

Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* X  
commentary by DSH and MRJ 2013 August 26

**<chapter heading: commentary>**

**4.14-18:** The jumbled wording of the title fails to convey that the chapter contains a carefully argued overall conception of the philosophy of political science as a theoretical and even, in some sense, natural science. Chapter X seems to consist of a typical one-sentence opening of Iamblichus, followed by a short extract from Aristotle, and a typical closing by Iamblichus.

**4.15 ὁ πομνήσεις:** This word also appears in the chapter heading of VIII (4.5) and XVII (5.16).

**<X 54.10-22: commentary>**

**54.10-12 attribution:** This seems to be an opening comment by Iamblichus, although he may have borrowed terminology from his source.

**54.12 εὐρήσει τις ῥαδίως:** This has a personal, dialogical feel to it, not being optative or expressed by means of verbal adjectives. It is as if the arguments were drawn from a dialogue in which someone was led, “easily”, to discover these things, perhaps through the prompting of an interlocutor. It is maybe significant because of the earlier claim in VI that philosophy is easy: τὴν φιλοσοφίαν εἶναι ῥαστώνης (40.20); cf. XII 60.15.

**54.12 ἀπὸ τῶν τεχνῶν:** In *NE* X 9, Aristotle compares the arts of legislation and politics and other skills. We quote the passage at length in the appendix to this chapter because of the high number of parallels. It is clear that an implicit target of both of the attacks, here and in the *NE*, is Isocrates, who tried to prove the superiority of the art of rhetoric over that of legislation in the *Antidosis*, where he argued that legislators need only imitate existing laws (*Antid.* 81-84). In the exposition of his developmental interpretation, Jaeger placed great stress on this chapter in order to show that Aristotle’s commitment in the *Protrepticus* to a concept of intelligence based on apprehension of ideal standards indicates an early stage of his development from a Platonic perspective to the supposedly mature view of the *NE*, in which Aristotle holds ethics to a lower standard. According to Jaeger, Aristotle “describes politics ... as a science that seeks for absolute norms (*horoi*). To philosophical politics he opposes the ‘arts’, which use merely second-hand knowledge. He reckons ordinary empirical politics as one of them, because its decisions are based only on the analogies of experience ... Philosophical politics has ‘the exact in itself’ for object. It is purely theoretical science. The ideal of mathematical exactness is contrary to everything that Aristotle teaches in his *Ethics* and *Politics* about the method of those studies” (*Aristoteles*, 85). Düring describes this as the “keystone in Professor Jaeger’s theory of Aristotle’s philosophical development” (*Attempt*, 213-214). See in general the commentary by Fritz-Kapp, *Related Texts*, p. 211-213 who showed that the *Protrepticus* was already critical of Platonic political philosophy; cf. Bobonich, ‘Why should philosophers rule?’, 164-175. The whole section should be closely compared with Plato, *Statesman* 294b-300e. Düring (*Attempt*, 216-217) imagined that *Laws* XII 962b-968a could have been written under the influence of the *Protrepticus*. But

although Jaeger says is that Aristotle “opposes” politics to the other arts; on the contrary, he illustrates what politics does by means of analogies to the more familiar crafts like building and medicine. It is not an argument from opposites, but rather an *a fortiori* argument: if builders must look to nature, *all the more so* must those performing actions in the most architectonic art of all.

**54.12-22 attribution and voice:** As the parallels below show, the material is Aristotelian, apparently written in response to Isocrates’ own discussion of the relation between medicine and gymnastic training with higher education. There is of course much Platonic background here, but the section is entirely free of neo-platonic elements. Of the idea that the excerpts in X must be from another work devoted to politics, we are in complete agreement with the reasoning of Jaeger on this point: “The fact that chapter 10 is ‘political’ in content has been supposed to prove that it must come from some purely political work of Aristotle’s; but this is superficial. The decisive thing is not the content but the point of view from which it is presented; and the point of view of this fragment—the emphasis on the theoretical character of normative politics—shows that it belongs to the praise of pure ‘theory’ in the *Protrepticus*” (*Aristoteles*, 77).

**54.13-14 γὰρ τῶν ἰατρῶν ὅσοι κομψοὶ καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν γυμναστικὴν:** Cf. above in VI, where the fact that doctors and trainers have knowledge of the body is invoked as inductive evidence that there can be a craft of the soul (38.14-22). Plato compares legislators to doctors and trainers at *Polit.* 294d-296c; ἰατρὸν μέλλοντα ἢ καὶ τινα γυμναστικὸν (295c1).

