



GUAIRACÁ REVISTA DE FILOSOFIA

DIALECTIC IN XENOPHON'S *MEMORABILIA*: RESPONDING TO 4.6

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Abstract: A consideration of *Memorabilia* 4.6 as a whole and in context reveals that Xenophon's Socrates taught his companions to be "more dialectical" (*dialektikōtéroi*) by deliberately offering them bad, simplistic, or fallacious arguments in order to provoke debate, discussion, and dialectic. This reading indicates why Xenophon introduces the chapter modestly by saying "I will try to explain even this" (the first words of 4.6.1) and why some of the arguments that follow have generated a decidedly mixed scholarly response. Although the chapter as a whole will be analyzed and discussed, particular attention is given to the use of the word "hypothesis" in the chapter (4.6.13-14) and the fact that Socrates identifies Odysseus as "a safe speaker" at 4.6.15.

Keywords: Xenophon. Socrates. dialectic. *akrasia*. Odysseus.

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DIALÉTICA NAS *MEMORABILIA* DE XENOFONTE: RESPONDENDO A 4.6

Resumo: Uma consideração de *Memorabilia* 4.6 como um todo e em contexto revela que Sócrates de Xenofonte ensinou seus companheiros a serem “mais dialéticos” (*dialektikōtéroi*) deliberadamente oferecendo-lhes argumentos ruins, simplistas ou falaciosos para provocar debate, discussão e dialética. Essa leitura indica por que Xenofonte introduz o capítulo modestamente dizendo “tentarei explicar até mesmo isto” (as primeiras palavras de 4.6.1) e por que alguns dos argumentos que se seguem geraram uma resposta claramente heterogênea dos eruditos. Embora o capítulo como um todo seja analisado e discutido, uma atenção especial é dada ao uso da palavra “hipótese” no capítulo (4.6.13-14) e ao fato de que Sócrates identifica Odisseu como “um orador seguro” em 4.6.15.

Palavras-chave: Xenofonte. Sócrates. dialética. *akrasia*. Odisseu.

Not surprisingly, Xenophon prepares the reader for *Memorabilia* 4.6 in 4.5²: after Socrates explains how continence (*enkráteia* beginning at 4.5.1)—explained as defeating pleasures (4.5.10) and achieved specifically by overcoming *akrasia* (4.5.8)—is required, paradoxically³, in order to experience the most memorable pleasures (4.5.9), Euthydemus’ response, appropriately, is enthusiastic: “‘Completely,’ he said, ‘true things are you saying!’”⁴ He will never say anything like this in 4.6, and the thesis of this paper is that there is a good reason he never pronounces any of the many conclusions at which Socrates arrives there to be true: the arguments on which those conclusions depend—and thus the conclusions themselves insofar as they depend on them—are deliberately constructed in order to provoke debate, and they have done so. “How he [sc. Socrates] was making his companions more dialectical [*dialektikōtéroi*], I will try to explain even this.”⁵ The “I will try” that governs 4.6 as a whole is therefore just as appropriate as Euthydemus’ enthusiastic response in 4.5.9: you don’t make your companions *more dialectical* by telling them the whole truth and nothing but the truth in a straightforward manner. Despite the fact that

2. All otherwise unidentified numerical citations will be to *Memorabilia* (hereafter “*Mem.*”). Citations are to E. C. Marchant (ed.), *Xenophontis opera omnia*, second edition, volume 2; I will hereafter use “OCT” as an abbreviation for this edition of the text, and “LSJ” for the current Liddell and Scott.

3. In fact, the paradox merely fleshes out the famous Socratic *bon mot* that hunger is best sauce, i.e., “for him, desire for food is relish” at 1.2.5 (all translations are mine).

4. Last words of 4.5.9; translations, as here, will err on the side of preserving Xenophon’s word order whenever possible.

5. First words of 4.6.1 (emphasis mine); in bracketing Greek words and phrases in quotations—as in discussion of those words or phrases in the text—I will convert oblique cases to the nominative, as here; in the text, one finds *dialektikōtérous*.

4.6 has been regarded as disappointing if not scandalous⁶ – at least to the extent that it has been treated as a whole⁷ – several of its conclusions have created exactly the kind of scholarly response I am claiming it was Xenophon's purpose to provoke⁸.

As a canonical example of such response, consider the first of two contiguous passages from W. K. C. Guthrie's magisterial *A History of Greek Philosophy* (p. 455):

Xenophon too bears out the intellectualism of Socratic ethics: 'Socrates said that justice and the rest of virtue was knowledge' (*Mem.* 3.9.5), and the same point is somewhat crudely developed in dialogue form at 4.6.6: no one who knows what he ought to do can think he ought not to do it, and no one acts otherwise than he thinks he ought to act.

Guthrie's "somewhat crudely" is apt or, if anything, somewhat understated. In 4.6.6, the knowledge in question is ostentatiously banal: since what the law prescribes is just (6.16-17),⁹ and since those who do what the laws prescribe do what is necessary for them to do (6.18-19), it follows from the fact that we can only obey the laws if we know what they are (6.20-22) that since knowing the law is sufficient for knowing what we need to do (6.22-23), and since we will do what we think it is necessary for us to do (6.23-24), that those who know what is lawful necessarily do what is just and are therefore just men (6.24-27)¹⁰. Since it follows that "justice is knowledge" even when otherwise ignorant men simply obey laws that may well have been made poorly by other ignorant men¹¹ – or, worse yet, when scoundrels simply know the law without seeing the necessity of obeying it¹² – the culminating definition of 4.6.6 should be viewed less as a proof-text, however crude, of "the intellectualism of Socratic ethics" than as a provocation: "'Correctly, then, would we define in defining as just those who are knowing the lawful things [*tà nómina*] concerning men?' 'It seems so to me.'"¹³.

6. Consider the tone of Heinrich Maier (1913, p. 57-62). The most significant recent critic of 4.6 is Andreas Patzer, *Der Xenophantische Sokrates als Dialektiker*, translated as *Xenophon's Socrates as Dialectician* in *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Xenophon*; see especially p. 242-251.

7. In addition to Louis-André Dorion and Michele Bandini (eds.), *Xenophon, Mémoires* (p. 184-204), see Xenophon (1923, p. xx-xxii), Leo Strauss, *Xenophon's Socrates* (p. 116-124), and (more briefly but usefully) Christopher Moore, *Xenophon's Socratic Education in Memorabilia Book 4*. Neither Maier nor Patzer (see previous note) discusses 4.6 as a whole, but note its prevalence in *Xenophon's Socrates as Dialectician* (p. 234). More recently, see Thomas Pangle, *The Socratic Way of Life*, p. 200-207.

8. Although Xenophon is presumably imitating Socrates' method in 4.6, my paper's thesis takes the "he" who will try to make his company more dialectical (earlier glossed as "Socrates, of course") to be Xenophon.

9. While examining arguments in detail, as in the remainder of this paragraph, I will supplement the chapter number—in this case, 6 stands for 4.6.6—with line numbers from the OCT.

10. Cf. NATALI, 2006, p.16-18.

11. See CHERNYAKHOVSKAYA, 2014, p. 221-222.

12. See STRAUSS, 2016, p. 36-37.

13. Last words of 4.6.6; cf. last words of 4.6.15, the last words of Euthydemus in *Mem.*

Saving for later discussion of how the words “concerning men” connect 4.6.6. to 4.6 generally, consider what Guthrie writes next (1969, p. 455): “In other places, however, Xenophon gives high praise not only to the continence of Socrates’ of life but to his continual commendation, in his teaching, of the virtue of self-control – *enkráteia*, the opposite of that *akrasía*, or incontinence, which according to Aristotle was on his assumptions an impossibility.” After giving evidence for Socratic intellectualism—and thus the denial of *akrasía* – in the first passage I quoted, Guthrie’s “however” serves as a kind of English *dé* to the previous one’s unspoken *mén*. Naturally the note Guthrie attaches to this sentence records the fact with which this paper began: that the passages containing Xenophon’s “high praise” of *enkráteia* include 4.5¹⁴. But Guthrie’s rather breezy listing of three such passages obscures the crucial importance of the last one he cites, i.e., the one in the chapter contiguous with the text where intellectualism and the denial of *akrasía* will now be presented “somewhat crudely.” The noun *akrasía* only appears five times in *Memorabilia*. but all of them are in 4.5. While Guthrie has bigger fish to fry, and thus will attempt to resolve the *mén/dé* discrepancy in the rest of his paragraph, I would point backward to a hidden *mén/dé* in Guthrie’s first sentence: while 3.9.5 serves as the canonical basis for Xenophon’s confirmation of Socratic intellectualism, it is really only the *mén* to the cruder but in any case eminently debatable *dé* formulation of this “doctrine” found in 4.6.6.

