

Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* chapter IX  
commentary by DSH & MRJ, 2013vi25

<chapter heading: commentary>

**4.9-13:** This chapter contains two great themes, bookended by an opening and closing, and with a bridge passage in the middle, as follows: *Opening* (49.1-3); Teleological argument that philosophy is the supreme good (49.3-52.5); *Bridge*: “*Therefore Pythagoras was right ... highest of all*” (52.8-16); Attack on utilitarianism and a defense of the intrinsic value of speculation (52.16-54.5); *Closing* (54.5-9).

The bridge between the two themes contains the conclusion Iamblichus announced he announces in the title of the chapter (“following this answer we can draw the whole protreptic as a conclusion”). The paragraph also contains a programmatic remark putting off the specification of the exact nature of what is to be theorized (“is a question for us perhaps to consider later”). The closing (54.5-9) also suggests a twofold division of the chapter.

**4.9 ἀπὸ τοῦ:** ἀπὸ + genitive is a formula which begins several of the chapter headings of Iamblichus’ *Protrepticus*; see note to the chapter heading of VII (4.9).

**4.9 τοῦ βουλήματος τῆς φύσεως:** Has Iamblichus invented this phrase, or borrowed it from the local context of his source? There is a direct parallel in *Pol.* VII, “for all art and education intends to fill in where nature falls short”: πᾶσα γὰρ τέχνη καὶ παιδεία τὸ προσλεῖ πον βούλεται τῆς φύσεως ἀναπληροῦν (1337a1-3); see also *Cael.* 3.14, “and one should call each thing that which nature intends it to be like and and to exist as, but not that which it is by force and contrary to nature”: Δεῖ δὲ ἐκαστον λέγειν τοιούτον εἶναι ὁ φύσει βούλεται εἶναι καὶ ὑπάρχειν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὁ βίᾳ καὶ παρὰ φύσιν. (297b21-23). But Aristotle also says in *Phys.* II 8 that, “it would be absurd not to think that it (sc. nature) comes to be for the sake of something just because the agent is not seen intending”: ἄτοπον δὲ τὸ μὴ οἰεσθαι ἐνεκά του γίγνεσθαι, ἐὰν μὴ ἴδωσι τὸ κινοῦν βούλευσάμενον (199b26-28). See also Simplicius’ comment on *Phys.* 192b8 at 271.18.

**4.9-10 ἔφοδος εἰς προτροπὴν:** The same phrase occurs in the headings to chapters IV (3.14), XII (4.22), XIII (4.24-5), XVI, and XIX (5.25-26); cf. XVI (5.10-11): see the note on the title at XII 4.22 for other places in which Iamblichus has used the idea of a distinctive protreptic approach.

**4.10-12 κατὰ τὴν Πυθαγόρου ἀπόκρισιν, ἦν εἰπε τοῖς ἐν Φλιοῦντι πυνθανομένοις τίς ἐστι καὶ τίνος ἐνεκά γέγονε:** The title refers the answer Pythagoras gave in response to a question put to him by the people of Phlius-- who was he? See below at 51.8-10 where Iamblichus makes the anecdote the focus of his chapter, perhaps not because it is the central idea of his source (Aristotle), but because it conforms well to the overall project of his Pythagorean series. But of course the scene of Pythagoras responding that he was "an observer of the stars" may have been mentioned by a character in Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*, and probably was (see our essay “on Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* as a dialogue” and specifically the section on Heraclides of Pontus for two other versions of the same story (which may themselves have as their ultimate source the version of the story in Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*): one by

Iamblichus in *VP* 12, and another by Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations* V.3.8-9 (where the story is attributed to "Heraclides of Pontus").

**4.12-13 συλλογιζόμεθα τὴν προτροπὴν ὅλην:** “draw the whole protreptic conclusion”. The expression συλλογιζόμεθα also occurs at XI 58.5-6 (in Aristotle’s voice) and XII 59.20 (in Iamblichus’ voice). Perhaps this refers to a “pure” protreptic conclusion as opposed to the “mixed” ones (see, e.g., title of *Protr.* VI 3.21-23).

#### <IX 49.1-11: commentary>

**49.1-3 attribution:** This is a typical opening of Iamblichus, perhaps borrowing terminology from his local source.

**49.1 Ἀνωθεν:** “on a higher level”. Iamblichus likes to use this expression, as in *Protr.* XII (59.20-21) and XXI 116.27; *VP*. 6.4, 66.11; DCM 12.15, 32.11, 60.18, 66.16. But he may have borrowed the term from his source, as Aristotle uses the expression to refer to higher order principles, see e.g. *NE* VI 6, 1139b14 and 12, 1144a13.

**49.1-2 τοῦ τῆς φύσεως βουλήματος:** The same phrase as in the heading (4.9).

**49.2 τὴν αὐτὴν προτροπὴν:** The words “the same exhortation” apparently refer to the establishment of the intrinsic value of wisdom in chapter VIII, announced at 41.7-11, and argued for in various ways since then and up IX 52.11. Or could it mean from the same source (i.e. Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*) or even the same speech by a character therein.

**49.3-11 attribution and voice:** no specific doubts as to authenticity have been registered here. The voice seems to be ‘Aristotle’, and for most of the rest of the chapter as well, or else that of an unnamed philosopher very much like him. There is solid parallelism with the Corpus.

**49.3 ἀπό ... διὰ ... κατὰ ... εἰξι:** On the variation of these prepositions see Dirlmeier, *MM*, p. 248.

**49.3 ἀπό τινος διανοίας:** The phrase arises in connection with Aristotle definition of luck in relation to intentional activity in *Phys.* II 5, “those things for the sake of something include those from thought and those from nature ἔστι δὲ ἐνεκά του ὅσα τε ἀπὸ διανοίας ἀν πραχθείη καὶ ὅσα ἀπὸ φύσεως (196b22); “but the end is not among the causes in him, but of the choices and from thought”: ἔστι δὲ τὸ τέλος, ή κομιδη, οὐ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίων, ἀλλὰ τῶν προαιρετῶν καὶ ἀπὸ διανοίας. (197a2).

**49.5-9 τὰ δὲ διὰ τέχνης μὲν οὐδεμιᾶς, ἀλλὰ διὰ φύσιν ... διὰ τύχην ἔνια γίνεται τῶν πραγμάτων:** Plato’s Athenian stranger says that the things that have, do, or will come to be, all do so either by nature, by art, or by luck: Λέγουσί πού τινες ὡς πάντα ἔστι τὰ πράγματα γιγνόμενα καὶ γενόμενα καὶ γενησόμενα τὰ μὲν φύσει, τὰ δὲ τέχνῃ, τὰ δὲ διὰ τύχην (*Leg.* 888e4-6; see commentary by Krämer, *Arete*, 224-232, and Wilpert 1949, 63-64). The same kind of division of causes is observed in this section of the *Protr.* In *Metaph.* XII 3 Aristotle divides the causes schematically into art, nature, luck, and spontaneity: ἥ γὰρ τέχνη ἥ φύσει γίγνεται ἥ τύχη ἥ τῷ αὐτομάτῳ (1070a6-7).

**49.9 ὅσα γοῦν μή τε διὰ τέχνην μή τε διὰ φύσιν:** The four MSS give four variants here for the particle in second position: γοῦν, γε, γάρ, and no particle. Of these, the one that makes the most sense is γοῦν, because it expresses the limitation in the inference: we do at any rate *say* that most events are due to fortune if they are not due to necessity or nature or skill, but Aristotle is not expressing his own view here. This is one of the few cases where we prefer a reading in V to a reading in F, and one of the few clues that suggest that V is independent from F, contrary to what Pistelli had argued.

**49.10 μήτ' ἐξ ἀνάγκης:** Aristotle mentions ἀνάγκη here in opposition to τύχη, but not further elaborated on as a cause its own right, as he does in *Phys.* II 9. Nor do we have here in the *Protr.* any mention of τὸ αὐτόματον (spontaneity), which in *Phys.* II 4 is said to be the kind of cause, of which luck is a species (applicable to the intents and purposes of human beings). This may indicate that something has gone missing, or that Aristotle's discrimination of causes underwent a development. But no argument can be pressed because we would not expect a full-blown technical exposition of causes in a popular work. For further commentary see also Flashar, *Fragmente*, p. 191; Krämer 1959, 229-231.

#### <IX 49.11-25: commentary>

**49.11-25 attribution and voice:** no specific doubts have been registered as to the authenticity. It continues the previous argumentation in the voice of 'Aristotle'. There is solid parallelism with the Corpus.

**49.11-12 τῶν μὲν οὖν ἀπὸ τύχης γιγνομένων οὐδὲν ἔνεκά του γίγνεται:** cf. 49.22 τὸ μέντοι διὰ τύχην οὐ γίνεται ἔνεκά του. In *Phys.* II 5 Aristotle argues that luck is a cause in the sphere of things done for the sake of something and related to what is in accordance with choice, but only incidentally: δῆλον ὅρα ὅτι ἡ τύχη αἰτία κατὰ συμβεβηκός ἐν τοῖς κατὰ προσάρεσιν τῶν ἔνεκά του. Διὸ περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ διάνοια καὶ τύχη· ἡ γάρ προσάρεσις οὐκ ἄνευ διανοίας (197a5-8).

**49.14 τὸ οὖν ἔνεκα:** In a passage of the *Rhetoric* which Düring (*Attempt*, p186) oddly calls the "earliest example", Aristotle glosses this noun phrase as follows: "and the for the sake of which is the end": τὸ δ' οὖν ἔνεκα τὸ τέλος ἐστίν (1363b16). Aristotle points out that τὸ οὖν ἔνεκα has two different senses in several key passages discussing it as a cause (*Phys.* II 2.194a35-36; *de An.* II 4.415b2-3, 415b20-21; *Metaph.* 7.7.1072b1-3; *EE* 7.15.1249b15). In the passage at *Phys.* II 2 Aristotle says that he distinguished two senses of "the for the sake of which" in the (now lost) work *On Philosophy*. The phrase is elliptical for "the cause for the sake of which"; the terminology for this cause is consistent in all the canonical passages which list them together (*A.Po.* II 11; *Phys.* II 3 = *Metaph.* V 2; *Metaph.* I 3; *GA* I 1); on this point see Johnson, *Teleology*, 64-80.