**54.13 τῶν ἰατρῶν ὅσοι κομψοί:** Cf. ἰατρῶν οἱ χαρίεντες (*NE* 1102a21). The parallel passage in *NE* I 13 contains a direct and extended version of a very similar argument:

Since happiness is an activity of soul in accordance with complete excellence, we must consider the nature of excellence: for perhaps we shall thus see better the nature of happiness. The true student of politics, too, is thought to have studied this above all things wishes to make his fellow citizens good and obedient to the laws. As an example of this we have the lawgivers of the Cretans and the Spartans, and any others of the kind that there may have been. And if this inquiry belongs to political science, clearly the pursuit of it will be in accordance with our original plan. But clearly the excellence we must study is human excellence; for the good we were seeking was human good and the happiness human happiness. By human excellence we mean not that of the body but that of the soul; and happiness we also call an activity of soul. But if this is so, clearly the student of politics must know somehow the facts about soul, as the man who is to heal the eyes must know about the whole body also; and all the more since politics is more prized and better than medicine; but even among doctors the best educated spend much labor on acquiring knowledge of the body. (*NE* I 13.1102a5-21)

The parallel gives us insight into why Aristotle would think that the politician must have knowledge of nature, because they must understand the nature of souls, which are the subject of politics. Plato in *Laws* XII had of course already made an extended comparison between the doctor and the politician (961e+).

**54.13-14 καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν γυμναστικὴν:** Isocrates in the *Antidosis* discusses gymnastic training and philosophy as two correlative skills, both integral to

education, the one developed for the body, the other for the soul (*Antid.* 180-185). But he disagrees about what counts as philosophy: geometry, astronomy and so forth do not, because “I do not, however, think it proper to apply the term philosophy to a training which is no help to us in the present either in our speech or in our actions, but rather I would call it a gymnastic of the mind and a preparation for philosophy” (*Antid.* 266).

What exactly is the argument of the *Protrepticus*? Is it an inductive argument along the following lines? (1) doctors must be knowledgeable about nature; (2) athletic trainers must be knowledgeable about nature; therefore, by induction (3) legislators must be knowledgeable about nature. It would seem that it is something more than this—an a fortiori argument along the following lines: (1) doctors must be knowledgeable about nature; (2) athletic trainers must be knowledgeable about nature; therefore, by induction (3) whatever promotes excellence in the body must be knowledgeable about nature (1,2 induction); but also (4) legislators promote excellence in the soul; (5) whatever produces excellence in the soul must be even more knowledgeable about what produces excellence in the soul than that which produces excellence in the body; therefore, (6) legislators must be knowledgeable about nature [even more so than doctors and trainers].

**54.16 περὶ φύσεως ἐμπείρους:** *NE* 1181b3. Cf. ἐξ ἐμπειρίας below (55.11).

**54.17 νομοθέτας:** literally means “law-givers” but also “legislators”. In the *Politics*, Aristotle favors the “legislators” over the *politikoi* “politicians”. In *NE* VI 8 νομοθετική is described as the “architectonic” form of “intelligence concerning the city” περὶ πόλιν ... φρόνησις (1141b24-25).

**54.21 ἐπαίειν:** The transmitted text ἐπάξειν is corrupt; an early scholar noted this and conjectured διδάξειν in the margin of F, yielding “someone who pretends to teach.” Editors since Pistelli have accepted this solution. In a personal communication, Barnes conjectured ἐπαίειν, and our research turns out a number of very persuasive parallels. For example, at *Pl. Grg.* 518c2-3, Socrates castigates Callicles for not being an expert in gymnastics, and this fits the present context perfectly; cf. ἐπαίεις οὐδὲν περὶ γυμναστικῆς *Hp. Ma.* 289e; *Ar. Metaph.* 981a24, *Rhet.* 1360a32. An earlier conjecture of ours is also perhaps possible: ἐξετάζειν, as in [*Ar.*] *Rhet. Al.* 1, 1421b10-3 and *Isoc. adv. Soph.* 10, though it is unclear whether this works with the preposition.

#### <X 54.22-55.7: commentary>

**54.22-55.3 attribution and voice:** We are not aware of any doubts regarding the authenticity of these words, and they seem to continue the argumentation in the voice of ‘Aristotle’. In general, see: Allan, ‘Notes’, 236-238; Most, ‘Fragments?’, 201f.

