Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* XI

translation, text, *apparatus criticus*, commentary

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<commentary on chapter heading>

4.19-20: The title, extraordinarily brief, rather accurately reflects the singular focus of the chapter: an argument about pleasure. Chapter XI contains at least two blocks from Aristotle, each of two or three paragraphs. These are preceded by an introductory sentence by Iamblichus, separated by his bridge passage at 58.10-17, and followed by a couple of concluding sentences at 59.13-18.

<XI 57.13-57.6: commentary>

56.13-15 attribution: Düring bracketed his B92 (59.17-18) as from Iamblichus, but accepted all the rest of the chapter as his fragments B78-91; Walzer and Ross include the entire chapter, without comment, as fragment 14. But 56.13-15 is evidently a navigational passage of Iamblichus in which he has borrowed terminology from his source.

56.14 μάλιστα ύπάρχει: The overall argument of the chapter a classical model of the “argument from the more and the less” is described in abstract in *Topics* V.8: “For constructive purposes, see if what is more is a property of what is more, for then also what is less will be a property of what is less, and least of least, and most of most, and without qualification of without qualification. Thus (e.g.) inasmuch as a higher degree of perception is a property of a higher degree of life, a lower degree of perception will be a lower degree of life, and the highest of the highest and the lowest of the lowest degree, and perception without qualification of life without qualification” (137b20-27, tr. Pickard-Cambridge ROT).

56.15-16 εντευθεν: Cf. VIII 48.20.

56.15-57.6 attribution and voice: so far as we can tell, nobody has registered doubts in print that this section is Aristotle. For analysis of the logic of the argument see generally Owen, *Logic and Some Earlier Works of Aristotle*, esp. 183-184; and de Strycker, *predicates*, passim. For a general analysis of the kind of logic employed in the chapter (but without specific reference to it) see Shields, *Order in Multiplicity*.

56.15 διττῶς λέγεσθαι τὸ ζῆν: Aristotle instances the multifariousness of the term “living” in *Top*. VI 10.148a23-36. He goes beyond pointing this to argue that these senses must be ordered by priority in *de An.* 414b25-415a1. Cf. *EE* II 1.1219a13-b3? *EE* VII 12.1244b23-33. Which draws out some ethical implications of the analysis along the same lines, with differently. Some version of this argument is represented in the *Long Commentary on the Physics* attributed to Averroes (see Rashed, *Lecteur*, 13-28; for a Latin text see Schnieja, *Drei prologe*, 185-188 which preserves two other versions; see also Harvey, *Hebrew translation*, for a Renaissance version).

56.15-16 τὸ μὲν κατὰ δύναμιν τὸ δὲ κατ’ ἐνέργειαν: Aristotle systematically treats of these terms in *Metaph.* IX 6-9. See Menn, ἐνέργεια and δύναμις, 73-114. Düring traces the history of this distinction, beginning with *Euthyd.* 280be And *Theaet.* (197b, 199a). He sees three aspects Aristotle’s conception: -- (1) the first is
characterized by the relations κτήσις—χρήσις (VI 40.1-11, XI 56.15-22); ἔχειν—
χρήσθαι (XI 57.7-12; cf. Top. 129b33, EE 1225b12; NE 1146b32; ἔχειν—ἐνέργειαν (XI 57.19-23). -- (2) the second is characterized by the relation of ἔξις—ἐργον (EE II 1.1219a9-38). -- (3) the third is the relation mentioned here at 56.15-16, δύναμις—
ἐνέργεια (cf. Metaph. V, VIII 6-9, de An. II 5). Aristotle stresses that success is a matter of activity, as opposed to mere capacity in EE II 1.1219a13f.

56.19 προσβάλλοντα τὴν ὄψιν: see below, ὅραν δὲ τὸν προσβάλλοντα τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ δυναμένου προσβάλλειν (57.11-12). Cf. Theaet. 193c.