So let’s get the most out of Guthrie before moving on. To begin with, he has put his finger on a real problem that demands explanation: there is no reason for Socrates to praise *enkráteia* if he regarded *akrasía* is impossible. We can, of course, finesse the problem by pointing out that “the denial of *akrasía*” is a post-Xenophon expression or concept, and that we should not read Aristotle back into this older text; less crudely, Guthrie goes on to articulate his own attempt at harmonization in the pages that follow (p. 456-457). But since the goal of the arguments presented in 4.6 is to make Socrates’ companions *dialektikōtéroi*, we should not be too quick to harmonize the debatable problem out of existence, and it is wiser to consider Xenophon, along with Plato, as having a lively dialogue about the denial of *akrasía* that has spanned the centuries from Aristotle to Gregory Vlastos and beyond.

With respect to Xenophon’s role in deliberately sparking this dialogue, we discover on looking back to the canonical proof-text of Socratic intellectualism in 3.9.5 that Socrates contrasts the continent from the incontinent in 3.9.4—the *enkrateîs* from the *akrateîs* (4.18-19)¹⁵ – exactly as if both types existed, before giving the principal evidence others will use to prove that Socrates claimed that one of them doesn’t (3.9.5)¹⁶. The difference, then, between the *mén* of 3.9.5 and the *dé* of 4.6.6 is

14. See e.g. *Mem.* 1.5, 2.1, 4.5.

15. Following Ven. (OCT on 3.9.4, line 18) and Marchant in *Xenophon IV*, p. 224.

16. See JOHNSON, 2005. p. 60, n. 41.

not that what will later be called “the denial of *akrasia*” is only called into question in the later passage’s case because of 4.5: this happens in 3.9.4 as well. The difference is that the claim in 3.9.5—that, since just things (*tà dikaia*) “and all other such things that are done through virtue” are beautiful and good (5.24-25), and thus that the man who knows the beautiful and the good will never choose anything else (5.25-26)—sounds a whole lot more reasonable and thus considerably less debatable than when *tà dikaia* are then “somewhat crudely” aligned with the eminently knowable *tà nómina* in 4.6.6¹⁷.

Given the central importance of *akrasia* in all discussions of the historical Socrates, it is appropriate that 4.6.6 would find its place in the standard Anglophone *History of Greek Philosophy*. But with respect to Xenophon studies in particular, it is rather the closely related equation of the just and the lawful that has generated the lion’s share of scholarly response where 4.6 is concerned¹⁸. To begin with, this fact is grist to my interpretive mill: I see Xenophon as deliberately generating the subsequent scholarly debate surrounding this dubious equation in accordance with the didactic purpose of 4.6, i.e., to make his own readers *dialektikōtérois*, just as Socrates had made his companions. The mere fact of this debate is, however, insufficient evidence of Xenophon’s intentions in this regard, and the first place to turn for evidence should be obvious from the foregoing: just as 4.5 prepares the reader for 4.6.6, so too does 4.4 prepare “Socrates’ companions” for 4.6.5-6.

But this time, there is no need to peer between the lines of Guthrie’s polished prose: in her chapter on “Gesetze und Gesetzentreue” – and most obviously in its first of two parts, entitled “The Legal and the Just,” where she considers the equation of *tà dikaia* and *tà nómina* – Olga Chernyakhovskaya (2014, p. 198) has done all the heavy lifting. Consider in particular, the opening words of her final paragraph on 4.6.5-6: “Das kurze Gespräch des Sokrates mit Euthydemus über Gerechtigkeit rüft folgende Fragen hervor” and then goes on to mention four of them, concluding with the simplified version of the fourth: “D. h.: Wenn das nómimon das dikaion ist, ist auch das dikaion immer das nómimon?”¹⁹ after which she writes (p. 198): “That one gets no answer to these questions from this dialogue [sc. 4.6.5-6] and that the questions themselves will not be considered by Socrates himself or his interlocutor, can possibly be explained by this chapter’s purpose [sc. 4.6]”. My thesis, then, entails dropping that particular “possibly.” As for Chernyakhovskaya, she provides an up-to-date review of the scholarship on the subject, and after showing the limited extent to which 4.4

17. It should not go without saying here that basic to the argument of 4.4 is Socrates’ awareness that voluntary law breaking exists: see especially 4.4.21: “‘For they break the laws,’ he said, ‘in many other ways as well.’”

18. See especially Morrison (1995); Johnson (2003) and Danzig (2009). For fuller bibliography, see Chernyakhovskaya (2014).

19. Cf. Marchant, *Xenophon IV*, p. xx, n. 1: “Compare *Mem.* 4.6.5-6, where the question ‘Is what the laws order necessarily just?’ is entirely shirked.”

answers the questions raised in 4.6.5-6, the second part of the chapter, “Possible Contradictions,” while exploring three of them, creates for this important chapter a pleasingly dialectical structure.

What Chernyakhovskaya does not explore, then, is the further possibility that Xenophon’s Socrates is making bad arguments for the debatable proposition that the just and the lawful are the same in 4.6.5-6 *deliberately* in order to advance the purpose of 4.6. Indeed the only time she quotes the first sentence of 4.6.1 (about what Xenophon will try to do in 4.6) is in a note that quotes the text in Greek, without comment, as far as 1.17, and is attached to a sentence that is justified by Socrates’ claim that those who don’t know are the ones who lead others astray²⁰. She comments (p. 198):

It is obvious that Xenophon exerted himself to prove the usefulness [sc. *Nutzen*, which I take to be a translation of *ōphélimos*] of Socrates to his interlocutors, and thus Xenophon’s Socrates can lead nobody into error; he must therefore know, for example, what is just, and must be ready to explain it.

So here’s where it gets tricky: I agree that Xenophon’s purpose is not to use his Socrates to lead us into error because he knows that those who become aware of the deliberate dialectical inadequacy of the arguments used in 4.6 will have drawn closer to the truth. But when he writes that it is those who don’t know who lead us astray (4.6.1), I am claiming that he knows while writing it – just as Plato did²¹ – that only those who know the truth can conceal it intentionally (i.e., *ekōn*)²². And my proof for the existence of this kind of salutary literary irony is what Xenophon writes at the beginning of 4.7: “That, on the one hand [*mén*], Socrates was manifesting his own view [*hē heautoû gnómē*] simply [*aplōs*] to those consorting with him seems clear to me from what’s been said.”

In light of (1) the highly complex way 4.6 is embedded in the structure of *Memorabilia*(4)²³, another example of which I am now considering, (2) its own variegated structure, an investigation of which will constitute the bulk of this paper, and (3) the many unanswered questions raised by its individual parts—of which a representative few have now been mentioned—the use of the word *aplōs* here should be taken as a joke, i.e., as an intentionally misleading description of the previous chapter, and thus as an example of what I am calling “salutary literary irony.”

20. With the ignorant ones who cause others to *sphállein*, cf. *ho hekōn pseudómenos kai exapatōn* of 4.2.20.

21. In addition to *Hippias Minor* (see following note), consider also *Phaedrus* (261d10-262c4).

22. On the connection between 4.2.19-20 and *Hippias Minor*, see Phillips (1989) and Johnson (2005, p. 52; 59-62).

23. The topics of discussion listed in 1.1.16 as well as the dialogues between Socrates and Critias (1.2.33-38) and between Alcibiades and Pericles (1.2.40-46) would clearly be relevant to this kind of contextualization as well.