**49.14-15 :ἀεὶ γάρ ὁ τὴν τέχνην ἔχων ἀποδώσει σοι λόγον δι' οὐν ἔγραψε καὶ οὖν ἔνεκα:** The exact same example is used to illustrate a similar point in *Physics* II 8: "but mistakes happen even in the case of technical skill, for example when the grammatical man writes incorrectly" ἀμαρτία δὲ γίγνεται καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τέχνην ἔγραψε γάρ οὐκ ὄρθως ὁ γραμματικός (199a33-34). See also *MM* 1189b6-21.

**49.15 σοι:** To whom does this refer? Cf. infra 50.19-20. Düring cites as a parallel

Isoc. *ad Nic.* 35, taking it to refer directly to Themison (*Attempt*, 186). A more likely possibility is that it refers to one of the characters of the dialogue.

**49.16 ὅ τι:** It is tempting to see here Aristotle's frequently invoked causal terminological distinction between ὅτι and διότι (e.g. *APo.* 87a31-37), although it is difficult to see how the text as printed in the manuscripts could be construed. But Pistelli's deletion of the whole word ὅτι is unnecessary, because a simpler correction, which gives good sense, is to read τι, separated from the relative pronoun.

**49.18-19 ἰατρικὴν ... οἰκοδομικὴν:** These are stock examples for Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. In *NE* I 5 Aristotle uses the examples of medicine/ health and architecture/ buildings, but adds strategy-victory as an example of goal-directed activities: τοῦτο δ' ἐν ἰατρικῇ μὲν ὑγίεια, ἐν στρατηγικῇ δὲ νίκη, ἐν οἰκοδομικῇ δ' οἰκία, ἐν ἄλλῳ δ' ἄλλο, ἐν ἀπάσῃ δὲ πράξει καὶ προαιρέσει τὸ τέλος· τούτου γὰρ ἐνεκα τὰ λοιπὰ πράττουσι πάντες (1097a19-22).

**49.20-21 πᾶν ἄρα ἐνεκά του γίγνεται τὸ κατὰ τέχνην:** Things that are caused not by luck but by skill, for example a ship or a house, come to be, intentionally, for the sake of some good. Ar. states this to be the case for every skill and every method at the outset of *NE* I 1: Πᾶσα τέχνη καὶ πᾶσα μέθοδος, ὁμοίως δὲ πρᾶξις τε καὶ προαιρέσις, ἀγαθοῦ τινὸς ἐφιεσθαι δοκεῖ· διὸ καλῶς ἀπεφήναντο τάγαθόν, οὐ πάντ' ἐφίεται (1094a1-4); and of every practice and choice in *NE* I 5: ἐν ἀπάσῃ δὲ πράξει καὶ προαιρέσει τὸ τέλος· τούτου γὰρ ἐνεκα τὰ λοιπὰ πράττουσι πάντες (1097a20-22); and also in all arts and sciences in *Pol.* III 12: ἐν πάσαις μὲν ταῖς ἐπιστήμαις καὶ τέχναις ἀγαθὸν τὸ τέλος (1282b14-5).

**49.21 τοῦτο τέλος αὐτῆς τὸ βέλτιστον:** Aristotle maintains that the end of each thing, is the best it can do: so the best thing medicine can do is to produce health, and the best thing a builder can do is produce a shelter that protects against weather and intruders. But Aristotle famously generalizes this analysis to natural philosophy as well, thinking each natural kind to have its own final end, which is the best thing for it (reproduction for plants, perception for animals, some kind of intelligence for humans, etc.). He uses similar language to describe the good in *Metaph.* I 2, “and this is the good of each, and generally the best in the whole of nature”: τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τάγαθὸν ἐκάστου, ὅλως δὲ τὸ ἄριστον ἐν τῇ φύσει πάσῃ (982b6-7).

**49.22-23 συμβαίη μὲν γὰρ ἀν καὶ ἀπὸ τύχης τι ἀγαθόν:** This is very close to the doctrine of *Phys.* 2.5, where we read: “but it is called good luck when something good happens”: τύχη δὲ ἀγαθὴ μὲν λέγεται ὅταν ἀγαθόν τι ἀποβη (197a25-26).

**49.23 οὐ μὴν ἄλλα:** A strictly prose expression indicating that what is said cannot be gainsaid; here it is used to emphasize that even though luck may result in something good, still it is emphatically not good insofar as it is caused by luck, but only because it is good for some other reason, and lucky circumstances happened to bring it about. For the idiom, see Denniston pp.28-30 who knows of ten examples in Plato, “more in Aristotle, over twenty in Demosthenes, and about thirty-six in Isocrates”. Denniston cites extensively from dialogues, and Aristotle's *Politics*.

**49.25 ἀόριστον:** In *Phys.* II 5 Aristotle argues that luck, as an incidental cause, is indefinite and unlimited: τὸ μὲν οὖν καθ' αὐτὸ αἵτιον ὠρισμένον, τὸ δὲ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἀόριστον· ἀπειρα γὰρ ἀν τῷ ἐνὶ συμβαίη (196b27-29; cf. 196b28,

197a9, 20, 21; 197a18-21; see also *APr.* 32b24, *APst.* 95a8, *EE* 7.14.1247a32, b7-8, b12-14; *Rhet.* 1369a32-33). On luck as an indefinite cause see Johnson, *Teleology*, 96-97.

#### <IX 49.26-50.12: commentary>

**49.26-50.12 attribution and voice:** no specific doubts have been registered as to the authenticity here. It continues on the argumentation in the voice of ‘Aristotle’. Once again, there is solid parallelism with the Corpus.

**49.27-28 βελτίονος ἐνεκεν ἀεὶ συνίσταται ἢ καθά περ τὸ διὰ**

**τέχνης:** A very similar a fortiori argument is invoked also in *PA* I 1, “But that for the sake of which and the fine exists more in the functions of nature than in those of skill”: Μᾶλλον δ' ἔστι τὸ οὖν ἐνεκα καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης (639b19-21); and *PA* 1.5, “For lack of haphazardness and being for the sake of something exists in the functions of nature most of all; and the end for the sake of which it is sustained and has been born has taken the place of the fine: ἀλλ' ἐνεκά τινος ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις ἔστι καὶ μάλιστα· οὐδὲ ἐνεκα συνέστηκεν ἢ γέγονε τέλους, τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ χώραν εἰληφεν (645a24-25).

**49.27 ἢ καθά περ:** is there a parallel of this expression in the corpus? Düring doubts Jaeger’s parallel, 903a33. Gigon went further and proposed to delete καθά περ. But the reasons for Düring’s suspicion and Gigon’s rejection are unclear; see also the following apparently similar parallels: 370a2, 736b10, 1031a8, 1097b30, 1170b20, 1179a35, 1180b29, 1321a30.

**49.28-50.1 μιμεῖται γὰρ οὐ τὴν τέχνην ἢ φύσις ἀλλὰ αὐτὴ τὴν φύσιν:** The same point—that art imitates nature and not vice versa—is argued in three other places of the *Protr.*: V 34.8-9 and IX at 50.12: ἡ τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν; 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 ἢ 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 Mund.* “skill imitates what nature does in this respect”: ἡ τέχνη τὴν φύσιν μιμουμένη τοῦτο ποιεῖν (396b11-12).

According to Düring, *Attempt*, p187, the father of this doctrine is Hippocrates and Democritus; cf. Nestle, *Hippocratica*, p8-17. See, e.g. Hippoc., *Vict.* 1.11f. and further Johnson, ‘The Medical Background’, 120 and n26.

**50.1-2 ἐπὶ τῷ βοηθεῖν καὶ τὰ παραλειπόμενα τῆς φύσεως ἀναπληροῦν:** See below note on 50.9-12 for the ancient idea that specifically human nature often falls short and requires the aid of art. Aristotle conceives of all art and education to exist for the purpose of dealing with natural deficiency, arguing in *Pol.* VII that “all art and education intends to fill in where nature falls short”: πᾶσα γὰρ τέχνη καὶ παιδεία τὸ προσλεῖπον βούλεται τῆς φύσεως ἀναπληροῦν (1337a1-3). In biology, the deficiencies of nature are compensated by other natural expediencies, as can be seen from an example in *PA* III 14 “for nature makes up the deficiency of the mouth by the capacity and heat of the stomach: τῇ δυνάμει γὰρ καὶ τῇ θερμότητι τῆς κοιλίας ἡ φύσις ἀναλαμβάνει τὴν τοῦ στόματος ἐνδειαν (674b29).

**50.1 ἔστιν ἐπὶ τῷ βοηθεῖν:** For this use of ἐπὶ see *GA* 5.8 “some teeth are

for crushing, the others for dividing”: εἰσὶ δ’ ἐκεῖνοι μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ λεαίνειν οὗτοι δ’ ἐπὶ τῷ διαιρεῖν. (788b29-34).

**50.2-4 τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἔοικεν αὐτὴ δύνασθαι δι’ αὐτῆς ἡ φύσις ἐπιτελεῖν καὶ βοηθείας οὐδὲν δεῖσθαι:** The language used here to describe the failure of nature to be able to accomplish and secure some result is vivid and harsh. He uses similar language to describe the problems with the notion of void in *Phys.* V 10, “either it entirely does not exist or with difficulty and obscurely”: ἢ ὅλως οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ μόλις καὶ ἀμυδρῶς (217b32-33).