**54.22-23 καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις τέχναις ταῖς δημιουργικαῖς ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως εὐρηται:** The whole passage is a fascinating elaboration of the Aristotelian slogan, employed also in the *Corpus*, that “art imitates nature”. The same idea can be found already in V (34.8-9), and employed in a major way in IX: ἡ τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν (50.12; see also notes at 49.28-50.1). The same point—that art imitates nature and not vice versa—is argued in three other places of the *Protr.*: and then further in X at 54.22-23. It is also invoked in key chapters of Aristotle’s natural philosophy: “skill imitates nature”: ἡ τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν (*Phys.* II 2 194a21-22); “some things skill supplies, those nature is not able to bring to perfection,

and other things skill imitates”: δὲ ἡ τέχνη τὰ μὲν ἐπιτελεῖ ἃ ἡ φύσις ἀδυνατεῖ ἀπεργάσασθαι, τὰ δὲ μιμεῖται (*Phys.* 2.8.199a15-17); see also “for skill imitates nature”: μιμεῖται γὰρ ἡ τέχνη τὴν φύσιν (*Meteor.* 381b6); cf. [Aristotle], *de Mundo* “skill imitates what nature does in this respect”: ἡ τέχνη τὴν φύσιν μιμουμένη τοῦτο ποιεῖν (396b11-12).

**54.24-25 οἶον ἐν τεκτονικῇ στάθμη καὶ κανῶν καὶ τόρνος:** See also the reference to κανῶν at 39.13. In the *Philebus*, Socrates distinguishes between productive knowledge, and a kind concerned with education and nurture; he goes on to discuss the manual arts and crafts, including medicine, agriculture, navigation and strategy; building is said to be a superior kind of craftsmanship because of its use of certain tools, which give it a high degree of accuracy (56b). Specifically, these are said to be the κανῶν (ruler or “standard”), τόρνος (string and point compass), διαβήτη (two-legged compass), στάθμη (carpenter’s chalkline), and προσαγωγεῖον (carpenter’s square) (56b9-c2). For a similar use of analogy to architectural tools, see also Aristotle’s discussion of the “Lesbian rule” (*NE* V 10 1137b29-32).

As Burkert (*Lore*, VI.1 at notes 101-103) points out, much of the terminology of geometry and geometrical tools is borrowed from the lexicon of architecture. The speaker in the *Protrepticus* capitalizes on this by arguing that philosophers will use the same kind of instruments to understand nature and accomplish practical things in accordance with it, as architects use to understand nature and to produce material things in accordance with it. This is related to the conception of “architectonic knowledge” in *Metaphysics* I.2 and the ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ φρόνησις of *NE* VI.1141b22).

**54.25 καὶ τόρνος ... τὰ μὲν ὕδατι:** Pistelli marked a crux, and we agree, conjecturing a loss of about a line. Although the line of thought of the passage can be followed, the three tools mentioned (chalkline, standard ruler, string-and-point compass) have an insufficiently tight connection with the two media described (water, and sunbeams in the air). It seems to us significant that the science that underlies the three tools mentioned is geometry, not physics. It seems likely that different tools were next mentioned, tools that use water and/or light, such as a full vessel of liquid to establish horizontality (a function now performed by the spirit level), and a sighting tube or διόπτρα, an ancestor of the builder’s transit; perhaps a complex tool was mentioned, for when a full vessel is fixed to a sighting tube, distant points of equal height can be determined precisely. Düring noted the possibility of an abridgement of the passage (*Attempt*, 216), but we seem not to be missing much more than a line or two.

**54.25-26 τὰ μὲν ὕδατι καὶ φωτὶ καὶ ταῖς αὐγαῖς τῶν ἀκτίνων ληφθέντων:** Cf. *PA* 658a2; *Cael.* 268a13-15. *Leg.* 962b-968a.

**55.1 ὁμοίως δὲ:** Bonitz 167a15.

**55.1-2 ἔχειν τινὰς ὅρους δεῖ:** See also *PA* 1.1, δεῖ τινὰς ὑπάρχειν ὅρους (639a6-15; cf. *EE* VIII 15.1249a21-b2 on nature as an internal principle of living things, unlike a Platonic Form, which is how Jaeger would like to interpret this.). Cf. Theoph. *Metaph.*, ληπτέον τινὰς ὅρους (11a1). In the last chapter of *EE*, Aristotle argues that the good man, like the doctor, must have a ὅρος by reference to which he can distinguish between what is healthy and unhealthy, good and bad (1249a20-b5).