Xenophon is leading into error those who will believe that Socrates is openly (*aplô̂s*) expressing *hē heautoû gnô̂mē* in 4.6: his Socrates was not doing so, and Xenophon knows it. But by using a literary device like this ostentatiously inaccurate *aplô̂s*, his culpability with respect to error is limited because he is using ironic deception for a salutary end: he evidently regards becoming *dialektikôtérôi* as intimately connected to the ability to spot false claims and bad arguments—as indeed he should—and he therefore uses the best means at his disposal in order to try to show how Socrates accomplished this result.

To be as clear as Xenophon says that Socrates was: I cannot prove that Xenophon is being deliberately deceptive for a salutary end by using *aplô̂s* as he does immediately after 4.6, or indeed by any other means: an author's intent is tricky enough to discern even when it is advanced by far less dialectical methods. In the present case, it is impossible—not merely difficult—simply because a critic can safely insist on a literal reading of the text: if Xenophon writes that Socrates was manifesting his opinion *aplô̂s*, then Xenophon must have thought this to be the case even if in fact *hē heautoû gnô̂mē* remains less than obvious at the end of the day. On the other hand, Xenophon completes this *mén/dé* sentence (4.7.1.23-24) in a way that implements and perhaps explains the theory of salutary literary irony: after employing literary irony through the humorous *aplô̂s* in the *mén* part of the sentence, Xenophon goes on to indicate its salutary purpose in the *dé* part (1.24-25): Xenophon states that of all those he knew or rather knows (1.26), Socrates was the most concerned with knowing what (*hó̂tou*) anyone (*tis*) of those consorting with him was (actually) understanding (*epistémō̂n* at 1.27), for it was presumably only by knowing this that he could make them self-sufficient (1.24-25).

And this, I claim, is sound pedagogy, still embodied in the true/false and multiple-choice question: the best way to test the self-sufficiency of the student – *i.e.*, to make sure the student isn't simply following a teacher's authority by parroting, as it were, *hē heautoû gnô̂mē*—is for the teacher to offer false but not entirely implausible statements that students must reject, refute, or at least question in order to become *dialektikôtérôi*. And it is in order to replicate what he takes to be Socrates' method of discovering the *epistémō̂n tis* – a phrase suggesting that those who do understand won't be numerous—that Xenophon describes the completion of Euthydemus' education as he does in 4.6²⁴. The fact that 4.6 is the last stage in the education of

24. The roles of 4.7, 4.4, and 4.5 in preparing the reader for 4.6 have already been considered. But in referring to the completion of Euthydemus' education, an even larger structural issue emerges: 4.4, a dialogue with Hippias on the lawful, stands in the middle of four chapters concerned with the education of Euthydemus: 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, and 4.6. These four chapters are arranged in a progressive order: there is no contradiction with respect to making his students *praktik[ô̂ter]ôi* (cf. 4.3.1 and 4.5.1) because 4.5 represents a higher stage of the young man's education than 4.3, just as 4.2.8-40 depicts progress over 4.2.1-7, and 4.3 does the same with respect to 4.2.

Euthydemus is therefore significant, and only the kind of dialectical or pedagogical reading I am proposing fully justifies its position.

As important as the context of 4.6 proves to be, it is the structure of the chapter itself that is most important. But even here, Xenophon has made context crucial: in 4.5.12, the last section of 4.5, Xenophon introduces 4.6 by explaining how conversation (*tò dialégesthai* at 12.6) makes men best, most able to lead (*hēgemonikōtátoi*), and most dialectical (12.10-11), with *dialektikōtatos*, the superlative of which *dialektikōtéroi* is the comparative, being the last word of 4.5. But earlier in 4.5.12, in describing *tò dialégesthai*, Xenophon writes: “And he said that *tò dialégesthai* is named from companions taking counsel together, discussing matters by kinds [*katà génē*]; it is therefore necessary to try as much as possible to make oneself ready for this, and to take especial care of it” (12.6-10).

About these words, much could be said, especially about the necessary interplay of well-prepared individual—ready, able and willing to submit himself to dialectic—and the collective and thus comparatively impersonal nature of taking counsel in common. But as a prelude to examining the structure of 4.6, it is the phrase *katà génē* that is most important, especially since it has just appeared for the first time at the end of 4.5.11: “but it is possible for the continent [*hoi enkrateis*] alone to examine the most important of things, and in both word and deed discussing by kinds [*katà génē*] the good things to prefer and the bad ones to reject” (11.1-4). No matter how pleasant and easy it may be to read 4.6 literally as a haphazard collection of not very compelling claims or definitions²⁵ – and thus as proof of Xenophon’s own dialectical ineptitude or even his superfluity²⁶ – it is only those strong enough to overcome such easy pleasures, *i.e.*, those prepared to submit themselves to Xenophon’s dialectical test²⁷, who will recognize what they need to accept and what to reject in the chapter they are about to read.

I am therefore suggesting that there is a closer connection between 4.5 and 4.6 than has been previously recognized²⁸. Before trying to make his readers more dialectical in 4.6, Xenophon has emphasized the importance of the skill that will allow them to discern the structure of the conversations that follow, *i.e.*, to distinguish

25. Patzer, 2010, p. 243: “*Mem.* 4.6.12 then also appends onto the six short dialogues that deal with the definition of ethical concepts another five short dialogues of forms of political leadership”.

26. Hence the need for “Befreiung von Xenophon” in Patzer, 1999, p. 73-74.

27. Cf. 4.2.26; I am claiming, then, that Xenophon himself has the capacity to test other people (*dokimázein* at 26.10).

28. See especially Natali, 2006, p.12: “In 4. 6 we will find a rather different, but not incompatible, idea of dialectic; this makes it unlikely that the indications given here in connection with the idea of *dialégein katà génē* could be applied directly to the different dialectic of the following chapter”. Note that Natali is defending a closer connection between the two chapters than is customary on 13.

things *katà génē*. This skill proves to be of crucial importance for interpreting 4.6: when read as a disconnected “laundry list” of topics to be defined, one is apt to miss the hints that Xenophon is generous enough to provide²⁹. Here, then, are the results of my own attempt to do so:

1. Introduction (4.6.1)	
2. Piety and Justice (4.6.2-6)	
	a) Piety (4.6.2-4)
	b) Justice (4.6.5-6)
3. Wisdom (4.6.7)	
4. The Good, the Beautiful, and Courage (4.6.8-11)	
	a) the Good (4.6.8)
	b) the Beautiful (4.6.9)
	c) Courage (4.6.10-11)
5. Governments (4.6.12)	
6. Hypothesis (4.6.13-14)	
7. Odysseus (4.6.15)	

In what follows, I will consider each of these seven parts in the following order, much as if I were attempting to illustrate Xenophon’s use of ring-composition (which in fact I am not): 7, 1, 2, 6, 5, 3, and 4. What I will be trying to illustrate by proceeding in this manner is the chapter’s dialectical integrity, with all its sections connected to its overall pedagogical purpose.

I have called section 15 of 4.6 “Odysseus” because Xenophon tells us that Socrates used a line from the *Odyssey* to illustrate what he called “a safe speaker” (15.19). Seemingly like Socrates, Odysseus was able to present his discourses “through the things seeming [to be true] to people” (15.20-21). Particularly in the case of Odysseus, this obviously does not mean that such discourses are true³⁰, so the question is really about Xenophon’s Socrates: his questionable verdict on Odysseus ties into the rest of the section because Xenophon has just told us that Socrates—“believing this to be [the] safety of a discourse” (15.16-17)—was generally proceeding “through the things most generally agreed upon” (15.16)³¹. But this scarcely describes with accuracy the discourses Socrates offers in 4.6, and since

29. Cf. “Xenophonic hint” at Johnson, 2005, p. 60.

30. Cf. Johnson, 2005, p. 55 n. 32: “Thus Socrates’ seemingly banal method is comparable to that of Odysseus, the master storyteller and inveterate liar”.

31. A process well described in Natali (2006) in connection with the discussion of Justice in 4.6.5-6 on 18 (emphases mine): “The consequence [sc. ‘that the right is identical to the lawful’] is not proved, even though it is possible that Xenophon thought that the passages were endoxastic enough to gain the assent of every reader.” The fact that Natali has (appropriately) grave reservations about this “possible” is indicated by his modifications of “endoxastic enough” later on the same page: first “(supposedly) endoxastic” and then “pseudo-endoxical identifications.” Identifying the latter as such is crucial to what I will describe as “text-imminent” criticism of 4.6 in what follows.