**50.4-5 τὰ δὲ μόλις ἡ καὶ παντελῶς ἀδυνατεῖν:** “But others <it completes> with difficulty or is even entirely incapable”. The MSS all lack ἡ, which is supplied by the conjecture of Segonds, building on a suggestion by Zuntz (*Mnemosyne* IV.s., 11 (1958): 158). Zuntz pointed to the parallel expression at *Gen An.* 774a14, and argued that the καὶ transmitted by the MSS needs to be corrected to ἡ; this is basically correct, we agree, but one reaches this result in a more rhetorically satisfying form by adopting the alternative of Segonds, includes καὶ, rather than replacing it.

**50.5-8 ἔνια μὲν δή που τῶν σπερμάτων εἰς ὄποιαν ἀν ἐμπέσῃ γῆν ἀνευ φυλακῆς γεννώσιν, ἔνια δὲ προσδεῖται τῆς γεωργικῆς τέχνης:** The restoration of ἀν in εἰς ὄποιαν ἀν ἐμπέσῃ is a convincing conjecture on the part of Kiessling, adopted by subsequent editors and by us; the subjunctive requires it and its loss is trivially easy to explain.

There is a discussion of the nature of trees in [Aristotle] *Plant.* I 6 in which it is argued that some trees come from seed, others through themselves: τὰ μὲν γεννωνται ἐκ σπέρματις, τὰ δὲ δι’ εαυτῶν (820b29-30); the latter option is elsewhere by Aristotle and Theophrastus called “spontaneously”. To the class of “spontaneously” generated plants, Theophrastus opposed the plants that come to be through cultivation; the spontaneous is thus coordinate with the natural in the study of plants, as opposed to the artificial cultivation of plants through agriculture: “these constitute two divisions of the subject, the one as it were natural and αὐτόματον, the other belonging to art and preparation, which intends the good. But the account is not the same for both, the first is what we might call an account from nature, the other from inventiveness, nature doing nothing in vain, and intellect proposing to help nature” (*CP* II.1.1.6-11, trans. Einarson and Link); “The study of plants pursues two different investigations in two different fields. The first investigation deals with plants that grow αὐτόματοις, and here the starting point belongs to their nature; whereas the other starting point is that which proceeds from human ingenuity and contrivance, which we assert helps their nature to achieve its goal” (*CP* III.1.1.1-5, trans. Einarson and Link; Cf. *IP* II.1.1.1-10). Theophrastus is even willing to state that the spontaneous is equivalent to the natural principle, in contrast to art: “the nature contains the starting points in itself, and we speak here of the natural, and what we see in plants that grow ἐκ τῶν αὐτόματων is of this description” (*CP* I.16.10.8-10, trans. Einarson and Link).

To put Aristotle’s point in the *Protr.* in the terms of Theophrastean botany, then, some plants spontaneously reproduce, and others require artificial cultivation. Sedley argues that the *Protr.* passage supports the idea that some natural things exist and function primarily for the sake of human beings, because if some natural plants require human cultivation, then they must already exist for the sake of human beings, and thus

Aristotle's teleology is anthropocentric ('Teleology Anthropocentric?'; cf. Wilpert 1949, 64).

There is no direct evidence for this view of plants in Corpus; the passage in *Politics* I 8 which says that the "other" animals exist for the sake of humans says that the plants exist for the sake of the animals (1256b16-17). One might argue that what is described here is a "food chain" in which the plants exist for the sake of the other animals, but since the other animals exist for the sake of humans, it turns out that plants exist for the sake of humans as well. We cannot address this larger issue here (but see, in addition to Sedley's article, Wardy, 'lore of averages', and Johnson, *Teleology*, p152-153 and p229-237). Certainly it must be conceded that all plants that undergo cultivation, and that require cultivation for their survival, exist for the sake of human beings.

But how does the idea that some otherwise natural plants need human cultivation fit with Aristotle's biological doctrines? In the scientific works, in the account of seeds and sperm, Aristotle consistently holds that the seed of the parent already contains the form into which the descendant will develop continuously, unless something interferes. In *GA* I 18 it is argued that the sperm already contains what nature intends it to be in isolation from anything that a human being does: "nature intends the sperm to be that out of which the things sustained in accordance with nature originally come to be—not because it comes out of something that an individual agent such as a human does—for it comes to be out of this because it is the seed": βούλεται δὲ τοιούτον τὴν φύσιν εἶναι τὸ σπέρμα ἐξ οὗ τὰ κατὰ φύσιν συνιστάμενα γίγνεται πρώτου, οὐ τῷ ἐξ ἔκείνου τι εἶναι τὸ ποιούν οἷον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου· γίγνεται γὰρ ἐκ τούτου ὅτι τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σπέρμα. (724b15-20). What the seed is programmed to grow into in fact determines the basic function of plants and even animals, for the function of plants is exclusively to produce seeds and fruit (*GA* I 4.717a23??). Plant and animal seed is similar in this respect according to *GA* I 23: "And simply put the animals seem to be like divided plants, as if someone divided the thing apart when bearing seed, resolving and separating them into the male and female. And nature manufactures all these things reasonably well. For the essence of plants is no other function and no other action besides the production of seed": καὶ ἀτεχνῶς ἔοικε τὰ ζῷα ὡσπερ φυτὰ εἶναι διηρημένα, οἷον εἴ τις κάκεινα, ὅτε σπέρμα ἔξενέγκειεν, διαλύσειε καὶ χωρίσειεν εἰς τὸ ἐνυπάρχον θῆλυ καὶ ἄρρεν. Καὶ ταῦτα παντα εὐλόγως ἡ φύσις δημιουργεῖ. τῆς μὲν γὰρ τῶν φυτῶν οὐσίας οὐθέν ἐστιν ἄλλο ἔργον οὐδὲ πρᾶξις οὐδεμίᾳ πλὴν ἡ τοῦ σπέρματος γένεσις (*GA* 1.23.731a21?-26). On the difficulty of how plants are formed out of seed and animals out of semen see *GA* II 1.733b23 and f.

**50.9 ἀ πολαμβάνει τὴν φύσιν:** A similar expression is used in the discussion of lunar halos as rain signs in *Meteor*. III 3, "for if it neither fades nor disperses but is allowed to attain the nature of it (sc. a halo), then it is probably an indication of rain": ἐὰν μὲν γὰρ μήτε καταμαρανθῆ μήτε διασπασθῆ, ἀλλ' ἐαθῆ τὴν φύσιν ἀπολαμβάνειν τὴν αὔτης, ὕδατος εἰκότως σημεῖόν ἐστι (372b21), cf. *Phys.* VIII 7 (261a18).

**50.9-12 ἀνθρωπος δὲ πολλῶν δεῖται τεχνῶν πρὸς σωτηρίαν κατά τε τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν καὶ πάλιν κατά τὴν ὑστέραν τροφήν:** That humans need skills in order to survive, because they lack certain natural advantages, was a great theme of Greek literature, as can be seen from Aeschylus' *Prometheus*, and an important report of Anaximander (DK 12A10). In Plato's *Protagoras*, the title

character gives a speech that describes how humans had to be given justice and language in order to compensate for their natural weaknesses relative to the other animals already born with fur, tooth, and claw (322ab). In the *Politics* I 8, Aristotle represents a pragmatic and popular extrapolation from the situation of congenital human need to anthropocentric exploitation of natural resources. Sedley, *teleology anthropocentric?* argues that this represents Aristotle's considered position (see above note). However that may be, Aristotle's further discussion of the arts of household management and money-making (i.e. economics) in *Politics* I 9-13 upholds the ethical-political principle that engagement in these arts is justifiable to the extent that human needs must be met but should not be pursued beyond what is required to sustain the happy and free human life; on this point see Johnson, *Teleology*, 229-237.

#### <IX 50.12-19: commentary>

**50.12-19: attribution and voice:** no specific doubts have been registered here. It seems to continue the argumentation of 'Aristotle' from the previous paragraph, still showing solid parallelism with the Corpus.

**50.12 ή τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν:** see above note on 49.28-50.1.

**50.14 ὅπασαν ἔνεκά του γίγνεσθαι:** The skills do things for the sake of some good (whether real or apparent), when they are used correctly. Since the skills imitate nature, we can infer that nature too brings things about for the sake of some good. As we will see, the point of this is to show that humans, who have come to be by nature, have come to be for the sake of some good. This section states three crucial premises of an argument of the chapter that may be summarized in reverse order.

1. Humans come to be by nature (51.4-6)
2. If something comes to be by nature, then it comes to be well (50.16-19)
3. If something comes to be well, then it comes to be correctly (50.16)
4. If something comes to be correctly, then it comes to be for the sake of something (50.14-15)
5. Therefore, humans have come to be for the sake of something

The next question to ask would be: what is "this something" for the sake of which humans have come to be? The question is explicitly raised, and then answered, below at 51.6-7. In the mean time in 50.19-51.6 he provides a series of examples of things that come to be correctly, by nature, and for the sake of something: the eyelid (50.19-23), a ship (50.24-26), and animals in general (50.27-51.6).

**50.16 τό γε καλῶς, ὄρθως:** For the doctrine that the thing that comes to be well does so correctly, see Heraclitus DK C1 cf. B60 [= Hipp. De victu 1.11] and Plato, *Charm.* 165d, *Leg.* 889a. Aristotle also uses this a principle in *Phys.* II 7 199a; *Meteor.* IV 3 381b6; *PA* 639b19-21, 645a23-26; *Metaph.* 982b6; *MM* 1190a13-15, 1182a33; *Pol.* VII 17 1337a1. See also: [Ar.] *Mundo* 5 396b12 and Theophrast. *CP* II 18.2.

**50.17 τό γε μὴν κατὰ φύσιν:** A progressive use of μὴν, see Denniston p.349; it would be a mistake to delete this μὴν, as Ross did in his OCT edition of the fragments of *Protrepticus*.

