervised, and in some parts sculpted. See the note for Speech 514 (97D).

426 (91E). See, for Protagoras' policy on charging and collecting fees, Plato, *Protagoras* 328B-C. See, also, Plato, *Theaetetus* 161B sq.

426 (92A). From Anytus' point of view, what Socrates asks here about Protagoras—whether he, having lived nearly seventy years, had artfully corrupted his associates for forty years—applies to Socrates himself. The fact that Socrates never demanded pay for what he did seems not to have been important for Anytus, judging from his prominent role as an accuser at Socrates' trial. Socrates, from Anytus' perspective, is just another kind of Sophist. See, for Socrates' way of distinguishing his life in philosophy from sophistry, Plato, *Apology of Socrates*; Xenophon, *Apology of Socrates*; Xenophon, *Memorabilia [of Socrates]*. See, on the distinction between knowingly corrupting and unwittingly corrupting the youth touched upon in the penultimate sentence of this speech, Plato, *Apology of Socrates* 25C-26A.

However this may be, one might expect Socrates to argue that the salutary effect of those who receive pay for their services is to be inferred only if those who pay understand both what they are paying for and that it is good for them. The argument here may be meant ironically, to appeal to a man whose father made his money by himself. See Speech 412 (90A). See, on Plato's *Apology*, the note for Speech 412 (90B).

427 (92B). See Speeches 179 (80B) and 459 (94E-95A).

429 (92B). Anytus, after having been moved to invoke Heracles in Speech 425 (91C), returns to invoking Zeus, the father of Heracles. See Speech 421

(90E). See, on Heracles, the note for Speech 425 (91C). See, also, the notes for Speeches 412 (90A) and 412 (90B).

434 (92C). "Diviner" translates *mantis*, which has often been rendered as "prophet" but not in this translation. See Speech 558 (99D). *Mantis* is related to the Greek word *manía*. Our English word "prophet" is derived from the Greek word, *prophētēs*, which means "properly one who speaks for a god and interprets his will to man." Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*. The word *prophētēs* does not appear in this dialogue. Nor is there any explicit reference to philosophy or philosophers. In Plato's *Timaeus*, the *mantis*, "one who utters oracles" while not in his right mind but in a state of divine frenzy, is distinguished by Timaeus from the *prophētēs* who, in his right mind, judges and interprets such oracles. *Timaeus* 71A-72C, especially 71E-72C. See the note for Speech 558 (99D). But see also Plato's *Phaedrus* 244A-245C.

434 (92D). The other reference to a "hereditary", or special family, relationship occurs in Speech 156 (78D). See the note for Speech 116 (77C).

437 (92E). "Gentleman" translates the appellation *kalôs kagathôs*, literally, "a noble and good man".

Compare Speech 2 (71A). Compare, also, Speech 469 (95C).

440 (93C). Themistocles (c. 528-c. 462 BCE) was the successful leader of Athens during the Persian War. He ended his life exiled from Athens. See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 892.

444 (93D). "Upright" translates *orthos*. The Greek root *orth-* is at the bottom of a large family of meanings, from morals to mathematics, just as the Latin root *rect-* is in the corresponding English words "right", "correct", "rectitude", and "rectangle". (It may be seen as well in the German word *Recht*.) See the notes for Speeches 406 (89C), 494 (97A), and 562 (99E). See, also, the note for Speech 502 (97B).

Sophos is translated here as "skilled". In Speeches 448 (93E) and 450 (93E), *sophos* is translated as "wise".

448 (93E). See the note for Speech 444 (93D). See, also, the note for Speech 440 (93C).

452 (94A). Herodotus called the man known as "Aristides the Just" (c. 520-c. 468 BCE) "the best and most just man in Athens". He was once ostracized by the Athenians. See, for his relations with Themistocles, Herodotus, *History*, 8, 78-83.

454 (94A). See, on Lysimachus, the note for Speech 456 (94B).

454 (94B). Pericles (c. 495-429 BCE) was the leader of Athens at the beginning of the ill-fated Peloponnesian War. See Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, II, xli-xlv. Pericles is discussed in Plato's *Protagoras*, *Menexenus*, *Phaedrus*, *Gorgias*, and *Symposium*.

See, on Paralus and Xanthippos, the note for Speech 456 (94B).

456 (94B). Pericles' very talented, mercurial ward Alcibiades, to whom Socrates was once close, is not mentioned. See Plato's *Symposium*: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 31. See, also, Xenophon, *Memorabilia of Socrates*, I, ii, 12-28, 39-47. See, as well, Speech 400 (89B).