This section should be compared with VI.39.13-19, where Aristotle speaks of the wise man as being authoritative, and argues that he is the norm of all good things, “giving orders in accordance with nature”. If we combine the ideas found in *Protrepticus* VI and

X, we seem to get the following result: the legislator should look to nature for the norms, but those norms are the wise people themselves. Does this mean that the legislator should imitate really existing wise people? The structure of the comparison in this section suggests that something considerably more abstract is meant. We are reminded that good architects get their tools, such as levels and rulers, from nature, such as water and light, in order to judge what is smooth and straight. Just as the craft of architecture looks to nature for tools in order to create the smooth and the straight; so the craft of legislation looks to truth for norms in order to create the right and the just. The finest law, accordingly, is that which has been laid down in accordance with norms that have been taken from nature, just as they best building is one that has been built with tools that have been calibrated to nature.

**55.2 ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας:** Cross-references to other cases of the reflexive: Cf. in IX, παρ' αὐτὸ τὸ πράγμα (52.27); and ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πράγματος (*NE* 1109a6, *MM* 1186b19); ὑπ' αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας (*Phys.* 188b30, *PA* 642a19). Isoc., αὐτὸ τὸ δίκαιον (*Antid.* 130). Plato, *Ep.* VII 343c. The present passage is part of the early history of making this term into a technical one of philosophy (see Düring, *Attempt*, 217-218).

As for the idea that the political scientist should research nature, Aristotle reminds us, right at the beginning of the *Politics*, that we should proceed just as we do in the natural sciences. “In the other sciences, it is always necessary to divide the compounded into the uncompounded (which are the least parts of the whole). So too in politics we must therefore look at the elements of which the state is composed, in order that we may see in what the different kinds of rule differ from one another, and whether any scientific result can be attained about each one of them. He who thus considers things growing from their origins, whether a state or anything else, will obtain the clearest view of them” (*Pol.* I 1-2, 1252a18-26, modified trans. Jowett).

**55.3 κρινεῖ τί δίκαιον καὶ τί καλόν καὶ τί συμφέρον:** Cf. Pl. *Polit.* 296e, which follows on to include the metaphor of the ship's captain (297a) and then the notion that the real statesman does not imitate but touches the truth itself (300e).

**55.4-6 attribution and voice:** We leave this in plain text because it seems likely that there has been compression here. Another possibility is change of speaker and an interlocution.

**55.5-6 νόμος κάλλιστος ὁ μάλιστα κατὰ φύσιν κείμενος:** Düring declares without argument that this is “certainly an error”, either accidental or a deliberate intervention by Iamblichus (*Attempt*, 219). The correct reading, he states, is ὄρος ὁ μάλιστα κατὰ φύσιν κείμενος. He appears motivated by doctrinal considerations, but notes that Monan offers an interpretation which makes this unnecessary. He argues that the arguments coming up at 55.14-25 confirm ὄρος, invoking Owen, *Some Earlier Works*, 174n3 who mentions *Topics* VI 3.140a6-17, where Aristotle denounces loose metaphors such as ‘the law is the “measure” or “image” of what is by nature just’; this appears to be grist for Düring's case that Aristotle would not have said “the finest law is the one which has been laid down most in accordance with nature.” Yet Düring goes on to say that this does not support his conjecture (“we can disregard the textual problem νόμος – ὄρος”), which leaves entirely unexplained what

he found suspicious or objectionable, still less “certainly an error” in the printed text. Also unexplained is how ὄρος could have got corrupted to νόμος κάλλιστος.

**55.6-7 attribution and voice:** Düring grumbles about this sentence, (*Attempt*, 220), understandably; it seems to us to be a compressed version of the original text. But there is no need to intervene in the text with the conjectural deletion that Düring proposes.