**50.19:** It was reasonable for Vitelli to perceive a lacuna here, after φύσιν; but not much seems to have been lost, perhaps only a few words, if that. Vitelli's conjectural supplement <εναντίον. ή οὖν κατὰ φύσιν> Vitelli is minimal and sensible, but we have

come to suspect gaps of unknown length where such inexplicable changes of inflection occur. The patterns of scribal errors suggest that the most likely amount of lost text corresponds to one or two lines of script in the format of the manuscript from which the scribe was working, in other words, more than a few words, perhaps a sentence or two. In this case, we are not convinced there is any rhetorical or grammatical gap, nor is there any logical difficulty in the idea of a coming into being coming into being, when Aristotle says, “a coming into being in what is in accordance with nature comes into being for the sake of something.”

#### <IX 50.19-51.6: commentary>

**50.19-51.6 attribution and voice:** The expression ἵδοι τις ἄν is used by Iamblichus in a the perfectly typical opening of VII (41.6, and see note there). Here is it used emphatically (ἵδοι τις ἄν ... ἵδοις ἄν ως) and reappears below at 53.2-3 (apparently Aristotle’s voice). The earlier use seems to be a case of Iamblichus “borrowing” an expression from his source in the formulation of his own transitional comments. The same could be happening here, although there is no reason to doubt that this explanation of the eyelids featured in the *Protrepticus* and that the teleological explanation of the eye was offered as an example of the goal-directness of nature (as it was by Aristotle’s predecessors and still is today).

**50.21 κατανοοῖς ... ἵδοις ἄν ως:** The number of the verbs (second-person singular) suggests dialogue, that is, failure of Iamblichus to sufficiently modify his source so as to adapt it to the monological format of his collection of protreptic texts. This counts as some evidence in favor of attribution, by extension, to Aristotle of the expression: ἵδοι τις ἄν.

**50.21 τὸ βλέφαρον:** The example of the eyelid was one of the earliest examples of intelligent design, offered already by Socrates by Xenophon: “And apart from these, don’t you feel that there are other things too that look like the effects of providence? For example, because our eyes are delicate, they have been shuttered with eyelids which open when we have occasion to use them, and close in sleep; and to protect them from injury by the wind, eyelashes have been made to grow as a screen” (*Mem.* 1.4.6, tr. Waterfield). The main end of the eyelid, according to Aristotle, is protection of the eye: τῆς δὲ σωτηρίας χάριν τὰ βλέφαρα (*PA* 2.13.657a35, and f. for birds and quadrupeds). Crustaceans have no eyelids because that requires quick action of the skin, in its place they have hard eyes (657b30-658a3); fish have no eyelids because there is little risk that objects will collide with their eyes, and nature does nothing in vain (658a7-10). *PA* II 15 658b14-18. On the reason why humans gain control of their eyelids late in life, and loose it when tired or drunk, see *GA* 2.6.744a36-b9. The benefit of rest does not seem to have been mentioned in the Corpus but is unique to the *Protr.*; see Johnson, *Teleology*, 193.

**50.21 οὐ μάτην:** That nature does “nothing in vain” is a general scientific principle that Aristotle frequently invokes, e.g. *Phys.* II 6.197b22-29; *de An.* III 12.434a31-31; *PA* II 13.657a35, II 15.658b14-18; *GA* V 8.788b20-22; *Pol.* 1245a9, 1253a9, etc. See also alternative versions of the formula at *Cael.* 290a31, 291b13; *GA* 744a36; *Pol.* 1256b21. A passage in *IA* 8 shows a concrete application, “the cause of limblessness for snakes is, first, that nature does nothing in vain but always looking to the

best for each thing out of the possibilities, preserving each unique substance and the being which it is in itself”: τοῖς δ’ ὄφεσιν αἴτιον τῆς ἀποδίας τὸ τε τὴν φύσιν μηθὲν ποιεῖν μάτην, ἀλλα πάντα πρὸς τὸ ἄριστον ἀποβλέπουσαν ἐκάστω ἐκ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων, ιασώζουσαν ἐκαστοῦ τὴν ἴδιαν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸ τί ἦν αὐτῷ εἶναι. (708a9-12). The opening of Theophrastus’ *On the Causes of Plants* shows how important a scientific principle it had become for peripatetic research. On the role of the principle see Johnson, *Teleology*, 80-82.

#### **50.24 ταύτον ἔστιν οὖ τε ἔνεκα γέγονέ τι καὶ οὖ ἔνεκα δεῖ γεγονέναι:**

**γεγονέναι:** The same identity is asserted in *Metaph.* III 2, “but the end and the for that sake of which is an end of some action”: τὸ δὲ τέλος καὶ τὸ οὖ ἔνεκα πράξεως τινός ἔστι τέλος (996a24-26 = 1059a36); and *EE* I 8, “but that for the sake of which as end is best and a cause of that which is under it and first of all the things”: τὸ δ’ οὖ ἔνεκα ὡς τέλος ἄριστον καὶ αἴτιον τῶν ὑφ’ αὐτὸ καὶ πρώτον πάντων (1218b9-11 go to 13?).

#### **50.25-26 οἷον εἰ πλοῖον ἔνεκα τῆς κατὰ θάλατταν κομιδῆς ἔδει γίγνεσθαι:**

**γίγνεσθαι:** The other references to seafaring in the *Protr.* are in VI (40.1-6) and X (55.24-56.2). Compare *Phys.* II 8, “and if the ship-building skill were in the wood, it would be produced as it is in nature; so if that for the sake of which is in the skill, it is in the nature as well”: καὶ εἰ ἐνῆν ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ ἡ ναυπηγική, ὅμοίως ἂν τῇ φύσει ἐποίει. ὥστ’ εἰ ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ ἔνεστι τὸ ἔνεκά του, καὶ ἐν τῇ φύσει (199b28-30).

**50.27-51.1 καὶ μὴν τά γε ζῷα τῶν φύσει γεγενημένων:** Here we return to the reading of the MS, and reject as misguided Vitelli’s conjectural supplement τῶν φύσει <τε καὶ κατὰ φύσιν> γεγενημένων, inspired by the conclusion at 51.5-6, and followed by Pistelli (where it occupies half of 50.27) and des Places: its effect would be to short-circuit Aristotle’s reasoning at 50.15-19. The argument for this is evidently the parallel in *Phys.* II 1, in which Aristotle is admirably explicit about how the terminology is to be used: “according to nature applies to all these things and also to attributes which belong to them in accordance with themselves, for example for fire being carried upwards; for this is not a nature nor does it have a nature, but it is by nature and according to nature. What nature is, then, has been stated, and what is by nature and according to nature” κατὰ φύσιν δὲ ταῦτά τε καὶ ὅσα τούτοις ὑπάρχει καθ’ αὐτά, οἷον τῷ πυρὶ φέρεσθαι ἄνω· τοῦτο γὰρ φύσις μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ ἔχει φύσιν, φύσει δὲ καὶ κατὰ φύσιν ἔστιν. τί μὲν οὖν ἔστιν ἡ φύσις, εἴρηται, καὶ τί το φύσει καὶ κατὰ φύσιν (192b36-193a1). But to include this already would anticipate the argument at 51.3-6, which argues that it is κατὰ φύσιν as a result of not being περὶ φύσιν.

Aristotle asserts that “either all or the best” (see note below) animals have come to be by nature and thus for the sake of something: this is the key assumption of his naturalistic teleology. Aristotle’s develops the theory of the method of explanation according to a thing’s end (teleology) in *APo.* II 11, *Phys.* II 8, and *PA* I 1. *Parts of Animals* is a four book treatise that constantly applies the principle “nature does nothing in vain” in the course of explaining the end of the parts of all the kinds of animals known to Aristotle. (In this regard it differs from the HA, which makes little mention of the cause for the sake of which, dealing instead on the material parts of animals.) The IA, PA, and GA continue the project of the PA to provide explanations of animal motion and reproduction according to all the causes, naturally and teleologically.

**51.1-2 ἡ τοι πάντα τοπαρά παν ἡ τὰ βέλτιστα:** Aristotle argues in the protreptic to the study of life sciences in *PA* I 5 that in all animals must be studied,

regardless of whether they are more or less noble (μήτε ἀτιμότερον μήτε τιμιώτερον, 645a6-7); for every kind of animal, he insists, reveals nature and beauty (φυσικοῦ καὶ καλοῦ, 645a23). But he develops a scale of value corresponding to the powers and activities of various kinds of living thing (HA VIII 1, 588b21-589a5; see Johnson, *Teleology*, p204-205). For the idea that there are some natural animals that are not best, see below note on 51.3-4.

**51.2 τις:** to whom does this refer?

**51.3-4 τὰ πολλὰ παρὰ φύσιν οἴεται γεγενῆσθαι διά τινα**

**φθιορὰν καὶ μοχθηρίαν:** One expects Aristotle to consider the generation of all animals, in fact all living things, as natural, and so what could be meant by **παρὰ φύσιν?**

An anonymous Byzantine or Renaissance scholar offers the following interpretation in a marginal note: “some animals have come to be unnaturally, as have those worms generated in rotting corpses and tapeworms in the sick” (anonymous scholiast to F; Des Places 153.18-20). It has been argued that we can distinguish between things that come to be “by nature” from those that come to be “according to nature”. Diseases and parasites and so forth come to be “by nature” (meaning, simply, they have natural causes like everything else), but not “according to nature”, because they have a bad, not good result. For this interpretation see further Düring, *Attempt*, 188.

But there are no direct parallels for this interpretation in the Corpus, as far as we can tell. A more likely possibility is that Aristotle has in mind a position like that expressed in the *Phaedo*, in which Plato describes the plants and animals of this part of the “corroded and polluted” cosmos as suffering from “ugliness and disease” (110e2-6). Following on this *Timaeus* accounts for the coming to be of all other animals besides male humans according to a theory of devolution; the moral failings and corruptions of men cause them to be reborn as the lower animals, and the entire animal series is a manifestation of the moral degeneracy of human beings (90e?). In the *Protr.*, Aristotle might be arguing that even if animals do arise by some process of devolution from corrupt humans, still it is clear that they come to be for the sake of something (such as the punishment and improvement of those human souls).

