

## FATHER OF THE DOGS? TRACKING THE CYNICS IN PLATO'S *EUTHYDEMUS*

SARA RAPPE

### INTRODUCTION: SOCRATES *APATOR*

Crito begins the *Euthydemus* by asking Socrates, “with whom were you conversing yesterday in the Lyceum?” Critics have long echoed Crito’s opening question, as there continues to be controversy over the historical identity of those two arch-antilogists, Dionysodorus and Euthydemus. Are these fictional characters meant to represent historical persons practicing the art of eristic?<sup>1</sup> Do they rather resemble Megarians<sup>2</sup> or even Protagoreans?<sup>3</sup> Could the brothers serve as a mask or mouthpiece for Platonic contemporaries such as Isocrates or Antisthenes?<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps these attempts to secure historical identifications for the brothers are misguided, and Crito’s question is at least partially a red herring. The word “who” announces that this dialogue sets off in a quest for identity; one should not expect that Plato will allow a solution without subjecting his readers to the requisite aporia.

Part of the difficulty in ascertaining the answer to just who Dionysodorus and Euthydemus are meant to represent is brought about by Plato’s very success as a fiction writer, that is, as one scholar writes, in recreating the “intellectual milieu of the late fifth century in which Socrates confronts the sophists and their pupils. It is difficult but necessary to bear in mind the gap between this art world, created by Plato, and the actual world in which Plato worked out his own philosophy. The intellectual world to which Plato’s own work belongs is defined not by the characters in his dialogues but by the thought and writing of his contemporaries and rivals such as the rhetorician Isocrates and the various followers of Socrates.”<sup>5</sup>

This translation of the fourth-century intellectual background into a fifth-century frame is cause for the dialogue’s humor as well as its obscurity.

1. Sprague 1962, 295: “the best that can be done to date Euthydemus is to take him as an older contemporary of Socrates with a possible birth date of 474.” The historicity of Euthydemus himself seems confirmed by two passages in Aristotle, *Soph. el.* 177b12 and *Rh.* 1401a26.

2. Cf. Dorion 1998.

3. As Caizzi 1996, 69, seems to suggest.

4. Most readers take the argument against rhetoric at 305–307 to be directed against Isocrates. In the last century a few commentators identified Euthydemus with Socrates’ follower, Antisthenes.

5. Kahn 1996, 2.

Thus the dramatic setting of the *Euthydemus*—the mock battles waged between the followers of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus on the one side and Socrates and his followers on the other—disguises the dialogue's contribution to an ongoing contemporary debate on the philosophy of Socrates (by "contemporary," I mean fourth-century B.C.E.). In this article, I explore some of the dialogue's more ludic episodes and argue that they can be better understood in the light of fourth-century intellectual concerns. In particular, I want to claim that even in Plato's Socratic dialogues, there are facets of Socrates that become more clearly pronounced in Hellenistic philosophy. Paradoxical as it may sound, Plato's Socratic dialogues may be used as a source for what could now be taken precisely as a non-Platonic Socrates.<sup>6</sup>

The dialogue's opening question, "Who?" does not confine itself to asking after Dionysodorus' and Euthydemus' credentials. This word also introduces an important aspect of Socratic methodology—Socratic self-inquiry—that is meant to contrast strongly with the disputational art. Self-knowledge, or discernment of what does and does not belong to the self, is foregrounded in Plato's representation of Socratic philosophy. In fact the dialogue goes on to explore this aspect of the Socratic legacy—the practice of self-inquiry—in the light of subsequent philosophical developments within the Socratic schools. In this article, I will be concerned with its relevance to Cynic, or rather, proto-Cynic, ethics.

By way of background, it will be helpful to note that the *oikeion* (inherent) / *allotriion* (foreign, aggregate) distinction functions as the ethical criterion in the philosophy of Socrates' associate Antisthenes.<sup>7</sup> Apparently, he taught that the road to virtue could be traversed only by one who possessed the ability to discriminate between "what is mine" and "what is not mine," as we learn from the Stoic Epictetus,<sup>8</sup> among other *testimonia*.<sup>9</sup> It is true that Xenophon associates Antisthenes with a more practice-oriented ethics, emphasizing qualities such as *karteria* (forbearance), *ponos* (labor), and *atuphia* (disdain for luxury and pretense). Nevertheless, it seems that the theoretical aspect of his ethics is reflected in fragments such as "nothing is foreign to the sage," and "evil is constituted by everything that is foreign" (Diog. Laert. 6.12 = *SSR* VA 134).<sup>10</sup> Such things as birth, wealth, and reputation are classified as *allotria* in Cynic sources. I take it, then, that the *oikeion/allotriion* distinction is invoked in cases where it becomes difficult (in practice) to separate "me" from "my," as for example, if someone should say, "I am ruined" when her reputation, let us suppose, has suffered a setback. In a similar way, we will see that Socrates poses this question to his

6. For example, Striker 1994, 243–45, has discussed the relationship between the Platonic Socrates and the Stoic Socrates in terms of the sufficiency of virtue thesis; see also Long 1996a and 1996b.

7. Brancacci 1992.

8. Epictetus *Dissertationes* 3.24.67 (= *SSR* VB 22). See page 294 below.

9. Cf. again Epiph. *Adv. haeres.* 3.2.9 (*SSR* VB 304) for the doctrine of *allotria*. For the *karteria* of the Cynics and of Antisthenes see Diog. Laert. 7.26 and 6.7 (*SSR* VA 90).

10. Some scholars have seen a reflection of Antisthenean ethics in the Platonic formula, τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν; cf. Giannantonio 1990b, p. 393, n. 39.

interlocutors—"me" or "my"?—about the body, or indeed, about beliefs, desires, and other mental states.