Odysseus, as Xenophon well knows, is capable of telling lies that are not salutary³², there is a salutary literary irony at play in comparing Socrates to Odysseus as Xenophon does.

This becomes more obvious when the first words of the section are considered: “But [*dé*] whenever he himself [*autós*] was going through something in his discourse”. What then is the domain of this last section? Was Socrates most like the deceptive Odysseus when he was presenting a discourse on his own, one that proceeded through uncontroversial steps, thus “rendering his auditors agreeable” (15.18)³³, or was it when he was teaching his auditors to be *dialektikótéroí* by using another method, one that was considerable less safe, through dialogues that raise more questions than they answer? Or was he doing both of these things at the same time? Bear in mind that my purpose here and throughout what follows is not primarily to answer such questions by offering the reader a univocal reinterpretation of either Xenophon’s or his Socrates’ “teaching” in 4.6, but rather to explain *how* they taught their students or readers to be *dialektikótéroí*: on my account, the aim of neither is to achieve a harmonizing consensus or *homónoia* (4.6.14). Much to the contrary: I am trying to show that the questions that arise from reading this chapter, including the unanswered ones, do so in accordance with its author’s pedagogical purpose and thus with his deliberate intentions.

Those intentions, of course, are described in the chapter’s first section (4.6.1). Here we are told for the first time in the chapter (cf. 15.16) what Socrates believed (*enómize* at 1.14):

Those [*mén*] knowing what each of the things that are might be [*tí hékaston eíē tón óntōn*] are also able to explain [these things] to others, but [*dé*] it is nothing surprising, he said, that those not knowing both cause themselves to trip and trip up [*sphálllein*] others. On account of these things, investigating with his companions what each of the things that are might be [*tí hékaston eíē tón óntōn*], never was he ceasing.

Having already mentioned that Plato’s Socrates has made the opposite claim—i.e., that it is only those who know who can effectively deceive, speak falsely in a consistent manner, and thus cause others to trip (see n. 21 above)—the striking thing in this passage is the verbatim repetition³⁴, especially since the words *tí hékaston eíē tón óntōn* suggest another Platonic parallel. In a general sense, the parallel is 32. In addition to 4.2.33, see Xenophon, *Ap.* 26.

33. Cf. Strauss, 1998, p. 122: “Socratic dialectic was thus twofold: he proceeded differently when he talked to a ‘contradictor’ from how he did when he talked to non-‘contradictors’; only the former procedure led to the truth, while the latter led to agreement on the basis of generally accepted opinions or to concord”.

34. See Patzer, 2010, p. 243: “But this question [sc. ‘what any given thing is’] that Xenophon presents twice with obvious pleasure in its high philosophical tone [*mit ersichtlicher Freude am hohen philosophischen Ton*], only allows as its answer the nature of the object in question: it is the classical formulation that enquires of its definition”. Patzer will explain Xenophon’s failure to answer this

pervasive and implicates all of the dialogues of definition; indeed what follows 4.6.1 is presented as being just enough of the things Socrates defined (1.18-19) “to clarify the manner [*trópos*] of his investigation” (1.19-20). More particularly, since Xenophon’s Socrates is about to consider most of the canonical virtues, i.e., piety, justice, wisdom, and courage³⁵, the highly general phrase *tí hékaston eîē tôn óntōn* – which applies to everything that is—seems far less apt than the curious but similar phrase Plato’s Socrates uses in the passage illustrating the use of hypotheses in *Meno* (86b5-6): “*what sort of thing is virtue among the things that are concerning the soul [tí estin tōn perì tēn psykhēn óntōn aretē]*”. In other words, given what Socrates is about to do in 4.6, it would perhaps have been more accurate for Xenophon to have written: “investigating with his companions what each of the things that are *perì tēn psykhēn* might be.” Thanks to Xenophon’s use of hypothesis in 4.6.13, *Meno* will reappear below.

But first, there is 4.6.2-6 that I have collected *katà génē*. Since the section on wisdom (4.6.7) is not included, the principle of collection applied here does not arise from the fact that both Justice and Piety are virtues. As already indicated it is the second of its two parts (on *tà díkaia* in 4.6.5-6) that has attracted the most scholarly response, both because of its relevance to the problem of *akrasía* and because of its problematic equation of *tà díkaia* with *tà nómima*. What makes it a mistake to consider Justice apart from Piety is that the conclusions reached in both cases are parallel, with the first ending as follows (4.5-7): “‘Then the one knowing the lawful things [*tà nómima*] concerning the gods [*perì tous theous*], will have been correctly defined for us as pious?’ ‘It seems thus to me,’ he said”. So all the same problems arise in 4.6.2-4 that will rise again in 4.6: once again the one who knows the lawful will do it, and once again doing the lawful is the mark of he who is pious just as it is of those who are just. And to ensure that we are discussing things *katà génē*, Xenophon defines the just in terms of “the lawful things concerning men [*tà perì anthrōpous nómima*]” (6.28-29) because he has already used *perì tous theous* here.

It is necessary to combine the discussions culminating in definitions of the one who is pious and of those who are just not only because of the obvious structural similarities that have now been sketched: their juxtaposition weakens the arguments used in both. Just as Chernyakhovskaya has detailed the connection between 4.6.5-6 and 4.4, so also is 4.3 equally relevant to the discussion of piety in 4.6.2-4, and in tandem with it, the concept of “unwritten laws” introduced in 4.4 undermines the parallel on which 4.6.2-6 as a whole depends. If the gods themselves are the authors of the unwritten laws (4.4.19), then there is a case to be made for the claim

question as proof of his (equally *ersichtlich*?) “confusion” and “carelessness of thought (not to say thoughtlessness)” on 244; this important sentence will be quoted in full below.

35. For Socrates’ unwillingness to distinguish temperance and wisdom, see 3.9.4; ostensibly, then, all five virtues are “defined” in 4.6.

that knowing *tà nómima* in this sense would in fact be sufficient. But one scarcely needs to be *dialektikótatos* to ask what would happen if a regime were to decree as a matter of written law that the pronouncements of the Delphic oracle were of no legal value. In 4.3.16, the claim that obeying state-law (*nómos póleōs* at 16.22) with respect to the gods is sufficient for pleasing them (16.21) is the slender reed upon which the written or man-made *nómima* become the guarantors and defining feature of the pious man. To put the general case succinctly: there is sufficient material in 4.3-4 to ensure that by the time the reader ponders 4.6.2-6, they will find plenty of things said there that they have been prepared to question, to debate, and to reject.

And with this observation, it is time to turn to 4.6.13-14, which makes a most promising start: “And if anyone [tis] might contradict him about anything” (13.1). But in conformity to the pedagogical practice that I am claiming Xenophon uses to try to show how Socrates made his interlocutors *dialektikótéroí*, the *tis* bringing the objection is not the *epistēmōn tis* of 4.7.1: it is rather the reader’s job to become the more dialectical companion of Socrates who will and can never appear in the text. Instead, the only contradicting *tis* that Xenophon considers is incompetent, the one “having nothing clear to say” (13.1-2) who “without demonstration” (13.2) is claiming either that this man is wiser, more of a statesman, braver—“or anything else among such things” (13.3-4)—than the one Socrates has named or described. When this kind of thing would happen, writes Xenophon, Socrates would “lead the whole discussion [back] up to the hypothesis [*hypóthesis*]” (13.4-5), *i.e.*, away from what person might be braver, wiser, or more of a statesman (*politikós*), and back to the underlying problem of what, for example, constitutes the work (*érgon* at 14.7) of a statesman. In the example, then, Socrates defends himself against the troublesome contradictor by reminding him of the argument’s scope. But if the contradictor is not incompetent, and is objecting to Socrates’ conclusion, the *hypóthesis* in question will be the underpinnings of the *lógos* itself. To take a more relevant example, the fact that the only example of the use of *hypóthesis* presupposes a reliable Socrates and an incompetent objector should itself be regarded as the *hypóthesis* on which this (inadequate) example depends.