<X 55.7-56.2: commentary>

**55.7-56.2 attribution and voice:** A. H. Chroust attempted to argue, without success, that 55.7-56.2 might belong rather to Aristotle’s *Politicalus* (see ‘an emendation to fragment 13’, 336-337). Flashar follows him in this in a note, but offers no fresh arguments (*Fragmente*, p. 195) and prints those lines as frags. 67-70 of the *Protrepticus*. We are in complete agreement with the reasoning of Jaeger on this point when he describes this passage as: “a very interesting fragment of Aristotle’s early views on politics. For all its Platonic presuppositions no other Platonist could have written it, because of its predominantly methodological interests. It shows that the *Protrepticus* took direct account of the Academy’s political aims. The fact that chapter 10 is ‘political’ in content has been supposed to prove that it must come from some purely political work of Aristotle’s; but this is superficial. The decisive thing is not the content but the point of view from which it is presented; and the point of view of this fragment—the emphasis on the theoretical character of normative politics—shows that it belongs to the praise of pure ‘theory’ in the *Protrepticus*” (*Aristoteles*, 77). This is certainly true, but we cannot join Jaeger’s further inferences from this state of affairs. He writes that “both the language and the philosophical content of this passage are pure Plato, a fact which had already been noticed in the days when the idea that Aristotle had a Platonic period was inconceivable” (90). It is unclear how Jaeger holds both that this is a passage that “no other Platonist could have written”, meaning no one but Aristotle, and yet it could still be “pure Plato”. This kind of confusion is introduced when one presupposes that the *Protrepticus* must have involved a doctrinal statement of Aristotle’s views. But if it was a dialogue, then this could have been a point of characterization more than philosophical commitments. A major parallel for this whole section is [Archytas] *de intellectu*, fr. 2 Thesleff (p. 38) apud Stob. *Anthol.* 1.48.6.

**55.8-9 τὸς λογισμοὺς τὸς ἀκριβεστάτους:** “most precise reasonings.” In VI we had “most authoritative” ἀρχικώτερον (38.15). These are of course the criteria laid out for the hierarchy of science in *Metaph.* I 2.982a25. Further the whole metaphor of “architectonic” knowledge is given an extended elaboration above by reference to the construction of buildings. But one must consider Aristotle’s warnings in *NE* I 3 about seeking the right degree of precision: “Our discussion will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject-matter admits of, for precision is not to be sought for alike in all discussions, any more than in all the products of the crafts. Now fine and just actions, which political science investigates, admit of much variety and fluctuation of opinion, so that they may be thought to exist only by convention, and not by nature. And goods also give rise to a similar fluctuation because they bring harm to many people; for before now men have been undone by reason of their wealth, and others by reason of their courage. We must be content, then, in speaking of such subjects and with such

premises to indicate the truth roughly and in outline, and in speaking about things which are only for the most part true and with premises of the same kind to reach conclusions that are no better. In the same spirit, therefore, should each type of statement be received; for it is the mark of an educated man to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits; it is evidently equally foolish to accept probable reasoning from a mathematician and to demand from a rhetorician scientific proofs” (1094b11-27, trans. Ross).

**55.9-11 οὐκ ἂπ’ αὐτῶν τῶν πρώτων λαβόντες σχεδὸν ἴσασιν, ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τῶν δευτέρων καὶ τρίτων:** Compare the criticism of imitative artists who take as their models things at a remove from the realities in Plato, *Rep.* X (598-600 esp. 599a); cf. *Cratylus* 389ab; *Rep.* 475e. For τὸ πρῶτον, see *EE* I 8.1218a1-10, b10, cf. *NE* I 7.1098a29-31; *Metaph.* I 2.982a25, 1028a13, a34.

**55.11 πολλοστῶν:** cf. Iamblichus, *De Myst.* 3.28 (p. 168.14 P.).

**55.13 αὐτῶν τῶν ἀκριβῶν ἢ μίμησις:** is this not a description of the sophist in Plato *Sph.* 265a? Wilpert 1949, 64.

**55.14-56.2 attribution:** All parties to the heated dispute over whether these words constitute evidence that Aristotle was a platonist at the time he wrote the *Protrepticus* agree that the words are attributable to him (although none go on to ask in whose voice they were put). For Jaeger, this passage constituted evidence that Aristotle subscribed to a Platonic theory of Forms. Von Fritz and Kapp, *Related Texts*, undermined this reading, by showing its anti-platonic elements and emphasis on nature.

**55.14-15 ὡσπερ οὖν οὐδ’ οἰκοδόμος ἀγαθός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅστις κανόνι μὲν μὴ χρῆται:** For κανών, see above note on 54.24-25.