Lysimachus, son of Aristides (Speech 454 [94A]), and Melesias, son of Thucydides (Speech 456 [94C]), appear in Plato's *Laches* consulting with Socrates about how to bring up their sons. Does such a concern on the part of Lysimachus and Melesias suggest that they turned out somewhat better than is indicated by Socrates in talking to Anytus? Lysimachus complains that their fathers (Aristides and Thucydides) had neglected their sons because they were so busy with public affairs. See Plato *Laches* 179A.

Paralus and Xanthippos, sons of Pericles (Speech 454 [94B]), appear in Plato's *Protagoras* (315A) as part of the amusing train of listeners to Protagoras. See, also, *Protagoras* 319D-320A, where Socrates again speaks of Pericles' failure to pass his own virtues on to his sons.

456 (94C). This Thucydides (flourished 449 BCE) is not the historian, but rather an aristocratic political rival of Pericles. He, too, was once ostracized by the Athenians. See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 902.

We have here pairs of political rivals from two generations: Themistocles and Aristides, Pericles and Thucydides. The first and third were more populist democrats, the second and fourth more conservative aristocrats. See Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, p. 369 n. 47; Mollin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*, p. 391.

459 (94E-95A). Anytus supposes, correctly, that Socrates is not a political innocent: he has lived almost seventy years in Athens, has continually spoken at length with all sorts of citizens (and non-citizens), and has just exhibited a keen interest in and knowledge of Athenian political gossip.

Socrates' discussion here favors neither of the dominant politically-partisan groupings of Athens, but raises questions instead, as Anytus understands him, about the political class as a whole. Anytus, quite naturally, seems to take the argument personally. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, II, 38. See, also, Speech 179 (80B).

SOCRATES AND MENO

467 (95C). See, for example, Plato *Gorgias* 455D sq.

469 (95C). "Most people" (*oi pollon*) is, literally, "the many".

Leo Strauss spoke of this as the "in a way, most surprising moment in the dialogue." Strauss, "Plato's Political Philosophy: The *Meno*," Lecture 11, p. 7. Meno is not simply a follower of Gorgias, who himself laughs at Sophists like Protagoras insofar as they claim to be able to teach virtue. Meno himself seems to be torn between the opinion that the Sophists can teach virtue and the opinion that they cannot. Meno is not much concerned with the

fundamental question (What is virtue?), but is very much concerned instead with the question of how to acquire it, perhaps only in order to display himself engaging in "policy" debates back home about the training and supervision of citizens. If Protagoras is right, and Meno has not taken the kind of virtue-course that Protagoras offered, then Meno's own virtue is deficient. This, Strauss suggested, explains why Meno approaches Socrates with his abrupt opening question: he hopes that Socrates might prove to be an arbiter between Gorgian sophistry and Protagorean sophistry. See Plato's *Gorgias* and *Protagoras*. See, on Meno as acquisitive, the notes for Speeches 1 (70A), 113 (77B) and 526 (98D).

470 (95C-E). Theognis of Megara flourished about 520 BCE. See, for text and sources, Bluck, *Plato's Meno*, pp. 392-94.

474 (95E-96A). Is there a contradiction (that is, "opposite things" said)? Or is the poet talking about different natural endowments? Why does Meno not raise such questions? See, for the uses of "nature" (*physis*) and "natural" in the dialogue, Speeches 1 (70A), 398-402 (89A-B), and 526-30 (98C-D). See, also, the notes for Speeches 2 (71B) and 82 (75C-D).

476 (96A-B). "Acknowledged" translates the passive form of the verb *homologeîn* (literally, "to say or to think the same"). This, in the perfect active form, is translated "have agreed". See Speeches 482 (96C) and 483 (96C). The same implicit passive form is also translated "recognized as" or "regarded as".

480 (96C). Granting that everything teachable is learnable (see Speech 408 [89D]), is everything learnable teachable? How do the first teachers become such?

484 (96C). "There appear to be" can also be translated "there are manifestly". Socrates does not supply the word that would make it one or the other. One argument for "manifestly" could be that Socrates is here introducing the minor premise of a syllogism.

490 (96D). See Speech 82 (75E) and its note. Socrates, just after concluding that virtue could not be teachable, seems to blame Meno's and his own teachers for not having adequately taught virtue to Meno and Socrates.

490 (96E). Thompson notes that "the state of the discussion as it stands now is represented by two hypothetical syllogisms, as follows:

1. If virtue is knowledge, it is teachable:
But virtue is knowledge:
Therefore virtue is teachable.

2. If virtue is knowledge, it is teachable:
But virtue is not teachable:
Therefore virtue is not knowledge.

The minor premise of each of these two syllogisms contradicts the conclusion of the other: "The *Meno* of Plato," p. 214. As for the shared major premise, see