In order to become *dialektikótéroí*, we must learn to discuss matters *katà génē*, and in bringing an objection to Socrates’ example of a *hypóthesis*, we must see its generic connection to 4.6.2-6. To begin with, as Andreas Patzer has pointed out³⁶, the two “definitions” reached in 4.6.4 and 4.6.6, along with those of the other two virtues (Wisdom in 4.6.7 and Courage in 4.6.10-11), are not really definitions at all:

36. See Patzer, 2010, p. 234-45, especially 244: “If one looks at the Xenophontic definitions more closely, it is clear that in four of the exemplary short dialogues between Socrates and Euthydemus (*Mem.* 4.6.2-4, 5-6, 7, 10-11 [sc. all four of the virtues ‘defined’ in 4.6]) Xenophon does not define the thing from which the conversation starts, but always the person, who bears the thing”. So also Stavru, 2005, p. 148-149.

they merely define “the one” who is, *e.g.*, pious, and not Piety itself³⁷. Indeed Patzer might well have added that these “definitions,” since they do not name any specific man or men³⁸, state the characteristic *érgon* of, *e.g.*, the pious or just men: in both cases, that they know (cf. 4.6 and 6.28)³⁹. Bringing a *lógos* of this kind back to its *hypóthesis* is therefore superfluous: it is the relevant *érgon* that already justifies Socrates’ identification of the (praiseworthy) man. But if Socrates’ example of *hypóthesis* is irrelevant to these *lógoi*, this does not mean that these *lógoi* are unobjectionable, or that any objection to them must be unclear and ungrounded in demonstration. In fact, Patzer (2010, p. 65.) has clearly demonstrated the objectionable *hypóthesis* (or *Grundvoraussetzung*) that constitutes their basis: while purporting in 4.6.2 to inquire “about piety [*perì eusebeías*]” (2.21), Socrates immediately shifts to “the pious man [*ho eusebés*]” (2.23) and concludes with his characteristic *érgon* (4.6). Applied retrospectively to 4.6.2-6, then, the specific example that Socrates uses to defend himself against a groundless objection is not simply superfluous but—if we return to and question the *hypóthesis* of the example itself—simultaneously indicates the well-grounded objection that a competent contradictor would bring. In short, Xenophon intends the *epistémōn tis* of 4.7.1 to read 4.6.13 with the man-centered “definitions” of the virtues in mind, and to bring those discourses back to the relevant hypothesis.

But the specific example used in 4.6.13-14 must not be given more weight than it can carry, and once we have recognized that it is Socrates throughout 4.6 who must be brought back to the hypothesis – not the inept objector who Xenophon uses to illustrate the process – we must distinguish at least three kinds of objection, the first of which, found in the previous paragraph, is based on the closest possible fit between the specific example and the scope of a previous argument. Two other kinds of objection would be based on the arguments themselves, and the first of these is comparative, and depends on contrasting the arguments in 4.6 with similar arguments elsewhere in *Memorabilia*. One might, for example, object to 4.6.2-4 on the basis of 4.4.19 by pointing out that the man who performs the state-sanctioned *nómima* concerning the gods is less, not more pious, than another man who obeys the unwritten laws, even when – indeed particularly when – they clash with those of

37. In fact, this would be a very good time for the reader to remember the hammered phrase of 4.6.1: in order to become *dialektikōtéroí*, we need to consider *tí hékaston eíē tōn óntōn*, as in “What is Justice?” or “What is Piety?” Where Patzer (see n. 34) sees Xenophon’s confusion, I see “a Xenophonic hint” (see n. 29): he is alerting the dialectical reader in advance to the inadequacy of the “definitions” to come.

38. The careless reader of 4.6.13 will reasonably assume that the debate between Socrates and the inept or groundless objector initially took the form of whether or not, *e.g.*, Pericles was more of a statesman than Themistocles, and that it was Socrates who brought the discourse back to the hypothesis, in this case, what is the *érgon* of the *politikós*. The dialectical reader, by contrast, will realize that since the foregoing definitions of the four virtues point to a man or class of men, they too need to be brought back up to the relevant hypothesis.

39. So too in the case of 4.6.7 and 4.6.11 (11.21).

the city⁴⁰. In order to adjudicate this competition between men – and thus remaining in the realm of the example Xenophon uses to explain the term *hypóthesis* – it is necessary to return to the question of the *nómima*, and how one comes to know them. The poignant question of 4.3 must therefore ring in our ears while reading the glib proceedings in 4.6.2-4: “How then can somebody [tis] honor gods more beautifully or piously than just as they themselves command, thus to do?”⁴¹.

But it is not difficult to give text-imminent examples as well, although it may well be objected – on the basis of the example – that the word *hypóthesis* no longer applies to the (false) *Grundvoraussetzungen* of each specific argument. In the case of 4.6.2-4, for example, its *lógos* hinges on the hypothesis that *deî* (“it is necessary”) – introduced by Euthydemus in the context of what obedience to the laws requires (2.25-26) – can ground the claim that nobody will honor the gods differently from how one thinks it is necessary to so (3.1-2). It is clear that *deî* must temporarily take on an absolute sense⁴², independent of what the law requires or any consequences of breaking it. So when Socrates asks: “Therefore, the one honoring [the gods] legally [*nomimōs*], honors [them] as it is necessary [*deî*]?” (4.3-4), he is entitled to the response “How could it not be so?” only if he is asking Euthydemus to affirm a tautology⁴³, *i.e.*, if this *deî* involves only legal necessity⁴⁴. But if this is so – if the question merely asks Euthydemus to affirm a tautology – Socrates’ argument fails since it is scarcely necessary to do as the law requires⁴⁵. As for applying the word “hypothesis” in this way, the beauty of Xenophon’s decision to use the word only once is that the very fact that it is underdetermined forces the reader – especially those who are going to become *dialektikōtérois* and *hēgemonikōtátois* – to think for themselves, and grasp on their own that since every discourse has its hypotheses, their nature necessarily depends on the specific argument in question⁴⁶.

The justification for increased flexibility in considering what Xenophon means by *hypóthesis* increases when we consider the political example Xenophon

40. Cf. Johnson, 2003, p. 258-263.

41. 4.3.16; This kind of cross-textual example confirms Socrates’ contention that only the continent are capable of investigating the strongest things (*tà krátista*) and discoursing *katà génē* (4.5.11) precisely because this still leaves plenty of scope for dialectical incontinence, *i.e.*, for the pleasant weakness of absolute dependence on textual literalness.

42. Cf. the repeated use of the intermediate *hà deî práttein* in 4.2.4: morally necessary as opposed to either legally or absolutely necessary.

43. Cf. “pseudo-endoxical identifications” in Natali, 2006, p. 18.

44. Cf. Xénophon, 2011, p. 198 n. 2.

45. Strauss is amusing on this point while discussing Piety in 2016, p. 36: “Piety is a virtue, hence it must be a kind of knowledge. And what kind of knowledge? The knowledge of the laws regarding divine worship. Now of course this is atrocious. Don’t you believe that Alcibiades knew these laws very well when he profaned the mysteries and mutilated the statues of Hermes? So then he was a pious man”.

46. It would be *naïve*, for example, to insist that the only hypotheses deployed by Socrates in Plato (*Men.* 87b2-89c10) are the ones he explicitly flags as such (*e.g.*, 87d2-3); Plato tries to draw our attention to a particularly important one immediately thereafter at 87d4-8 without using the word.

uses of “bringing the whole discourse back to the hypothesis” in 4.6.14: it is hardly more useful than the mathematical example Plato’s Socrates uses in *Meno* (86e4-87b2) to explain *hypóthesis* there, raising as it does more questions than it answers⁴⁷. The guiding question, of course, is what constitutes the work (*érgon*) of the good citizen (*agathòs polítēs* at 14.7), and Socrates will give four examples of such “works.” It may be important that this is the second appearance of the word *érgon* in the chapter: the first time Xenophon used it, he applied to his own task: it would require “much work” on his part to go through all of Socrates’ definitions (4.6.1). But certainly by the time we reach 4.6.14, if not before, it has become clear that it is not the definitions themselves by which Socrates will make his companions *dialektikōtéroi*, but rather by bringing to their attention the need to return to the relevant hypotheses on which those definitions depend. And the fourth of the works is particularly relevant—in a dialectical sense, that is—to Xenophon’s current *érgon*⁴⁸: in the case of *dēmēgoría*, ridiculed by Socrates in his first conversation with Euthydemus (4.2.3), the good citizen’s work is to implant *homónoia*, just as the Odysseus-like safe-speaker of the next section will do⁴⁹.