56.19-22 ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐπίστασθαι καὶ τὸ γιγνώσκειν, ἐν
μὲν τὸ χρήσθαι καὶ θεωρεῖν λέγομεν, ἐν δὲ τὸ κεκτήσθαι τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἔχειν: In the terms ἔξις : χρήσις = δύναμις : ἐνέργεια in the context of scientific knowledge, see Phys. VIII 4.255a33-b5; de An. II 1.412a10-11, III 2.426a23-24; Metaph. IX 6.1048b2-6, XIII 10.1087a15-16; NE VII 5.1146b31-33; EE II 9.1225b11-12; de Strycer, ‘predicats’, 602n16; Menn, ἐνέργεια and δύναμις.

56.22-23 εἰ τοίνυν τῶ μὲν ἀισθάνεσθαι τὸ ζήν διακρίνομεν καὶ
tοῦ μὴ ζῆν: See in VII, τὸ γέ ζῆν τῷ ἀισθάνεσθαι διακρίνεται τοῦ μὴ ζῆν (44.9-10). Cf. “a higher degree of perception is a property of a higher degree of life” (Top. 5.8.137b25). Top. 129b33-34. In the De Anima perception are movement are the capacities most often associated with living. See Jaeger’s discussion, Aristoteles, 257 (German ed.). EE 1244b23-33 is a key parallel.

56.23-24 τὸ δ’ ἀισθάνεσθαι διττῶν: Aristotle instances the
multifariousness of the term “perception” in Top. 5.2.129b33-34 and 130a19-21.

56.24 κυρίως: This term is also used at 57.3, 58.12, 59.8; see the discussion of

56.24-25 τῶ χρήσθαι ... τῶ δύνασθαι: Pistelli reports τὸ χρήσθαι ...
tὸ δύνασθαι as the conjectural reading of Kiessling; but it is not a conjecture, as we find it already in L and no doubt in the descendent of L which Kiessling used to bring improvements to the edition of Arcerius. The dative construes nicely, and the variant reading is not tempting to us, though it was selected as correct by Pistelli.

56.25-57.1 διὸ περ ἕϕαμέν ἀισθάνεσθαι καὶ τῶν καθεύδουτα
λέγοντες, ὡς ἔοικε: We can construe the received text, though somewhat awkwardly. It has seemed to other scholars that something is missing (and they have written conjectural Greek sentences in order to fill it in, see the app. crit.). A gap is likely, and can be explained either as a product of textual transmission or a poor stitching job on the part of Iamblichus in excerpting Aristotle. According to Düring, the pleonasm is unparalleled in the Aristotle corpus; nevertheless, he follows Ross in rejecting doubt that this is what Aristotle wrote (Attempt, 246). What neither seems to have considered is the possibility that what we have here is an artifact of a dialogue. See Flashar, Fragmente, p. 196.

57.2-4 τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἐγρηγοροῦτα φατέον ζῆν ἀληθῶς καὶ
cυρίως, τὸν δὲ καθεύδουτα: See also, above, in VIII where sleep the “common conception” about sleep is invoked (45.25-46.7 and note); and, below, a reiteration in the voice of Iamblichus at the end of XII (45.6-20). The nature of sleep is a crucial scientific as well as philosophical preoccupation of Aristotle. See the treatise De divinatione per somnium, in which Aristotle rejects the idea that dreams contain divinely inspired messages and insights; see also HA 536b30, 537a14; Chroust, ‘nature of dreams’, p. 168.
It is thought that Aristotle also discussed the veracity of dreams in the *Eudemus* (e.g. frag. 1 W/R = Cicero, *de Div.* 1.25.53). See also *On Philosophy* (e.g. frag. 14 Ross = SE M. 9.20-22). For sleep as an illustration of the dynamis-energia distinction see *APr*. 31b28; *de An*. 412a25; *Metaph*. 1024b23, 1074b18; *NE* 1095b32, 1147a14; 1178b19; *EE* 1216a2-10; 1219b16-20.