**55.17 καὶ εἶ:** on the grammar, see Düring, *Attempt*, 221; Cope ad *Rhet.* 1354a25; *Pol.* 1260b31, 1279b22.

**55.18 πράττει:** We follow Scaliger and Pistelli in restoring to indicative. The sudden switch to subjunctive is jarring and does not coordinate logically. Pistelli discovered the conjecture in reviewing Scaliger’s marginalia on Arcerius’ text.

**55.18-19 ἀποβλέπων καὶ μιμούμενος:** Cf. the extensive and rather exact parallel at *DCM* 34.96.10?-97.7 that might be attributable to the *Protr.*

**55.20-21 Λακεδαιμονίων ἢ Κρητῶν ἢ τινῶν ἄλλων τοιούτων:** See also: *NE* I 13.1102a5; *Pol.* IV 1.1288b41, VII 13.1333b12-26. In *Politics* II, Aristotle examines both ideal states that have proposed in theory (Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*; the proposals of Phaleas of Chalcedon, and Hippodamus of Miletus), and actual states which have been proposed to satisfy certain ideals (Sparta, Crete, and Carthage). In *Pol.* II 12, there is appended a kind of postscript, which discusses other legislators, in particular Solon and his democratic reform of the Athenian constitution.

**55.21 οὐκ ἀγαθὸς νομοθέτης οὐδὲ <πολιτικός> σπουδαίος:** Plezia’s supplement (*Classica et Mediaevalia* 28 (1967), 214-215) makes sense because it rhetorically balances ἀγαθὸς νομοθέτης, and his parallels linking the pair of concepts are compelling: *Pol.* III 1.1276b36, IV 1.1288b27, V 9.1309b35, VII 4.1326a4, 14.1333a37.

**55.22-23 μηδὲ θείου καὶ βεβαίου τὴν φύσιν ἀθάνατον καὶ βέβαιον:** Düring suspects the second βέβαιον as an addition by Iamblichus.

**55.24 δῆλον ὅτι μόνου:** δῆλον was accepted by Vitelli and printed by Des Places, but not by Pistelli. The conjecture is convincing because without it there is no finite verb, but the corruption to μόνον can easily be explained by attraction to μόνου a few characters later.

**55.24 μόνου τῶν δημιουργῶν τοῦ φιλοσόφου:** Jaeger, *Aristoteles*, German version, 77 and 261 argues that this was not Aristotle's opinion when he wrote *Pol.* 1288b21-1289a1. But this is contradicted by Fritz and Kapp, *Related Texts*, 32. τῶν δημιουργῶν; cf. *Pol.* 1273b32.

**55.25 καὶ νόμοι βέβαιοι καὶ πράξεις:** cf. Plato, *Polit.* 294b.

**55.26-27 πρὸς τὴν φύσιν βλέπων ζῆ καὶ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον:** See in IX "nature and the divine", ἡ φύσις ἡμᾶς ἐγέννησε καὶ ὁ θεός (51.7; see note ad loc. and cf. X 55.26-27). Wilpert 1949, 64. Düring claims that the identification of nature and the divine is habitual in Diogenes of Apollonia and the Corp. Hipp. (but gives no references). For the argument, see *Pl. Rep.* 6.500e-501e. Although he is not at all skeptical that many of the excerpts of Iamblichus are authentically from Aristotle's *Protrepticus*, Moraux ('from the *Protrepticus*', 125) reasonably voices doubts that this expression (and some others preceding it) are due to Aristotle, noticing "the highly Platonic character of the expressions". Others have taken such expressions as evidence of a Platonic phase of Aristotle's development.

**55.27 κυβερνήτης:** Cf. *Protr.* VI 40.4-5: πλεῖν ἐφ' Ἡρακλέους στήλας and note ad loc. on the significance of the "sailing to the ends of the earth" rhetoric for protreptic speeches. But Aristotle's use of the sailor goes beyond rhetorical imagery, since he uses the pilot or helmsman as a model for the soul's "cybernetic" control of the body's organs (or "instruments"). The pilot must be knowledgeable in order to guide the ship correctly, and thus the analogy fits neatly with the problem about the correct use of goods in 67.23-68.14. In *De Anima* II 1 Aristotle is at such a preliminary stage of his inquiry that he writes that "it is not clear whether the soul is an actuality of the body as a sailor is to his ship" (413a8-9) Why did this question arise for him? Because this was the model proposed by Socrates in his great speech in *Phd.* 247cd: the intelligible entities in "the place beyond heaven" are observable only to intellect "the helmsman of the soul". This is the imagery that Aristotle refashioned in his *Protrepticus*. Alexander of Aphrodisias argues that in the end Aristotle did not think that the soul was analogous to the pilot of a ship (*De An.* 1.29; see also Iamblichus, *De Anima*, 33, and Dillon and Finnimore, p. 168-70). Jaeger argues that this metaphor is derived from medical literature (citing *Vet. Medic.* 9 in *Paideia* 3.24).