Importantly, this is not the only echo of 4.2 in 4.6.14: the other is found in the section’s last word, where Xenophon sums up 4.6.13-14 as a whole: “And thus, with the discourses brought back up [sc. to their hypotheses], even to the contradictors themselves [*kai hoi antilégonτες autoi*], manifest [*phanerón*] was becoming the truth [*talēthēs*]”. It’s easy to miss what makes this sentence crucial: this is the only time in *Memorabilia* that the word “truth” appears with an article and in the singular. The only other time “truth” appears with an article (albeit in the plural) is in 4.2.21, at the conclusion of a passage relevant to the dialectical reading of 4.6 on offer here. As Plato’s Socrates does in *Hippias Minor*, Xenophon’s Socrates argues in 4.2.18-20 that the one who errs voluntarily is more knowledgeable than the one who does so involuntarily, and that not even to friends must one always *haploízesthai*, a marvelous

47. For recent attention to the passage, see Benson, 2015, p. 116-129.

48. It is somewhat strange that the other three characteristic “works” of a good citizen (14.8-13) find parallels in Xenophon’s own writings: to say next to nothing about the relevance of *Anabasis* and *Hellenica* to 14.10 and of *Cyropaedia* to 14.11-12, consider the connection between 14.8-9 and *Poroi*, the last thing we can be sure that Xenophon was revising before his death (4.51): “Thus in the administration of resources, would he not win [the title of ‘good citizen’] who is making the city more well-provisioned [*euporōtéran*] with resources?”

49. Cf. Patzer, 2010, p. 250: “Xenophon can hence presume to say that he knew nobody who secured such consensus (*homologōúntas pareikhen*) from his listeners as Socrates (*Mem.* 4.6.15). If that were really the case, we would remain unable to discover how Socratic philosophy managed to develop the explosive force it did.” What robs Xenophon’s account of Socratic dialectic in 4.6.13-15 of its capacity to explain this (aptly named) “explosive force” is that an unadventurous literalism allows us to consider only a Socratic monologue that aimed at consensus (on the one hand) and a dialogical return to hypothesis, initiated by Socrates, in response to inept objectors; this ignores the fact the objector might have been provoked to make an apt objection by the kind of “safe-speaking” famously associated with the monologues of Odysseus; see especially *Od.* 19.203.

verb defined as “behave simply, deal frankly” in LSJ, but best understood in the context of *Memorabilia* (4) as “to speak *haplôs*”.

And this, of course, is precisely what I am claiming that Socrates is not doing throughout 4.6: his arguments are deliberately flawed, and thus cannot be described—to use another marvelous word—as *anamphilogótaton* (4.2.34)⁵⁰. Moreover, it is only by returning to their *Grundvoraussetzungen* that his friends can discover the errors and equivocations on which they depend. It is therefore another example of salutary literary irony when Xenophon uses the concessive *kai* in the conclusion of 4.6.14: it is rather only *hoi antiléontes autoí* who, by virtue of those very objections, are becoming *dialektikótéroí*, and thus for whom the truth is becoming manifest⁵¹. But when nobody asks such questions, safe-speakers like Odysseus (15.19), proceeding just they please, and with nobody there to bring them back (14.14), reach conclusions calculated to implant *homónoia* by any means necessary, and thus to put an end to the conversational *stásis* (14.12-13) that creates dialectic⁵². My claim is that the purpose of 4.6 as an integrated whole is to undermine conversational tyranny by illustrating its flagrant abuse while at the same time hinting at the methods necessary for—and thus provoking—its overthrow.

And this suggests the connection between 4.6.13-14 and 4.6.12, the section in which politics enters the chapter. On the other hand, the question of regime and leadership has been with us from the start: in the last sentence of 4.5, Xenophon tells us that it was from *tò dialégesthai* that not only the most dialectical would emerge, but also the best and those most capable of leadership, *i.e.*, the *hēgemonikótátoí*. Only among those *antiléontes* who *did* have something clear to say (13.1-2) would not lack a demonstration that there were more pious and just men than those Socrates appeared to be praising in 4.6.2-6. Those two “definitions” are once again especially pertinent because of the return of the words *nómos* and *nómima* in 4.6.12⁵³, and also because in the case of tyranny, the ruler leads “however he might wish” and without laws (12.27-28). This recalls the basis of the earlier definitions: the law-based conceptions of both the pious man and the just men began—in 4.6.2 and 4.6.5—by ruling out the possibility that one can honor the gods or treat (*khresthai*) human beings “in what manner one might wish” (2.24-25 and 5.8-9) in specific contrast with the laws and the lawful. But since there are no laws for the just or pious men to know (12.27), would that mean that there was no way to be either pious or just in such a regime? One imagines that both Socrates and Xenophon would have found

50. LSJ: “undisputed, undoubted” in the superlative.

51. Cf. Strauss, 1998, p. 122: “only the former procedure led to the truth”.

52. For Strauss, unfortunately : the only alternative to “dialectics strictly understood” is rhetoric, which Xenophon’s Socrates therefore taught (1998, p. 123). Cf. Natali, 2006, p. 12-13, especially 13 n. 33, and Xénophon, 2011, p. 205 n. 3.

53. The word *nómos* is used seven times in 4.6.5-6, the same number of times *nómima* and *nomímōs* are used in 4.6.4-6 (there are likewise seven appearances of each in 4.5); each is used once in 4.6.12.

a way to be so even there⁵⁴. At the very least, one can imagine a thoughtful auditor making such an objection.

Whether or not Xenophon expected us to think of him while reading 4.6.14 or 4.6.12, he clearly intended us to think of Socrates while reading the discourse about Wisdom in 4.6.7. First of all, Socrates gives another “definition” that describes “a wise man” (*sophós* at 7.12) by his *érgon* rather than defining *sophía* itself, as he set out to do (7.1). And since that “work” in question is, once again, knowing (*epístasthai* at 7.12), the account of this third virtue aptly follows the brittle or banal intellectualism of 4.6.2-6⁵⁵. There is, however, an account of *sophía* in the argument, and it functions on my account as the argument’s (text-imminent) *hypóthesis*: wisdom is *episté̄mē* (7.7-8)⁵⁶, and thus one is wise solely in relation to what one knows (7.12). An objection to the argument based on other passages in *Memorabilia* is of course also possible, and when Euthydemus, in (forced) agreement with Socrates, asks: “For how could anyone [*tis*]—in respect of the things he does not know [*epístasthai*]—be wise with respect to them?” (7.4), it would be impossible not to think of one particular *tis* who is wise precisely because he knows the things he does not know. What Plato will have his Socrates call “human wisdom”⁵⁷ has been explained by Xenophon’s Socrates at the start⁵⁸, and Xenophon will remind us in 4.7.1 that Socrates knew the things he did not know, and acted accordingly with respect to them (1.29-30). In fact, the (human) wisdom of Socrates informs the awareness of Euthydemus—that erstwhile know-it-all and (former) admirer of the sophists (4.2.1)—that it is impossible (“by Zeus” at 7.10) for a man to know all the things that are (*tà ónta pánta epístasthai* at 7.9)⁵⁹.

And with this, we finally reach the middle of 4.6: the “definitions” of the Good (4.6.8), the Beautiful (4.6.9), and Courage (4.6.10-11), considered as a unity *katà génē*. Why they should be so considered is not difficult to see: the first thing Socrates asks Euthydemus about Courage is whether it is one of *tà kalá* (10.29-1), and the

54. As for the latter, I suggested in the context of 4.6.14, that in considering the *érgon* of the “good citizen,” the medium becomes the message, and in the context of 4.6.12, “Xenophon the Athenian” constitutes an ongoing dialectical problem for salient questions about citizenship and politics. For example: if those who hold office in a democracy are drawn from all (12.31), including those who do not fulfill *tà nómima* (12.28-29), on what grounds is Xenophon something other than a citizen of Athens? Can his exile be in accordance with the laws (12.26-27) even if his various works show him to be a good citizen? Has not a tyrant, albeit a many-headed one, done as he pleased (12.28) while ruling over the unwilling (12.27)? On the central position of aristocracy in the list of three, see Strauss, 2016, p.38.