Turning to the Corpus, the *Generation of Animals* is the obvious place to look for an interpretation. There Aristotle considers a class of animals that are “spontaneously generated”, as opposed to generated through seed. These might be thought contrary to the normal method of sexual reproduction and thus contrary to nature, but Aristotle argues that spontaneously generated organisms are natural and he even admits that there are degrees of “nobility” for these things (*GA* III 11.762a10-33, τιμιώτερον at 24). Another possibility, arising from the same work, is that in the *Protr.* Aristotle has in mind freaks or monsters which, as he says in *GA* IV 4, “belong to the class of things contrary to nature, but not entirely contrary to nature but only as it is normally”: ἔστι γὰρ τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι, παρὰ φύσιν δ' οὐ πάσαν ἀλλὰ τὴν ως ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ (770b9-11). As Aristotle continues to argue (down to 770b19), even freaks are in a sense in accordance with nature, since they come to be due to regular causes, etc. (see Johnson, *Teleology*, 198-201). The accounts of both spontaneously generated organisms and freaks are fully consistent with the position argued in the *Protrepticus*, and also with Aristotle’s mature position, stated in the protreptic to life sciences in *Parts of Animals* I 5, that all animals are in some sense noble and each contains some portion of the divine, which may

be sought out and discovered by the keen student of nature.

There is also the possibility that Aristotle conceives of all other life forms as inferior or degenerate relative to the human being, on which see next note.

**51.4-5 τιμιώτατον δέ γε τῶν ἐνταῦθα ζῷων ἀνθρωπός ἔστιν:** “a human is the most valuable of the living things down here”. But humans are not the best of all things in the cosmos, as Aristotle reminds us in *NE* VI 7: μὴ τὸ ἄριστον τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἀνθρωπός ἔστιν (1141a21-22); cf. *Pol.* I 2, “for just as when perfected a human is best among the animals, so in separation from law and justice he is the worst of all”: ωσπερ γάρ καὶ τελεωθεὶς βέλτιστον τῶν ζῷων ἀνθρωπός ἔστιν, οὔτω καὶ χωρισθεὶς νόμου καὶ δίκης χείριστον πάντων (1253a31-33). Aristotle readily admits our inferiority to the celestial bodies (which he considers living things) in *PA* I 1, for the heavenly bodies “are obviously much more ordered and definite than we are” (641b18-19). But Aristotle in the same work adduces the posture of humans as evidence of their superiority to the other animals (i.e. those down here) in *PA* IV 10, “for of all animals the human alone stands erect, because its nature and substance is divine. For it is the function of the godlike to think and to be intelligent” (686a27-29). And compare the pragmatic anthropocentric remarks of *Phys.* II 2 194a35 and *Pol.* 1.8 (1256b22). Compare the full-blown anthropocentric providential scheme put into the mouth of Socrates by Xenophon, M. 1.4.14.

#### <IX 51.6-15: commentary>

**51.6-8 attribution and voice:** we punctuate with a question mark: τί δὴ τοῦτό ἔστι; <does this follow F?> and consider it likely that this was asked by an interlocator in Aristotle’s dialogue, in response to the argument leading to the conclusion that “the human being has come into being for the sake of something”. We leave it in plain text because of uncertainty about the extent to which dialogue may have been omitted. The desperate measures of other editors to invent Greek supplements, presumably under the assumption that dialogue should not be present in a letter or treatise, have been noted in the *apparatus criticus*.

**51.6 καὶ τοῦτό ἔστι τῶν ὄντων:** Düring argues that there is no connection with what precedes and thus calls for a reordering; a more conservative position would be to assume that something has dropped out. Cf. 49.15-16.

**51.7 οὖ χάριν:** The same point is made in almost the same terms at *Pol.* VII 15: “reason and intelligence are the end of our nature, so that the generation of the habits should be organized looking to them” ὁ δὲ λόγος ἡμῖν καὶ ὁ νοῦς τῆς φύσεως τέλος, ωστε πρὸς τούτους τὴν γένεσιν καὶ τὴν τῶν ἔθων δεῖ παρασκευάζειν μελέτην (1334b15-17).

**51.7 ἡ φύσις ἡμᾶς ἐγένυνησε καὶ ὁ θεός:** For the conjunction of nature and the divine, cf. X, “live looking to nature and the divine”: πρὸς τὴν φύσιν βλέπων ζῆι καὶ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον (55.26-27). In *de cael.* I 5, Aristotle says “god and nature create nothing that is without a point” (271a33). It is not necessary to take this personification literally and assume an intentional agent is meant; “for all things by nature have something divine in them” (*NE* vii 13, 1153b32). Düring cites some medical writers to whom the divine was considered something in the order of nature (*Attempt*, 190). He later states that “the identification of ‘nature and the divine’ is habitual in the early

writings of the Corp. Hipp. and in Diog. of Apollonia (*Attempt*, 222); unfortunately he gives no references. Simplicius and Philoponus' treatment of this phrase is discussed in Moraux, 'l'tradition indirecte', 168.

### 51.7 ἡ μᾶς: Note pronoun usage.

**51.8-10 attribution and voice:** we regard it likely that the question at 7-8 was asked by an interlocator in Aristotle's dialogue, and we regard the story at 8-10, about the answer that Pythagoras gave, to be by Aristotle, although it cannot be conclusively ruled out that Iamblichus has interpolated the story in accordance with the wider purpose of his Pythagorean works. More likely is that the presence of this passage is one of the reasons that attracted Iamblichus to the idea of excerpting the *Protrepticus* of Aristotle for his Neopythagorean *Protreptic to Philosophy*.

**51.7-8 τί δη τοῦτό ἐστι:** Here we return to the reading of the MS, and reject two speculative emendations by Zuntz, the effect of which would be to transform the opening of this paragraph into this: "So what is this thing, for the sake of which nature, and the god, have brought us into being? When Pythagoras was asked this, ..." The emendations are intrusive and presuppose very unlikely corruptions; better is to construe the transmitted text, despite the awkwardness. This is especially the case given that we appear to have here a fossil of the original dialogue (see above comment). Thus Burkert (*Lore*, 5n11) warns against the process whereby Düring, by accepting the emendation, removes a crucial hint for source criticism provided by the text of Iamblichus, since emphasis on the *ti esti* line of questioning is, as he puts it, "characteristic" of early Pythagoreanism.

**51.8 Πυθαγόρας ἐρωτώμενος:** The story about Pythagoras' answer to the citizens of Phlius about the origin of the term philosophy is recounted by Cicero and by Iamblichus in VP XII (see appendix to the commentary on this chapter). The comparison between the three ways of life and the three classes of people attending an athletic festival is directly parallel to 53.19-54.5 below. Aristotle was well informed about and highly interested in Pythagorean traditions; he mentions them regularly in works on natural philosophy, and wrote a work or works on the "Pythagoreans" (DL 5.25, titles 98 and 102). Thus he could easily have written up a version of the story, based on the account in a work of Heraclides of Pontus, probably his work *On the Woman Not Breathing* (Diogenes Laertius, *Preface* 12). It cannot be ruled out that Iamblichus has switched sources and has begun to cite from Heraclides at this point; but we believe instead that it is the character 'Aristotle' who makes reference to the views and the thought of Heraclides within this discussion, mentioning his theatre metaphor and giving his own version of it (at the end of ch. IX of Iamblichus' *Protrepticus*), as well as mentioning this story about Pythagoras claiming to be the first philosopher. It was precious to Iamblichus to have 'Aristotle' confirm the essential correctness of the Pythagorean approach to theoretical philosophy, and Iamblichus prominently showcases the comment that "Pythagoras was right, according to this argument anyway." Since this last qualification runs contrary to the purposes of Iamblichus, we can be perfectly sure that it was not invented by him, but discovered in his source text.

### 51.11-15 attribution:

**51.11 Ἀναξαγόραν:** DK 59A30, not in Curd, *Anaxagoras* (cf. 89-90, 102). Anaxagoras is also quoted above in VIII (48.16-18). Aristotle attributes almost the same

saying to Anaxagoras at *EE* I 5, “and they say that Anaxagoras gave the following answer to someone working through these kind of difficulties and asking what it is for the sake of which one should choose to be born rather than not be born. He said: to observe the heavens and the whole cosmic order”: τὸν μὲν οὖν Ἀναξαγόραν φασὶν ἀποκρίνασθαι πρὸς τινα διαποροῦντα τοιαῦτ’ ἄττα καὶ διερωτῶντα τίνος ἐνέκ’ ἀν τις ἔλοιτο γενέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ μὴ γενέσθαι “τοῦ” φάναι “θεωρῆσαι τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν περὶ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον τάξιν” (1216a11-14). Anaxagoras is represented by Aristotle as the type of man who leads the intellectual life (*EE* I 4.1215b6-14 cf. *NE* VI 7.1141b2-5, X 9.1179a13-17). See Jaeger, ‘On the origin and cycle of the philosophical ideal of life’, App. I of Aristoteles, Eng. transl., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 426-461. orig. publ. in *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1928. Compare Euripides frag. 910; Clem. Alex. Strom. 2.130; DL 2.10.

**51.13-14 τοῦ θεάσασθαι [τὰ περὶ] τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ περὶ αὐτὸν ἄστρα:** We accept Pistelli’s conjectural deletion, but reject his supplement. The transmitted text could have resulted from the following process: a marginal note could have interpolated τὰ before 51.14 περὶ αὐτὸν ἄστρα, with the phrase τὰ περὶ later erroneously inserted into the text before τὸν οὐρανὸν. Since neither the moon nor the sun have a definite article, there seems to be no good reason to supply it for the stars; there seems to be no need for the more unlikely conjecture of Jaeger, which would add definite articles to all the terms.