**55.27-56.1 ἐξ ἀιδίων καὶ μονίμων:** Cf. *MA* 700b33; *GA* 731b24, *MM* 1197b7.

**56.2 ὄρμεῖ καὶ ζῆ καθ' ἑαυτόν:** Vitelli's conjecture ὄρμεῖ (followed by Jaeger and Einarson) gives much better sense and fits perfectly with the nautical analogy, resulting in an almost proverb-like memorable statement. Key parallels include: *MM* I 1.19.5; *Top.* 155b11; *Ath. Pol.* 23.3.4; cf. Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 281; Aristides 215 (1.134 Dindorf). For further discussion see: Gadamer, 155 and Bignone's defense of ὄρμῶ (*GCFI* 15, p. 34 = *Perduto* 1, 157-226). Einarson's interpretation correctly recognizes the expression as a response to Isocrates, *Antid.* 268 (followed by Düring, *Attempt*, 223).

## &lt;X 56.2-12: commentary&gt;

**56.2-12 attribution:** This section seems to reiterate the arguments from the second part of VII: the comparison between vision and theoretical knowledge (43.20-45.3); and specifically about deprivation of sensation (44.9-13). But here the issue is put in terms of motion instead of life. The point seems to be that we would not be able to do anything—to act or otherwise engage in practical affairs—were it not for the “observational” i.e. theoretical capacity. It is unclear whether Iamblichus has intervened into the text, but it seems that he has limited himself to the first sentence (which paraphrases the main point to come) and the last clause. There is no indication that any of the rest of the paragraph is inconsistent with Aristotle’s views or his way of expressing himself; and it is clear that it must be ‘Aristotle’ who is speaking at this point.

**56.2-3 ἡδε ἢ ἐπιστήμη:** i.e. φρόνησις. According to Düring, this “shows that here is a gap” (*Attempt*, 223). Cf. *NE* 1172b3-7. *Symp.* 208e-209; *Phd.* 79d cf. 40.20-41.2 (= DCM 82.23-83.2); *Leg.* 661c. But see Fujisawa 133-134, etc.

**56.5 μόνον γὰρ αὐτῆς ἔργον:** *Sens.* 445b15; *APr.* 1.30.46a3; *Phys.* 253a33.

**56.8 ἦμεν:** Pistelli, following the MS that Arcerius used (B), printed εἶμεν, thinking that the optative would better express the counterfactual. Arcerius himself conjectured the more regular spelling εἴημεν, but preferred ἦμεν, which is what one finds in the oldest manuscripts. Kiessling chose Arcerius’ conjecture (εἴημεν), but there is nothing wrong with the originally transmitted reading ἦμεν understood as the imperfect, because when we are deprived of sight we are in fact deprived of motion.

**56.11 τὰ μὲν λαμβάνομεν τὰ δὲ φεύγομεν:** “we accept some things and avoid others” is comparable to the antonymic pairs in VII “prescribes and proscribes” κελεύει καὶ κωλύει (41.31), and in VIII “one is to be avoided and the other is valuable” τὸ μὲν φευκτόν ἐστι τὸ δὲ αἰρετόν (45.13).

**Appendix 1 to Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* X:**

A massively parallel text from the last chapter of the *NE*.