57.4 μεταβάλλειν εἰς ταύτην τὴν κίνησιν: “making a transition into the process”. Cf. πᾶσαν κίνησιν (58.24); see Menn, δυνμίς. For “making a transition” cf. *NE* 1173b3.

<XI 57.6-23: commentary>

57.6-23 attribution and voice: Although the first several words may be a rough transitional formula of Iamblichus, the rest seems to be a continuation of the argumentation from the previous section, in the voice of ‘Aristotle’. Flashar, *Fragmente*, 196 considers the passage to have been compressed by Iamblichus, resulting in an awkward train of thought at 57.8-9. But no one to our knowledge has published doubts that the rest of the passage is attributable to Aristotle. According to Owen, the logical doctrine of this paragraph is contradicted by Aristotle’s assertion, in other apparently early works, that “if one predicate can be called more X than another, the predicate must apply to them both in exactly the same sense” (‘earlier works’, 184); he cites Phys. 7.249a3-8, *Cat*. 11a12-13, cf. *Pol*. 1259b36-38.

57.6-7 διὰ τούτο καὶ εἰς τούτο βλέποντες: Düring translates “judging by this criterion” (*Attempt*, 246); but more literally “looking to this” or “in view of this”. Cf. *Phd*. 273cd. De Strycker, ‘predicats’, 603n21-604, brackets the prepositional phrases a glosses, arguing that διὰ ταύτα cannot refer to αἰσθανόμεθα τινός (57.6) and that ὅταν ωὖν points to a new distinction. But a sufficient explanation of the awkwardness is a poorly executed resumption of citation by Iamblichus. We see similar kinds of compression in *Protr*. XII, Plato sections, etc.). We resist deletion because the phrases seem to preserve some important terminology from the source.

57.8 Des Places mistook a comment by de Strycker, ‘predicats univoque’, 607-608 to be a conjecture (<τὸ> λέγομενον), which he then printed. But there is no reason for the conjecture (and none given); in fact, de Strycker is pointing out how not to construe the argument.

57.8-9 ἦ τῷ ποιεῖν ἦ τῷ πάσχειν: “either by acting or being acted on.” For this opposition, see *de An*. 430a18, and *Cat* 9. But as Flashar points out, this distinction does not quite map on to the main capacity/activity distinction. Something in the argument seems to have been misunderstood by Iamblichus, or else gone missing in his selection; in favour of the latter is the re-appearance of the acting/being acted on idea at 57.22-23.

57.11-12 ὅραν δὲ τοῦ προσβάλλοντα τὴν ὁψιν τοῦ δυναμένου προσβάλλειν: see above on 56.19.

57.12-14 τὸ μᾶλλον λέγομεν καθ’ ὑπεροχὴν ἄν ἄν εἰς ἡ λόγος ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὸ πρότερον εἶναι τὸ δὲ ὦστερον: See above note on VI 38.10, and μᾶλλον above at 57.9-10. There is a systematic treatment of priority and posteriority in *Metaph*. V 11.1019a1-4. It is possible that Aristotle refers to the present discussion when in *NE* VIII 1 he says, “it is possible for the more and the less to exist for
things different in species, and this has been mentioned by us previously”, δέχεται γάρ
τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἦττον καὶ τά ἐτερα τῶν εἰδει. εἰρηται δὲ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐμπροσθεν
(1155b14-16; for the suggestion see Stewart ad loc.). Aristotle treats “the topic of the
more and the less” (τόποι τοῦ μᾶλλον καὶ ἦττον) in Cat. 5.3b33-4a9 and Top. II 1, II
10, and IV 2.123a14-15, V 8, VI 4.141b28-29. See also the discussions of priority and
posterity at Cat. 12 and Metaph. 5.11. The Platonic background is to be found in
Phileb. 53b. EE I 8.1218a1-15. Compare the logic of VI 38.3-14 (= DCM 81.7-16). And
see Owen, ‘some earlier works’, 183-184.