#### <IX 51.16-52.8: commentary>

**51.16-52.8 attribution and voice:** no specific doubts about authenticity have been registered here. The argumentation continues in the voice of ‘Aristotle’ showing strong parallels to the Corpus.

**51.18-19 τέλος δὲ κατὰ φύσιν τοῦτο ἔστιν ὁ κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν πέφυκεν ὕστατον:** A version of the argument of this section is given in *Pol.* VII.15 in the transition to a discussion of the primary education of children. “Thus much is clear in the first place, that, as in all other things, birth implies an antecedent beginning, and that there are beginnings whose end is relative to a further end. Now, in men reason and mind are the end towards which nature strives, so that the birth and training and in custom of the citizens ought to be ordered with a view to them. In the second place, as the soul and body are two we see also that there are two parts of the soul, the rational and the irrational, and two corresponding states, reason and appetite. And as the body is prior in order of generation to the soul, so the irrational is prior to the rational. The proof is that anger and wishing and desire are implanted in children from their very birth, but reason and understanding are developed as they grow older. For this reason, the care of the body ought to precede that of the soul, and the training of the appetitive part should follow: nonetheless our care of it must be for the sake of the reason, and our care of the body for the sake of the soul” (1334b12-22, tr. ROT modified). But see the note on 51.20 for a qualification on the principle that the final stage of a process of generation corresponds to that for the sake of which it has come to be.

**51.20 περαιουμένης:** παιρομένοις is corrupt, although it appears to be an early mistake. The L reading and the correction in the margin of F περαιουμένης give the necessary meaning, ‘complete’ (equivalent to περαίνω, according to LSJ s.v.). The more unlikely reading περαινομένης was found in two later manuscripts (Greek manuscript 77 in the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome, and cod. Neap. Borbon. III-B-30 in Naples) by Pistelli; and this reading was printed by him and des Places.

**51.20 τῆς γενέσεως συνεχῶς:** The primary example of a constant process

of change is the physical development, including maturation and ageing, of an organism, especially a human being, as in the present example. But Aristotle in *Physics* II 2 adds a crucial qualification to the principle that the cause for the sake of which is the end of a process of generation in the sense of final stage, “But the nature is the end or that for the sake of which. For if in a continuous process of generation (συνεχούς τῆς κινήσεως) there is some end, this is the final [end] and that for the sake of which. And that is why the poet was led to a ridiculous extreme in saying [of a dead man] that ‘he has got the ending for which he was born.’ For not every finality wants to be an end, but the best does: ἡ δὲ φύσις τέλος καὶ οὐ ἐνεκά ὅν γὰρ συνεχούς τῆς κινήσεως οὔσης ἔστι τι τέλος, τοῦτο ἐσχατον καὶ τὸ οὐ ἐνεκά: διὸ καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς γελοίως προήχθη εἰπεῖν “ἔχει τελευτήν, ἥσπερ οὖνεκ’ ἐγένετο”. βούλεται γὰρ οὐ πᾶν εἶναι τὸ ἐσχατον τέλος, ἀλλὰ τὸ βέλτιστον (194a27-33). Thus it is not agedness or death, but the wisdom that comes naturally with age, that is the end for the sake of which we were born.

**51.20, 51.24, 52.4 οὐκοῦν:** The particle is extremely common in Platonic dialogue, and appears in a succession of arguments or a new step in an argument (e.g. *Prtr. 330cd*, Denniston p434). Düring (*Attempt*, 189) finds no parallels in the extant works of Aristotle to a sequence of more than two of this particle in a row (although there are many of two in a row). On the other hand, he points out that the literary structure of the whole argument is common in Aristotle, citing: *Cat.* 2a34-b35; *GC* 337a17-25; *NE* 1180a14-24. Two passages not mentioned by Düring deserve further study. The first is a passage in the *Rhetoric* in which Aristotle describes a technique of responding to interrogation; the questioners are represented as using the same particle (1419a29, 33, 33), “If a conclusion takes the form of a question, explain the reason for the conclusion: for example, when Sophocles was asked by Pisander if he had approved establishing the government of the Four Hundred as the others on the committee to draft legislation did, he admitted it. ‘But why? Surely (οὐκοῦν) these things you did were bad things, right?’ ‘Yes’ he said; ‘but there were no better alternatives!’ And [reply] as the Spartan replied, when rendering an account of his term as ephor and being asked if the others on the board had not been justly put to death: the examiner asked, ‘Surely (οὐκοῦν) you behaved in a way similar to them?’ He admitted it. ‘Surely (οὐκοῦν) it would be just,’ he said, ‘to put you to death as well?’ ‘Not at all,’ he replied, ‘for they took bribes to do these things; I did not, but acted in accordance with my own judgment.’” (1419a25-35). It is perhaps significant that Aristotle represents the particle in a dialogical role. Could the passage in Iamblichus be a compression of dialogue in the *Protrepticus*? The other example of three successive cases of οὐκοῦν is *APr.* 2.14, where Aristotle explains the relationship between probative and per impossible demonstration; a series of examples of demonstrations are given and it is asserted that if such a demonstration is made “then the supposition must have been”: οὐκοῦν ή μὲν ὑπόθεσις ἦν (63a9, 26, 41; Bekker’s punctuation with paragraphs at these points greatly enhances the legibility of his text).

**51.23 πῶς οὐκ τὸ τοῦ βελτίονος τέλος ὑστερίζει τῆς γενέσεως:** Reading the conjecture supplied by us, πῶς οὐκ] πῶς οὐκ: “How could the end of the better not come later than its generation?” On the principle that it does, see *DCM* 26.83.21-22 and note *ad loc.* We don’t understand the construal of the uncorrected text πῶς ἀεὶ in Ross (“we may say”) or in des Places (“il semble”).

**51.24 ψυχὴ σώματος ὕστερον:** Compare the related premise used above in

VI: ψυχὴ σώματος ἄμεινον (38.15).

**52.1 τὸ γῆρας:** Socrates argues that the ability to reason about advantage and disadvantage, unlike simple perception through the body, comes later in life after “a long and arduous education” (*Theat.* 186c). Aristotle represents a similar view, but for a slightly different reason: “while young men become geometers and mathematicians and wise in matters like these, it is thought that a young man of practical wisdom cannot be found. The cause is that such wisdom is concerned not only with universals but with particulars, which become familiar from experience, but a young man has no experience for it is length of time that gives experience (*NE* VI 8.1142a15-16, ROT); cf. “we ought to attend to the undemonstrated sayings and opinions of experienced and older people or of people with practical wisdom not less than to demonstrations; for because experience has given them an eye they see aright” (*NE* VI 12.1143b11-14, ROT). In discussing the distribution of duties of warriors and councillors, Aristotle states that “both functions should be entrusted by the ideal constitution to the same persons. Not, however, at the same time, but in the order prescribed by nature, who has given to young men strength and to older men wisdom” (*Pol.* VII 9.1329a15-16, ROT).

**52.5 ἔνεκα τοῦ φρονῆσαι τι καὶ μαθεῖν:** Cf., below, ἐπὶ τὸ γνῶναι τε καὶ θεωρῆσαι (52.7), and chapter 11, ὁ φρονῶν καὶ θεωρῶν (58.8; cf. 58.10). Cicero recounts that “man, as Aristotle observes, is born for two purposes, thought and action: he is at it were a mortal god” (*Fin.* II. 13.40, tr. Rackham). Later, in *Fin.* 5 we have a more or less original version of the argument of this section in the words of Cicero, “It is therefore at all events manifest that we are designed by nature for activity. Activities vary in kind, so much so that the more important actually eclipse the less; but the most important are, first (according to my view and that of those with whose system we are now occupied [sc. the peripatetics]) the contemplation and the study of heavenly bodies and of those secrets and mysteries of nature which reason has the capacity to penetrate; secondly, the practice and theory of politics; thirdly, the principles of prudence, temperance, courage, and justice, with the remaining virtues and the activities consonant therewith, all of which we may sum up under the single term of morality; towards the knowledge and practice of which, when we have grown to maturity, we are led onward by nature’s own guidance. All things are small in their first beginnings, but they grow larger as they pass through their regular stages of progress. And there is a reason for this, namely that at the moment of birth we possess a certain weakness and softness which prevent our seeing and doing what is best. The radiance of virtue and of happiness, the two things most to be desired, dawns upon us later, and far later still comes a full understanding of their nature.” (21.58, tr. Rackham).

**52.6-8 καλῶς ᾅρα κατά γε τοῦτον τὸν λόγον Πυθαγόρας εἴρηκεν ως ἐπὶ τὸ γνῶναι τε καὶ θεωρῆσαι πᾶς ἀνθρωπος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ συνέστηκεν:** This refers to the answer Pythagoras gave to the people of Phlius (see comment on the title for this chapter), given above at 51.8-10, but the reiteration at 52.7-8 adds τὸ γνῶναι, drops ἡ φύσις, and drops the astronomical direct objects, making the second version much less vivid and compelling. This section clearly contains Iamblichus’ transitional remarks between the two topics mentioned in the title of the chapter. See Burkert, ‘Platon oder Pythagoras’, 168-169.

**52.8-16 attribution and voice:** Prima facie the passage contains a navigational statement, and could therefore be considered to belong to Iamblichus. But it could just as well be the comment of a speaker in the dialogue delimiting the subject of his speech.

**52.9 τις ἐτέρα φύσις:** Possible candidates for this include: θεός (as in 1249b17); τὴν ἀλήθειαν (as above in chapter 8.47.4); or τὴν δὲ τῶν ὄντων φύσιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν (below at 54.4).