Must we not, then, next examine whence or how one can learn how to legislate? Is it, as in all other cases, from statesmen? Certainly it was thought to be a part of statesmanship. Or is a difference apparent between statesmanship and the other sciences and arts? In the others the same people are found offering to teach the arts and practicing them, e.g. doctors or painters; but while the sophists profess to teach politics, it is practiced not by any of them but by the politicians, who would seem to do so by dint of a certain skill and experience rather than of thought; for they are not found either writing or speaking about such matters (though it were a nobler occupation perhaps than composing speeches for the law-courts and the assembly), nor again are they found to have made statesmen of their own sons or any other of their friends. But it was to be expected that they should if they could; for there is nothing better than such a skill that they could have left to their cities, or could prefer to have for themselves, or, therefore, for those dearest to them. Still, experience seems to contribute not a little; else they could not have become politicians by familiarity with politics; and so it seems that those who aim at knowing about the art of politics need experience as well. But those of the sophists who profess the art seem to be very far from teaching it. For, to put the matter generally, they do not even know what kind of thing it is nor what kinds of things it is about; otherwise they would not have classed it as identical with rhetoric or even inferior to it, nor have thought it easy to legislate by collecting the laws that are thought well of; they say it is possible to select the best laws, as though even the selection did not demand intelligence and as though right judgment were not the greatest thing, as in matters of music. For while people experienced in any department judge rightly the works produced in it, and understand by what means or how they are achieved, and what harmonizes with what, the inexperienced must be content if they do not fail to see whether the work has been well or ill made—as in the case of painting. Now laws are as it were the 'works' of the political art; how then can one learn from them to be a legislator, or judge which are best? Even medical men do not seem to be made by a study of text-books. Yet people try, at any rate, to state not only the treatments, but also how particular classes of people can be cured and should be treated—distinguishing the various habits of body; but while this seems useful to experienced people, to the inexperienced it is valueless. Surely, then, while collections of laws, and of constitutions also, may be serviceable to those who can study them and judge what is good or bad and what enactments suit what circumstances, those who go through such collections without a practiced faculty will not have right judgment (unless it be as a spontaneous gift of nature), though they may perhaps become more intelligent in such matters.” (1180b-1181a, trans. Ross)

**Appendix 2 to Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* X:** Note on Iamblichus' political philosophy.

According to D. O'Meara, Iamblichus had a strong influence on subsequent neoplatonic political philosophy, in large part because of the success of his school in the eastern

Roman empire (*Platonopolis*, 16-17, 46-49). Plotinus had developed a “scale of virtues representing a progressive divinization of the human soul, a scale beginning with the ‘political’ virtues and leading up to the ‘purificatory’ virtues” (*Enn.* 1.2; *Platonopolis*, 40). The scale was “formalized and developed” by Porphyry (*Sentences*, chapter 32). Iamblichus in turn expanded the list and established a version that was to become common in a lost work entitled *On Virtues* (*Platonopolis*, 40, 46-47). Several of Iamblichus’ letters preserved by Stobaeus show a political interest on the part of Iamblichus; the letter addressed to someone named Asphalius being the most important:

Intelligence leads the virtues and makes use of them all, like an intellectual eye, arranging well their ranks and measures and opportune disposition ... being prior, intelligence originates from the pure and perfect intellect. Generated thus, she looks towards this intellect and is perfected by it, having it as a measure and finest model of all her activities. Now if there is any communion between us and the gods, it comes about most through this virtue, and it is most especially through her that we are assimilated to the gods. The discernment of what is good, useful, fine and their opposites, is present to us through her, as is the judgment of appropriate actions and correction assured. In short, intelligence governs humanity and leads the whole order among humans, painting cities, households, and the way of life of each person by comparison with the divine model, according to the best resemblance, erasing this, adding on that, and in both imitating the model in due proportion. So indeed does intelligence make divine-like those who have her. (*Stob. Anth.* III, pp. 201.17-202.17, modified translation of O’Meara, *Platonopolis*, 90-91)

The passage is useful because it shows the kind of thing Iamblichus has to say about intelligence in his own voice, and the fact that this voice differs greatly from what we read in the *Protrepticus* is evidence that Iamblichus’ intervention in the text has been minimal (except that we do not know how much of this section he has cut out).

The pseudo-pythagorean “mirror of princes” literature of which this is a part, and which is partially preserved by Stobaeus (and probably influenced the purpose and organization of his anthology), may have been based on materials originating in Iamblichus’ library (*Platonopolis*, 97; cf. Piccione, ‘enkyklios paideia’). This kind of literature was originated by Isocrates in his work *Nicocles* (*Platonopolis*, 101). O’Meara does not mention the *Protrepticus* of Aristotle in this connection, although it is generally accepted that his work was a contribution to the genre. Further, the excerpt on political science that Iamblichus made from Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*, contained here in his chapter 10 of his own *Protrepticus*, fits nicely with O’Meara’s overall interpretation of his Iamblichus’ and subsequent neoplatonic political philosophy which emphasized the importance of *phronesis*, the role of perfect models, and the comparison of constitutional types (see esp. *Platonopolis*, 98-105).