57.13 <ὁ> λόγος: de Strycker, predicats univoque’, 613-614 discusses Aristotle’s
usage in the Top. and Cat. and argues that the expression would be familiar with the
addition of the definite article.

57.15 μᾶλλον ἄγαθον: Aristotle argues at length that the term ‘good’ is
ambiguous, and cannot without be equivocation be reduced to one of its senses in NE I 6
and EE I 8. See NE I 4.1096a19-b14 and b21-25, where Aristotle argues that wisdom and
pleasure correspond to different definitions of the good (quote it). See also de Strycker,
‘predicats’, 611-615.

57.16 τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ τὴν φύσιν αἰρετὸν τοῦ ποιητικοῦ: Phys.

57.16 ποιητικοῦ: Des Places introduced confusion at 57.16 when he printed
ποιητοῦ for ποιητικοῦ, noting in his apparatus for 87.9, “ποιητοῦ] ποιητικοῦ Anon.
(Pistelli, p. iv et in textu).” On p. iv of his Praefatio, Pistelli had approved the early
conjecture by “Vulcanius (immo Anonymus)” from the ‘absurd’ ποιητοῦ to ποιητικοῦ.
He also printed this, which suggested to Des Places that he must have neglected to record
that this was a conjecture; but no, it is the reading present in F and Pistelli’s printing of it
was accurate, only his account of it as a conjecture in his Praefatio was misleading to
Des Places, who did not collate F carefully enough to see this.

57.17-19 καί τοί περὶ λόγον ὅρμους ως οὗχ ἐστι
κατηγοροῦμενος ἄμφοτεροι, ὃτι ἄγαθον ἐκάτερον ἐπὶ τῶν
ὀμελίμων καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς: This sounds like an anti-platonic point, similar to the
criticism of the generic good in EE I 8 and NE I 4. The participle κατηγοροῦμενος
is used frequently in the Corpus.

57.17 οὗχ ἐστι: The manuscript reading οὗχι results in a contradiction. But the
minimal emendation of Vitelli makes perfect sense of the argument. De Stryker’s
emendation οὗχ ἐστι is also possible, but more severe and not as explicable from a textual
transmission perspective.

57.18-19 ὃς ἐστι... ἀρετῆς: For the construction, see Bonitz, Index, 872a1-4.

57.19 ζῆν ἄρα μᾶλλον: It may seem odd to treat “living” as something that
admits of more or less; Owen comments on the logical difficulty of this (‘some earlier
works’, 183). And yet, this is the motor of Aristotle’s argument. It requires that there be
degrees of vitality, an idea which Aristotle embraces. Compare, for example, the idea of
more or less noble animals in IX 50.27-51.6 (and see notes therein) and in the “scale of
nature passages” (such as HA VIII 1 588b21-589a5; cf. Johnson, Teleology, 204-205). Cf.
EE 1219a23-25 and NE 1098a7-17.
57.19-23: Compare the argument at EE II 1.1219a23-25. See also Shields, *Order in Multiplicity*.

<XI 57.23-58.14: commentary>

57.23-58.10 attribution and voice: This continues the argumentation of the previous paragraph and its a fortiori logic. No specific doubts have been registered about the authenticity of this section. There are solid parallels to the Corpus; see below.

57.25-25 ἐνὸς ἡ δύναμις ἔστι, τούτο αὐτὸ πράττῃ τις, εἰ δὲ πλείονων: Cf. NE 1097a25-28 (flute example) and 1098a17.

57.26-27 ητοι μόνον ὅταν αὐλιὴ χρηταί τις ἡ μάλιστα: NE 1097a27 (a note to a lecturer to expand on a stock example?); 1098a17.