**52.13 ἐν αὐτῷ :** Zuntz argues that the MS reading αὐτῷ is corrupt and emends το ἀπ' αὐτῶν; Ross and Düring emend diacriticals to αὐτῷ, ‘oneself’, an attractive idea; in fact this reading was already present in one of the older MSS, V. But a parallel in *Rhetoric* 1.5 seems to indicate a reference to a particular person, which could *a fortiori* be the situation if the *Protrepticus* were a dialogue; “For such a person would be self-sufficient, if there are the goods both internal to him and the external goods (τά τ' ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ ἔκτος ἀγαθά). For there are no others besides these. On the one hand the goods internal to him (ἐν αὐτῷ) are the goods of the soul and those of the body, but on the other hand external goods are good birth and friends and money and honor”: οὗτω γὰρ ἂν αὐταρκέστατος τις εἴη, εἰ ὑπάρχοι αὐτῷ τά τ' ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ ἔκτος ἀγαθά· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἄλλα παρὰ ταῦτα. ἔστι δ' ἐν αὐτῷ μὲν τα περὶ ψυχὴν καὶ τὰ ἐν σώματι, ἔξω δὲ εὐγένεια καὶ φίλοι καὶ χρήματα καὶ τιμη (1360b24-28).

**52.12-17 τοῦτο γάρ ἔστιν ἀκρότατον:** Aristotle tells us at the outset of *EE* II that he made this argument in the “exoteric works”, “for all these are goods, the external [goods], those [goods] in the soul and, among these, the more choiceworthy are those in the soul, as we indicated also in the exoteric writings”: πάντα δὴ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἦ ἔκτος ἢ ἐν ψυχῇ, καὶ τούτων αἱρετώτερα τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, καθάπερ διαιρούμεθα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐξωτερικοῖς λόγοις (1218b32-34). For further commentary see Jaeger, *Aristotle*, 249; Dirlmeier, Philol. Supp. 30 (1937), 29.

**52.15 ἐν <τῇ> ψυχῇ:** The supplement of Kiessling is required, to re-establish the parallel.

#### <IX 52.16-53.2: commentary>

**52.16-53.2 attribution and voice:** no specific doubts of the authenticity of this section have been registered. It seems to resume the argumentation in the voice of ‘Aristotle’, but possibly after an interlocution (in the environment of 52.8-16). This is reinforced by the characterization of a question ‘What’s the use?’ etc. at 52.25-28. The view attacked is evidently Isocrates’ utilitarian conception of philosophy and education (see our essay “Isocrates’ *Antidosis* and the *Protrepticus* of Aristotle”). A characteristically Aristotelian response is given here (one cannot really imagine another author or voice) in defense of the intrinsic value of some kind of activities. Polybius (III 4.10-11, with no specific work in mind?) argues that, contrary to Aristotle, no one pursues knowledge for its own sake, but only for the sake of honor, pleasure, or utility.

**52.16 τὸ δὲ ζητεῖν:** In *Pol.* VIII 3 the same position is cast as a principle of primary education: “to always be seeking the useful is not fitting for the great-souled and free people: τὸ δὲ ζητεῖν πανταχοῦ τὸ χρήσιμον ἥκιστα ἀρμόττει τοῖς μεγαλοψύχοις καὶ τοῖς ἐλευθερίοις (1338b2-4); cf. *NE* I 4.1096b16-19.

**52.17 χρησίμην:** In *Metaph.* I 2, Aristotle argues that the kind of wisdom he is seeking originated when people stopped having to focus on what is useful because the necessities had been taken care of: “for it is clear that it is because of knowing that they pursued science and not for the sake of anything useful. And this is confirmed by what happened. For when almost all of the necessities had been supplied, as well as the things that make subsisting easier, this kind of intelligence began to be sought”: φανερὸν ὅτι διὰ τὸ εἰδέναι τὸ ἐπίστασθαι ἐδίωκον καὶ οὐ χρήσεώς τινος ἔνεκεν. μαρτυρεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ συμβεβηκός· σχεδὸν γὰρ πάντων ὑπαρχόντων τῶν ἀναγκαίων καὶ πρὸς ῥαστώνην καὶ διαγωγὴν ἡ τοιαύτη φρόνησις ἤρξατο ζητεῖσθαι (982b20-24).

**52.19 τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα:** See below XII 59.24-26. Socrates’ rant against paid private teachers in *Rep.* 6 accuses them of substituting the convictions of the mob or beast for wisdom about what is good or bad, just or unjust, “and he has no other account of these things, but calls the necessities just and fine, but the nature of the necessary and the good, how different they are in reality, he has neither seen nor would be able to show anything else. Does not this kind of person, by Zeus, seem like an absurd educator?” (493c3-8).

In *Top.* III 2 Aristotle rehearses the commonplaces of the comparison between necessities and superfluities, “and the superfluities are better than the necessities, and sometimes more choiceworthy as well. For to live well is better than to live, but to live well comes from superfluities, and life itself the necessities. But sometimes the better things are not the more choiceworthy. For if it is not better, it is necessary and more choiceworthy. To do philosophy at least is better than to earn money, but it is not more choiceworthy for the one who is in need of necessities. But the superfluities exist when the necessities are possessed but someone manages to secure some other things among the goods. But, perhaps roughly, the necessary is more choiceworthy, but the superfluous is better” Καὶ τὰ ἐκ περιουσίας τῶν ἀναγκαίων βελτίω, ἐνίοτε δε καὶ αἱρετώτερα· βελτιον γὰρ τοῦ ζῆν τὸ εὖ ζῆν, τὸ δὲ εὖ ζῆν ἐστιν ἐκ περιουσίας, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἀναγκαῖον. ἐνίοτε δτὰ βελτίω οὐχὶ καὶ αἱρετώτερα· οὐ γὰρ εἰ βελτίω, ἀναγκαῖον καὶ αἱρετώτερα· τὸ γοῦν φιλοσοφεῖν βέλτιον τοῦ χρηματίζεσθαι, ἀλλ’ οὐχ αἱρετώτερον τῷ ἐνδεεῖ τῶν ἀναγκαίων. τὸ δ’ ἐκ περιουσίας ἐστὶν ὅταν ὑπαρχόντων τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἄλλα τινὰ προσκατασκευάζηται τις τῶν καλῶν. σχεδὸν δὲ ἵσως αἱρετώτερόν ἐστι τὸ ἀναγκαῖον, βελτιον δὲ τὸ ἐκπεριουσίας (118a6-15). In *Pol.* VII 14 Aristotle provides several examples, “war is for the sake of peace, unlesure for leisure, and the necessities and useful things for the sake of the fine things”: πόλεμον μὲν εἰρήνης χάριν, ἀσχολίαν δὲ σχολῆς, τὰ δ’ ἀναγκαῖα καὶ χρήσιμα τῶν καλῶν ἔνεκεν. (1333a33-36). The same terminology features in Aristotle’s division of the kinds of pleasure in *NE* VII 4 (1147b23-30); Cf. *MM* 1.34, (1198b16).

**52.21 ὁν ἄνευ ζῆν ἀδύνατον:** See *Metaph.* 1015a21 (quote it).

**52.22 συναίτια:** See also below on 53.2. The term is asserted to be in origin Hippocratic by Düring, *Attempt*, 40 (citing *Vet. Med.* 17 = p. 49.2 Hense). See Isocrates 5.33, 44; 15.96. Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.4.15. Plato, *Phd.* 99b, *Polit.* 281c, 287b; *Grg.* 519b, *Tim.* 46d. The term features in Aristotle’s distinction of the several kinds of necessity in *Metaph.* V 5: “We call necessity that without which it is not possible to live, as a co-cause (for example, breathing and nutrition are necessary for animals, for it is not possible for them to exist without these)”: Ἀναγκαῖον λέγεται οὐ ἄνευ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται

ζῆν ως συναιτίου ὁῖον τὸ ἀναπνεῖν καὶ ἡ τροφὴ τῷ ζῷῳ ἀναγκαῖον, ἀδύνατον γάρ ἄνευ τούτων εἶναι (1015a20-22; cf. 1015b3). Thus a *sunaition* is a cause in the framework of hypothetical necessity. In NE 3.5 Aristotle discusses how the virtues are voluntary, and says that we are “co-causes” of our own states of character (1141b23). In VV 4 experience and memory are said to be co-causes of wisdom (1250a37). The term occurs most often in Aristotle in the context of natural science, e.g. *Phys.* I 9 (192a13). In *de Anima* fire is said to be, of nutrition, a “co-cause, but not a cause in the strict sense”: ὃ δὲ συναιτίον μέν πώς ἐστιν, οὐ μὴν ἀπλῶς γε αἴτιον (416a14); cf. *Sens.* 441a29, *HA* 634a17, *GA* 782a26, 783b21.

**52.22-23 ἀ ποβαίνη μηδὲν ἔτερον:** Cf. *DCM* xxiii 71.4.

**52.23-25 οὐ γὰρ δὴ τόδε μὲν αἱρετὸν διὰ τόδε, τόδε δὲ δι’ ἄλλο,** τοῦτο δὲ εἰς ἄπειρον οἴχεται προϊόν, ἀλλ’ ἵσταται που: Cicero writes, “Aristotle and Theophrastus often and admirably praised knowledge for its own sake” (*Fin.* V 25.73, tr. Rackham). Aristotle stresses that the chain of actions and purposes must come to an end at some point in *NE* I 1: Εἰ δῆ τι τέλος ἐστὶ τῶν πρακτῶν ὃ δι’ αὐτὸ βουλόμεθα, τᾶλλα δὲ διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ μη πάντα δι’ ἔτερον αἱρούμεθά πρόεισι γὰρ οὕτω γ’ εἰς ἄπειρον, ὥστ’ εἶναι κενὴν καὶ ματαίαν τὴν ὅρεξιν, δῆλον ως τοῦτ’ ἀν εἴη τάγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον (1094a18-22). Other passages where he emphasizes stoppage of infinite regression include: *APo.* I 22.83b28; *Metaph.* 994b9-27, *NE* I 1.1094a19-22, 1096b16-19, *EE* 1248a21, *Pol.* 1323b7; Iam. *DCM* 23.72.2-6. Jaeger, *Aristoteles*, 279.