55. Cf. Johnson, 2003, p. 274: “But his [sc. Xenophon’s Socrates’] intellectualism is entirely banal if all that one needs to know is what the statutes require.”

56. On the basis of his refusal to distinguish Wisdom from Temperance at 3.9.4, we could say that Socrates defines all five virtues in 4.6.

57. Pl. *Ap.* 20d8 and 23a6-7.

58. See 1.1.2-16, especially 7-8.15-20, 9.27-29 and 6-9, and 1.11 as a whole.

59. For the refutation of “those believing [themselves] to know all things [*hoi pánt’oioménoi eidénai*],” see 1.4.1; note that this passage confirms the practical synonymy of *eidénai* and *epístasthai*.

young man not only echoes his verdict on Piety (4.6.2) that it is so (it is *kálliston* at 10.1), but confirms the move that renders it “useful” (*khrêsimon* at 10.1-3), thereby establishing a more substantive link with “the beautiful.” But the courageous are said to be “good” (*agathoi* at 10.9)—and the cowardly “bad” (10.10-11)—in a manner that has little apparent and no explicit connection with their being “beneficial” (cf. 8.17-20), and both the definitions of “good” and “beautiful” come together when the *agathoi* are said to *kalôs khrêsthai* (11.12-13) those things in relation to which courage is the, *i.e.*, “the terrible and dangerous things” (first at 10.3-4). Since the verb *khrêsthai* dominates the section as I have defined it—eight uses of the infinitive in 4.6.8-11, as well as three other verb forms in tandem with four uses of *khrêsimon*—the shades (and slides) of meaning involved should be clarified at the outset.

To begin with, then, *tò khrêsimon* is “the useful,” and as the passage’s most astute critic has emphasized⁶⁰, it is neither “the good” nor “the beautiful” that Socrates defines in 4.6.8-9, but rather *tò òphélimon* (“the beneficial”) and *tò khrêsimon*, the latter being (*kalón*), or rather “beautiful in relation to what it may be *khrêsimon*” (9.27-28). When the infinitive *khrêsthai* appears in 4.6.8, it clearly means “to use,” and does so in the phrase *kalôs ékhein khrêsthai*, where *kalôs* is linked not “to use” —as in “to use beautifully” or “rightly” —but rather as *kalôs ékhein*, meaning “it is right,” in this case, “it is right or proper to use [*khrêsthai*].” Hence Socrates asks Euthydemus to agree that “in relation to what each thing may be *khrêsimon*, in relation to that it is right [*kalôs ékhein*] to use it” (8.24.25), a tautology that is then flipped with a crucial supplement: “Is each thing *kalón* in relation to anything else than what in relation to which it is right to use it?” (8.25-26). When we then come to Courage, that in relation to which it is *khrêsimon* will turn out to be “the terrible and dangerous things,” and the courageous—erstwhile glossed as “good”—will *kalôs khrêsthai* these very things (11.12-13), which now no longer means “to use” them, but rather “to handle” or “to cope with them well.” In the “definition” of *kalón*, then, we are invited to think of an appropriate tool whose strictly utilitarian “beauty” is in relation to that task for which it is right (*kalôs*) to use it, whereas in the definition of courage, the same words (*kalôs* and *khrêsthai*) reappear, but are now reconfigured grammatically and semantically while being linked to (morally) good men who know how to handle perilous situations “beautifully” as opposed to cowards, *i.e.*, bad men, who cope with them badly (*kakôs khrêsthai* at 11.14).

Socrates distinguishes the courageous from only two other kinds of men: the “mad men” who are ignorant of the fact that—and thus do not fear—dangers that are truly dangerous (10.3-7), and the cowards who fear things that are not truly

60. Patzer, 2010, p. 244: “Here he [sc. Xenophon] mixes up the definiendum with the definitum and thus gives, instead of a definition of the Good and the Beautiful, a definition of the Helpful (*tò òphélimon*) and the Useful (*tò khrêsimon*), in the sense that the former is good and the latter beautiful—a confusion that reminds us of the confusion of inductive and definitive formulations of the what-is questions [discussed on 235-36], out of which the investigation arose”.

fearful (10.8-9). It is all very well to say that this is only a question of knowledge⁶¹, and that unlike the cowards (so defined) and the madmen, the brave know what things are and are not to be feared and “handle them appropriately.” But Socrates says nothing about what the verb *khresthai* means in the case where brave men, as opposed to cowards, must face things that are truly fearful, *i.e.*, in the operative case. The fact that brave men are knowledgeable enough to fear the fearful tells us next to nothing; the question is how they handle it. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the slippery combination *kalôs khresthai* – which might very well mean “to handle beautifully” or even “nobly” – appears only after Euthydemus has confirmed his (true) belief that it is those who are good (*agathoi* at 10.9) in relation to the terrible and dangerous things who are courageous (10.9-10), and just as importantly that is the cowards who are bad (10.10-11).

As great as the shift in how *khresthai* is used – from the appropriately useful tool in relation to “beauty” (4.6.9) to the rather more responsive ability “to handle” or even “to cope with” in the case of dangers in 4.6.10 – the meaning of “good” undergoes a greater shift along similar lines: while defining *agathon* in relation to *tò ophelimon* in 4.6.8, we are in the world of Protagoras⁶²: an instrumental good is relative to that for which it is beneficial. But the courageous man is not an instrument, nor is anything said about the kind of instruments he actually uses; the shift in the verb *khresthai* ensures Socrates’ silence on this point⁶³. Consider, for example, the soldier’s shield: it is beneficial to keep ahold of it while withstanding a fear-inspiring but resistible enemy, but when that fearful enemy becomes (apparently) irresistible, it is beneficial to throw that shield away and run. But Socrates cannot say such a thing because Euthydemus knows – and Xenophon expects the reader to know as well – that no manner how beneficial it may be in the case of flight, throwing away one’s shield is not the action of a good man or a brave one, nor could the words *kalôs khresthai* in relation to dangers decently apply to such a way of “handling” them, regardless of the thrower’s knowledge of what is or is not to be feared.

With the relevant problems associated with *kalôs khresthai* having been introduced in 4.6.10, the second section on Courage (4.6.11) will proceed to presume the same kind of brittle intellectualism already employed in the discussions of Piety and Justice. There, it was enough to know *tà nómina* – a move that might have been more helpful here, since leaving one’s post or throwing away one’s weapons is easily made unlawful⁶⁴ – but now the relevant hypothesis is less concrete and even more debatable: those who know how to *kalôs khresthai* the dangerous things therefore

61. See Xénophon, 2011, 2.2, p. 198-99 n. 4.

62. Pl. *Prot.* 333e5-334c6.

63. Especially striking in the context of, *e.g.*, the (unusable) golden shield of 3.8.6; note *khrontai* and *eúkhresta* at 3.8.5, lines 26-27.

64. Pl. *Leg.* 943c8-944a2.

know “how it is necessary to handle [*hōs deî khrêsthai*]” them (11.16-17), and those who know *hōs deî khrêsthai* are also necessarily able (*dunásthai*) to handle them in this way (11.17-19), i.e., *kalôs khrêsthai*. Those who do not handle them well must handle them badly (11.14), and those who err in this way (11.18-20) are the cowards (11.22-23); those knowing how to *kalôs khrêsthai* – not those who actually do so – are defined as courageous (11.21-22). Even though the ability to know what one is able and unable to do has already been identified in 4.2.25-26 as the essence of self-knowledge (26.4-6), naturally nothing is said here of one’s limitations, physical or otherwise: the possibility that one may know what it would mean to *kalôs khrêsthai* in a wartime situation—we are, after all, speaking just as much about “acting nobly in the face of dangers” as handling them well—but yet be physically unable to do it, is ignored unless captious readers (*hoi antilégonτες* of 4.6.14) themselves bring the objectionable hypothesis to light: “Therefore those knowing how it is necessary to *kalôs khrêsthai* are also those who are able [to *kalôs khrêsthai*]” (11.17-18). Not surprisingly, Socrates puts this in the form of a question⁶⁵.