57.27 ἵσως γὰρ ἐπὶ τούτῳ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἁλλῶν: Düring says that this is “probably corrupt” and suggests an improvement that brings about a decent sense: ἵσως γὰρ τούτῳ ἐπὶ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἁλλῶν. “for perhaps this applies to other things.” And yet this sense is not exactly what the line of thought requires. What we have is so telegraphic that we suspect that Iamblichus is responsible for the compression. For ἐπὶ with the dative meaning ‘for an end or purpose’ see LSJ B.III.2.

58.1-2 μάλλον χρησθαι τὸν όρθὸς χρῶμενον φατέον: Cf. Plato, Clit. 407d4; Euth. 280e3-281a8; Men. 88e1; cf. Dio. Chr. 13.13.

58.2 τὸ γὰρ ἐφ’ ὃ: identified with τὸ οὗ ἐνεκα Metaph. 1022a8.

58.2 ἐφ’ οὗ καὶ ὃς: Vitelli’s conjecture ὃ καὶ ὃς (followed by Pistelli but not Des Places) is presumably motivated to create agreement with the sketchy ἐπὶ τούτῳ at 57.27. It is not clear whether ἐφ’ ὃ does not refer to a discontinuous idea. Perhaps the passage has undergone compression as a result of either scribal transmission or Iamblichus’ excerption. The line of thought, however, is clear: both the objective (ἐφ’ ὃ) and the mode (ὡς) should naturally be determined in accordance with the best use.

58.3-10: Compare the account in de An. I 2.403b25-27, where Aristotle argues that the two definitive powers of the soul are sensation and movement (cf. III 3.427a17-19). See EE II 1.1219a35-39, NE X 7.1177b26-1178a8; de Strycker, *predicats*, 604.

58.4 ἐργὼν: This is the reading of R; both Pistelli and Des Places print this, misreporting it as the reading of F. The singular is more grammatical than the manuscripts’ ἐργῶν, although it is possible to construe the plural.

58.5-6 συλλογίζεσθαι: This term is also used in the title to IX (4.12-13) and in XII (59.20).

58.6-7 ζῆ μᾶλλον ὁ διανοοῦμενος ὁρθῶς καὶ μάλιστα πάντων ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων: Owen argues that this conclusion trades on an ambiguity of μάλιστα: “Plato had ignored or exploited the ambiguity in μᾶλλον, and when the author of the *Protrepticus* propounds a Platonic argumentum ex gradibus, he accordingly seeks to safeguard his argument by recognizing the ambiguity but treating it as harmless. Only by minimizing it can he go on to argue that the man who is superlatively alive knows that which is superlatively exact and intelligible; for the first superlative and the second correspond to different senses of μάλιστα” (“earlier works”, 184).

58.3 δῆ: Düring is convinced that this is a reference to B70 (43.20-25).
58.9 τό γε τελέως ζήν: Cf. in XII, τὸ τελέως ἢ ζήν (60.7-10). NE X (1177a27).

58.10-14 attribution: It is possible that there has been compression of the source text here, but to us it seems more likely that this is a redundant conclusion on the part of Iamblichus.

58.11 ὁ περ εἶναι: “that which it is to exist” is a technical phrase in Aristotle, sometimes corresponding to τὸ γένος and occasionally τὸ τί ἐστιν and ὑσία (see Bonitz, Index, 533b55-60). Düring invites a comparison with Cic. Fin. 2.13.40, thinking it possibly a “reminiscence”, but there is no real parallel.

58.12 μάλιστα καὶ κυριώτατα: Exactly the same phrase is used in VII: μάλιστα καὶ κυριώτατα (41.24). Iamblichus often picks up and repeats phrases from his source text in the comments that he composes to introduce them or finish with them.