**52.27-28 καὶ ‘τί οὖν ἡμῖν ὅφελος;’ καὶ ‘τί χρήσιμον;’ ἔρωτάν:**

This reads a lot like dialogue, and appears to be a relic of a process of extraction of the surrounding ideas from a dialogue. Even Düring had to admit this (*Attempt*, 209).

**53.1 καλὸν κἀγαθὸν:** This is a very important conjunction of evaluative concepts for Isocrates, see especially *Ad Demonicus* 62, 13.4. 51.2; *Soph.* 6.7, cf. *Helen* 8-- which clearly means more than just beauty and goodness. Later in the *Protrepticus* Aristotle runs an argument to the effect that theoretical philosophy, in particular mathematical philosophy, manifests the corresponding virtue of combining beauty and accuracy; see for example: καλῶς καὶ ἀκριβῶς (XI 58.3) and κάλει καὶ ἀκριβείᾳ (*DCM* xxvi 83.24-25).

**53.2 συναίτιον:** Cf. above on 52.22 and, in the dedication, συνέργον, Stob. 785.14.

### <IX 53.2-15: commentary>

**53.2-15 attribution and voice:** An argument to the intrinsic value of philosophy in the same voice of ‘Aristotle’ and showing strong parallelism to the Corpus. The first part of the argument been shown in an acute analysis by Renahan, ‘Aristotelian Mode’, to involve an uniquely Aristotelian mode of reasoning paralleled but not exactly duplicated in the Corpus. The passage was justly famous in antiquity: Cicero seems to have used it as a model for his *Hortensius*, as we can discern from a reference to it in Augustine. For all these reasons, there seems to be no cause for doubt that this passage appeared in Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* in this form.

**53.2-3 ἕδοι δ’ ἄν τις:** See note on this expression above at 50.19-21 and at VII 41.6; cf. VIII: γνοίη δ’ ἄν τις τὸ αὐτό (47.5).

**53.2-7:** See the commentary by Renahan, ‘aristotelian mode’, 507-508. The construction is typical of Aristotle: a process of elimination in which only θεωρεῖν remains once χρεία and ὄφελος are removed, the conclusion is a sentence with λείπεται and an inferential particle (such as ἔρα, ὡστε, δή) See Bonitz, *Index*, 425b28f. for several more examples of this construction with λείπω. Renahan has definitively discerned a passage Aristotelian in both style and content, but for which it is otherwise impossible to find any strict parallels.

**53.4 μακάρων νήσους:** The Isles of the Blessed are mentioned in *Politics* VII 15, “Those then who seem to be the best off and to be in the possession of every good, have special need of justice and temperance—for example those (if such there be, as the poets say) who dwell in the Isles of the Blest; they above all will need philosophy and temperance and justice, and all the more leisure they have, living in the midst of abundance” (1334a28-34). But Aristotle sends a very different message about the activity of the blessed gods in *NE* VII 8, “but that complete happiness is a contemplative activity will appear from the following consideration as well. We assume the gods to be above all other beings blessed and happy; but what sort of actions will we assign to them? Acts of justice? Will not the gods seem absurd if they make contracts and return deposits, and so on? Acts of a brave man, then, confronting dangers and running risks because it is noble to do so? Or liberal acts? To whom will they give? It will be strange if they are really to have money or anything of the kind. And what would their temperate acts be? Is not such prase tasteless, since they have no bad appetites? If we were to run through them all, the circumstances of actionwould be found trivial and unworthy of gods. Still everyone assumes that they live and therefore that they are active; we cannot suppose them to sleep like Endymion. Now if you take away from a living being action, and still more production, what is left but contemplation? Therefore the activity of god, which surpasses all others in blessedness, must be contemplative; and of human activities, therefore, that which is most akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness” (1178b7-23, ROT).

Cicero also reports: “the old philosophers picture what the life of the wise will be in the Isles of the Blest, and think that being released from all anxiety and needing none of the necessary equipment or accessories of life, they will do nothing but spend their whole time upon study and research in the science of nature” (Fin. 5.19.53). Apparently he also used the trope in his *Hortensius* (which was modeled on the *Protrepticus*, see our essay “on Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* and the *Hortensius* of Cicero”).

Cicero in his dialogue *Hortensius* argues thus: “If we, when we emigrate from this life, were permitted to live for ever, as the legends say, in the Isles of the Blissful Ones, what need of eloquence would we have when there are no cases to be pleaded, or even of the virtues themselves? We would not need courage, where no task or danger was prescribed to us, nor justice, where there was no property of others to try to get, nor temperance, to rule non-existent desires. We would not even need practical wisdom, where no choice between the good and the bad was held out to us. We would be blessed with the possession of one thing only – knowledge and cognition of nature, for which alone the life of the gods is to be praised. From this it may be seen that other things are necessities, and only this is a matter of choice.” (Augustine, *De Trinitate* 14.9.12 = Cicero, *Hortensius* fr. 101 SZ, transl. after Ross)

Jaeger argued that Cicero's version is closer to Aristotle's than Iamblichus', *Aristoteles*, p73; cf. Gadamer, 'Protr. und die', p143-144. A close examination of Cicero's comment in the *Hortensius* shows that, although he may well have been inspired by this passage of Aristotle's *Protrepticus*, he expanded on what he found. Aristotle had not said explicitly that the virtues were not called for in these Isles, only that there would be "no use for anything, nor would anything benefit anything else, and only thinking and observation remain." Cicero makes explicit the unexpressed idea that the virtues would not be called for, by mentioning each of the four virtues which in his day had been established as the cardinal virtues, courage, self-control, justice, and practical wisdom; and we can be confident that this was not in Aristotle's book not only because we have what seems to be the only passage about the Isles of the Blest, but also because Aristotle did not organize his thinking in terms of these four cardinal virtues, a scheme which he regarded as too simple.

The question "What are the Isles of the Blest?" was answered by a Pythagorean *acusma* "The sun and moon". According to Burkert: "this places the Beyond in the orderly cosmos; it represents the same desire for stability that forges a theology of the soul about the soul and put ritual taboos together into a "way of life" ( $\betaίος$ ). Height and depth, fall and ascent do not become dominant ideas in the in the theology of the soul until the realm of the stars is taken in to become part of the picture" (*Lore*, IV 4, n. 72 with reference to VP 82).

**53.7 καὶ νῦν:** Düring writes, "it would be interesting to know exactly what Aristotle had in mind when he wrote those two words" (*Attempt*, p210)

**53.7 ἐλεύθερόν φαμεν βίον εἶναι:** Cf. το ελέυθερον (Protr. V 34.23) and ἐλευθερώσαντος (36.18). That a science be free is one of the major criteria for the highest wisdom in *Metaph*. I, "thus it is clear that they were not seeking some other need but, just as the man, we say, is free who lives for the sake of himself and not someone else, so too this is the only free one among the of sciences: δῆλον οὖν ως δι' οὐδεμίαν αὐτὴν ζητοῦμεν χρείαν ἐτέραν, ἀλλ' ὡσπερ ἄνθρωπος, φαμέν, ἐλεύθερος ὁ αὐτοῦ ἔνεκα καὶ μὴ ἄλλου ων, οὔτω καὶ αὐτὴν ως μόνην οὖσαν ἐλευθέραν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν (982b24-27); cf. *Theat*. 175d.

**53.13 οἱ σοφοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν:** But who could this be? See Dodds' commentary on *Grg*. ad 523a1-524a7.

**53.14 ἐν "Αἰδου:** Compare the myths about Hades in several dialogues of Plato: *Meno* 81b; *Phd*. 70c; *Grg*. 523a; *Ep*. 7.335a.

#### <IX 53.15-54.9: commentary>

**53.15-54.5 attribution and voice:** Another argument to the same conclusion about the intrinsic value of philosophy, in the voice of 'Aristotle' and showing strong parallelism to the Corpus. No specific doubts about this passage have been registered in the literature.

**53.15 οὐδὲν οὖν δεινόν:** This seems to be a reply to a charge that it is "bizarre" (*δεινόν*) to in an activity that is useless, a charge made by Isocrates against mathematical and theoretical philosophy in *Antidosis* 285.

**53.17 φάμεν:** The use of the third-person plural here might suggest unexcised dialogue.

**53.19 εἰς Ὀλυμπίαν:** Pythagoras is supposed to have alluded to the Olympic Games in giving his explanation of philosophy to the people of Phlius. Both Cicero and Iamblichus preserve more extensive versions of that story (see comment on title of this chapter); see also Burkert, ‘Platon oder Pythagoras’, 159-160. We must assume, then, that this section is a continuation of a speech recounting Pythagoras’ answer at Phlius. On the Panegyric *topos* in general see Joly, *genres de vie*, p29, and for additional bibliography the review thereof by Spoerri, *Gnomon* 1958, p188. Aristotle makes quite a different use of the *topos* in *EE* 1.8, “as in the Olympic Games it is not the most beautiful and the strongest that are crowned but those who compete (for it is some of these that are victorious), so those who act rightly win the noble and good things in life” (1099a3).

**53.24 <ἄν> ἀντὶ:** Arcerius’ supplement, suggested in his ‘Notae’ has been followed by modern editors because the optative without ἄν looks odd and is too remote from the ἄν (with subjunctive) in 53.15; the correction is trivially easy to explain.

**54.3-4 ἐνεκα τοῦ θεάσασθαι αὐτούς:** Cf. V: δι’ αὐτὸ ψιλὸν τὸ θεωρεῖν.

**54.4 τὴν δὲ τῶν ὅντων φύσιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν:** Aristotle considers the study of “the nature of things” to be typical of philosophy from the earliest thinkers to the present day (*Phys.* I 8.191a25ff.). Cf. *Theat.* 173e, *EE* 1215b1-2.

**54. 5-9 attribution:** A programmatic remark by Iamblichus which reaffirms that that the chapter consists of two parts: the teleological argument (“the intention of nature”), and the intrinsic value of philosophy apart from all questions of utility.