Louis-André Dorion has considered the definition of Courage in 4.6.10-11 in relation to the fuller discussion of this virtue in 3.9⁶⁶, and his conclusions tend to confirm my claims about Xenophon’s intentions with respect to provoking the kind of critical response that can and must be brought to bear on other parts of 4.6. And since both *kalón* and *agathón* are discussed more fully in 3.8, another reason to collect 4.6.8-11 into a unity *katà génē* is that all three topics implicate contiguous chapters in *Memorabilia* (3). But the most amusing instance of inter-textual criticism connects the discussion of *tò agathón* in 4.6.8 with the opening words of *Memorabilia* (4). While the first thing that Socrates asks Euthydemus to deny about *tò ophélimon* in 4.6.8 is that “the same thing is beneficial for all [*tò autò pâsin ophélimon*]” (8.15), Xenophon insists in 4.1.1 that Socrates was *ophélimos* “in every matter [*en pantì pragmati*]” (1.1) and “in every way [*pánta trópon*]” (1.1-2), so that there was “nothing more beneficial [*oudèn ophelimóteron*]” (1.3) than consorting and conversing with him “anywhere and on any matter” (1.4-5). The inter-textual counterexample to the Protagorean relativity of *tò ophélimon* in 3.8 and 4.6 is thus Socrates himself⁶⁷, not because of what he says about *tò ophélimon*, but because of what Xenophon says and tries to show about him throughout the *Memorabilia*, and particularly in book 4.

65. Consider Johnson, 2005, p. 51: “The essential failing of writing [in the context of *Phaedrus* 274b-277a and the Seventh Letter] is that it is not interactive. But this need not mean that written texts are worthless, so long as they are treated as playful goads to active reflection rather than as repositories of wisdom”.

66. Xénophon, 2011, 2.2, 199: “Comme la position la plus constant de Socrate, dans les *Mémorables*, et de Xénophon, dans l’ensemble de son oeuvre, est que l’aquisition de la vertu, quelle qu’elle soit, requiert à la fois l’étude et l’exercice (cf. 3.9.2 [...], c’est au contraire la définition de 4.6.11 qui paraît moins «socratique»”.

67. Note that Socrates thus becomes the connection between 4.6.7 and 4.8.8; this may suggest another way of arranging the sections of 4.6 *katà génē*, and I would prefer in any case to have my arrangement considered only as evidence of the dialectical link between 4.5 and 4.6.

In that final book, it is the five⁶⁸ chapters involving Euthydemus that stand out, with 4.6 as their logical culmination and fulfillment. Pivoting around the discussion with Hippias about law, the other four chapters are as pleasingly arranged as I have tried to show 4.6 to be. The developmental contradiction between Socrates' purpose with respect to making his companions *praktikóteroi* in 4.3.1 and 4.5.1 has been noted above; I want to conclude with the relevant parallel between 4.2 and 4.6. In his 2005 article *Xenophon at his most Socratic* (Memorabilia 4.2), David M. Johnson writes (p. 55): We shall therefore have to read our chapter actively, with the assumption that it is not meant to be simple and straightforward, *i.e.* that Xenophon is not as naïve as he is normally made out to be". My claim throughout is that this is also the way that 4.6 must be read, and thus that 4.2 and 4.6 appropriately bookend the conversations with Euthydemus, thereby ensuring that this beautiful and well-read young man will henceforward be one of the self-sufficient ones (*autárkeis* at 4.7.1)⁶⁹.

To that end I have adduced a number of ways, both inter-textual and text-imminent, in which Xenophon alerts the reader that this is the way 4.6 in particular must be read. If Socrates' text-imminent equivocation on *kalôs khrêsthai* – from the active use of the appropriate tool to the appropriate handling of a difficult situation – is less elegant or significant than the ongoing equivocation on *eû práttein* employed by Plato's Socrates⁷⁰, we should remember that it is Xenophon who best unmasks the deliberately flawed argument we find in Plato's *Euthydemus*⁷¹, where Socrates makes bold to claim that wisdom guarantees good luck⁷². I raise this point about Plato at 68. Taking the conversation Xenophon describes at 4.4.5 to be with Euthydemus; cf. 4.2.6 and Diogenes Laertius 2.48. On the connection with the latter, see following note.

69. Rather than regarding Euthydemus as "a rather low class man" (Strauss, 2016, p. 9) whose "was not a good nature" (STRAUSS, 1998, p. 94)—on which see Johnson, 2005, p. 47 n. 20—we would be well advised to reconsider the suggestion of H. G. Dakyns that Euthydemus is Xenophon himself; see Dakyns (XENOPHON, 1890-1897, p. xl-xliv): "On the personal note in the *Apomnēmoneúmata*: Who is Euthydemus? (in Bk. IV)." Although he does not cite Dakyns, an unmistakable sympathy for Euthydemus can be found in the valuable notes of Dorion (XÉNOPHON, 2011), and he mentions the "Euthydemus as Xenophon" hypothesis at p. 65-66, n. 3. Note that Xenophon could thus both accurately and humorously describe himself as having been present at 4.3.2.

70. Best understood in the following grammatical terms: (1) active, "to do well," (2) middle, "to do well for oneself," *i.e.*, "to succeed," and (3) a passive or rather responsive "to fare well." At Plato (*Alc. I.* 116b3), for example, *eû práttein* is used in sense (1), immediately thereafter, at b5, in sense (3). The classic account of this standard trick – "the convenient ambiguity" on 335 – is Dodds, 1959, p. 335-36. More recently, see Cain, 2007, pp.17 and 120, nn. 16-17.

71. Cf. Plato, *Ethd.* 279c9-280b5 and 3.9.14-15. Cf. the use of *eû práttein* at 14.8 with 15.11.

72. See Jones, 2013; Rider, 2012, p. 211-12, and especially Irwin, 1992, p. 204-205: "After finding such serious flaws in this argument in the *Euthydemus* [sc. 279c9-281e5, analyzed on 203-205] we might remind ourselves that the dialogue as a whole is concerned with eristic, and suggest that even the protreptic passages are not free of the fallacious argument that is rife in the rest of the dialogue." This golden sentence is particularly striking in the context of its author's dependence on "Socrates' Philosophical Protreptic" for Socrates' eudaemonism in Irwin, 1995, p. 52-53 (a section called "The Importance of Euthydemus" precedes "Eudaemonism" in ch. 4). For the doubts of Xenophon's Socrates about happiness as *anamphilogôtaton agathón*, see 4.2.34.

the end only to suggest that there was really no other way that either Xenophon or Plato could (try to) show how Socrates made his companions *dialektikōtéroi*. It would be by placing in his mouth arguments that depended on “pseudo-doxastic identifications” and were therefore flawed *deliberately*⁷³ – something that, to be pedagogically effective, required knowledge of what’s true⁷⁴ – that they could move (cf. *kineîn* at 4.2.1) their readers to respond: provoking them to explain clearly – by means of a demonstration that led back to a moveable hypothesis (cf. Pl. *Rep.* 533 c2-3) – how one might effectively contradict (*antilégoi* at 4.6.13) those arguments. It was in this way that the greatest Socratics tried to make their readers *dialektikōtéroi*, teaching all of us in the process how truth begins to become manifest.

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73. Cf. Patzer, 2005, p. 244 (emphasis mine): “Xenophon again demonstrates that the confusion [see n. 60 for context] is not the result of philosophical intention but of carelessness of thought (not to say thoughtlessness)”. The difference between us is therefore not that I am the only one claiming to understand Xenophon’s intentions; both of us must do that. Note, however, that my approach is not based on hermeneutical “charity,” since the latter is often used to cover over an author’s deliberate errors.

74. Pl. *Phdr.* 262a9-b1; with Natali’s “pseudo-endoxical identifications” (see n. 43), cf. Plato’s *metabibázein katà smikrón dià tôn omoiotētōn* at *Phdr.* 262b5-6.

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