<58.15-59.3: commentary>

58.15-17 attribution: uncertain, although at least some of the terminology seems to originate in the source, such as τελεία ἐνέργεια καὶ ἀκωλυτος. Nevertheless, several considerations combine to indicate that these sentences are in the voice of Iamblichus: the passage stitches a connection between two unrelated arguments, one of which has just come to a simple and easy conclusion (58.5-10); it repeats the thought of Aristotle without further development; and it contains late vocabulary – at 58.15 the word ἀκωλυτος, meaning ‘unhindered’, is a word preferred by later authors (e.g. Polybius, Josephus, and Epictetus) to the synonym which Aristotle uses instead, συμποδιστος (though Plato does once use the adverb ἀκωλυτως). On the other hand, compare 58.15-17 with NE VII 13.1153a15, 1153a1, a15, a20-23, 14.1153b10-16, X 3.1173b15-20, 1174b18-23.

58.15 τελεία ἐνέργεια καὶ ἀκωλυτος: ἀκωλυτος does not occur in the Corpus; the adverb only in Plato. Düring compares ἐμποδίζει in NE 1153a15, b10-16; Pol. 1295a37. But again, no real parallel. Aristotle discusses the importance of a conception of success as an unimpeded activity in NE VII 14.1153b9-12. Aristotle argues that wisdom is the most continuously pleasant activity in NE X 7.1177a19-21.

58.16 τὸ χαίρειν: identical with ἡδονη in Phileb. 21a; GA 724a1; Pol. 1323b1.

58.17-59.3 attribution:

58.20 μὴ τῶ πίνειν ἄλλα τῶ συμβαίνειν: An application of the doctrine of accidents. See above in VII (43.28).

58.21 καθήμενον: cf. Phys., οἷον τὸ καθήμενον ως χωρὶς ἐρωτομενον (186b21).

58.22 φήσομεν: On the future tense, see Brink, 34. The variation between φήσω and ἔρω (58.28) in the same passage is, according to Düring, unparalleled in Plato and Aristotle.

58.24 πᾶσαν κίνησιν: cf. ταύτην τὴν κίνησιν (57.4-5).

59.2 αὐτὸ τὸ ζήν: See above 58.17-27.

<XI 59.3-18: commentary>
59.3-13 **attribution and voice:** continues on the progressive a fortiori argument about pleasure from the previous section.

59.5 ἡδονήν: Cf. the concept of pleasure discussed at *Metaph.* XII 7.1072b26.

59.7-8 εἰ τοίνυν καὶ πολλαὶ ψυχῆς εἴσι χρήσεις, ἀλλὰ: for this grammatical construction, cf. above in chapter 5 (34.2735.5); for parallels in the corpus see Eucken, *De Arist. Dic. Ratione*, 33.


59.13-17 **attribution:** Iamblichus. There is certainly a change of tone of voice at 59.13; after the long sinewy argument concludes, we get a static enthusiastic comment in apparently Platonic language. For a similar case, see XII 60.10-61.1; in both cases it remains so far unclear to us whether Iamblichus is transmitting ideas and expressions from his reading of the *Protrepticus*, perhaps from a distinctively Platonic or Pythagorean passage therein, or whether he feels free to add Platonic words and phrase *ad libidem*.

59.14-15 ἀπὸ τῶν μάλιστα ὄντων πληρομένην: Düring points out (*Attempt*, 252): πληροῦσθαι not in this sense in the Corpus and with ἀπὸ not until later Greek.

59.15 στέγουσα: compare *Rep.* 586ab.

59.16 εὐφροσύνην: See Walsdorf, ‘Epicurus’, 228, 254n116, who points out that the only occurrence of this term in the corpus of Aristotle is in the *Topics* (112b21-26).

59.17-18 **attribution:** This seems to be static metatext, insufficiently progressive and with excessive superlatives, suggesting Iamblichean authorship.

59.17 δι’ αὐτὸ τὸ χαίρειν: cf αὐτὸ τὸ ζῆν above.

59.17-18 τὰς ἀληθεῖς καὶ ἀγαθὰς ἡδονὰς: *NE* 1153a29, 1172a22.