Plato's *Euthydemus* is deeply concerned with the question of what is inherently good. Socrates' argument here, to the effect that nothing is good but knowledge, actually helped to bring about a kind of "Cynic revival" in the Stoa.<sup>11</sup> In this article I argue that the *Euthydemus* exhibits a number of familiar Cynic trademarks, or rather motifs that strikingly anticipate Cynicism, (apparently) associated with Socrates' follower Antisthenes. This approach to the dialogue allows us to formulate a somewhat controversial answer to the historical question, who is the father of the dogs, or Cynic philosophers. A close reading of Plato's *Euthydemus* suggests that, contrary to the assertions of those who have recently studied the question, Antisthenes may well be the father of the dogs, while not himself a practicing Cynic.<sup>12</sup> Plato here recognizes a strain of Socratic teaching that over time developed into an entirely different breed, so to speak.

But the historical allusion is part of a broader theme within the dialogue that explores the philosophical lineage of Socrates. Certainly it is possible to read one of those apparently meaningless exchanges between Socrates and Euthydemus as developing this topic: at 298b Euthydemus actually calls Socrates ἀπάτωρ (fatherless), as the conclusion to a refutation of the kind that Aristotle names, "fallacies connected with accident"<sup>13</sup> (*Soph. el.* 166b28). The word "father" is predicated accidentally of both Chaeredemus and Sophroniscus, respectively the grandfather and father of Socrates. Though each is said to be a "father," each is different from the other, whence the refutation: "Then Euthydemus took up the argument and said: 'now if Chaeredemus is a father, and if Sophroniscus is, in his turn, another than a father, then [Sophroniscus] is not a father, so that you, Socrates, are fatherless'" (298b1). But what does it mean to say that Socrates is "fatherless"? Fatherhood can be understood as a metaphor denoting philosophical succession, discipleship, or lineage, as in fact the later Neoplatonists used it.<sup>14</sup> While paternity/maternity is Plato's favorite image for philosophical creativity and production,<sup>15</sup> in the *Phaedrus*, written logos itself is metaphorized as a child who stands in need of its father's/author's help.<sup>16</sup>

11. Details are provided below, but to anticipate, cf. Long 1996a, who argues strongly for a link between Socratic and Cynic ethics, using as evidence the controversy in the Stoa over the unorthodox teachings of Aristo, who rejected the Stoic theory of "preferred indifferents." According to Long, "rather than calling Aristo a Cynicising Stoic, it would be better . . . to regard him as a Stoic who thought that the Cynic tradition of Socrates was truer to the spirit of the philosopher than tendencies which Zeno was initiating" (p. 23). In Hellenistic philosophy, therefore, we have evidence of a debate over the legacy of Socrates' ethical teachings.

12. Giannantoni 1990b has come down on the side of those who deny the Antisthenes-Diogenes link in the Cynic succession. He argues: 1) Aristotle speaks about *Antistheneioi* but not about *kunikoi*; "the Dog" refers not to Antisthenes but to Diogenes; 2) The two Cynic contemporaries of Diogenes, Crates and Onesicritus, speak about Diogenes but they are in manifest ignorance of Antisthenes. According to Giannantoni, it is only in the accounts of authors who are very late, such as Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, and Aelian, that one finds a connection between Antisthenes and Diogenes.

13. Caizzi 1996, 99, clarifies the structure of this refutation in her incisive commentary: "Oppure si tratta di quella che Aristotele chiama la fallacia secondo l'accidente: se X è diverso da Y, è Y ha la propria accidente di essere padre, X è diverso dal padre, dunque non è padre."

14. Cf. Procl., *Commentary on the Parmenides*; Dam. *Isid.*; Marinus, *Life of Proclus*.

15. Cf. *Tht.* 150a–151d6, *Symp.* 209b, *Phdr.* 275e. On this image see Ferrari 1987, chap. seven.

16. *Phdr.* 278a5–b2, and see 276e7–277a4 for the self-generating logos.

Above I suggested that some of the obscure references in the *Euthydemus* might be better understood if the reader keeps in mind the translation of fourth-century issues to a fifth-century setting. Hence the epithet ἀπάτωρ, "fatherless," could signal difficulties with the writing, or literary portrayal, of Socrates.<sup>17</sup> That is, the literary representation "Socrates" is necessarily "fatherless," because it is bereft of the historical Socrates.<sup>18</sup> By allowing that Socrates has become a *logos* whose meaning is under dispute within the various *Sokratikoi Logoi*, the *Euthydemus* opens up a conversation about the philosophical lineage of the Socratic movement.

The connections between the philosophy of Socrates<sup>19</sup> and the philosophy of the Cynics, reflected in their mutual distrust of *doxa*, *chremata*, and *epideixis* (intellectual exhibitionism), are well known.<sup>20</sup> In the *Euthydemus*, as I will argue, Plato juxtaposes what are arguably Cynic tenets or at least tendencies, against what are often regarded as Socratic *dog-mas*. Though this discovery does not commit us to defining any one version of Socrates as the historical or even the Platonic Socrates, the plurality of Socratic versions is a possibility that Plato himself may have wanted us to see.

Although this article primarily attempts an interpretation of the *Euthydemus*, this interpretation entails the supposition that Socratic elenchus relies on the interlocutor's willingness to engage in genuine self-reflection. Self-inquiry—a fundamentally nondogmatic practice—is the basis of the Socratic elenchus, which is not (at least in the *Euthydemus*) therefore calculated to derive, inculcate, or otherwise produce a list of so-called Socratic precepts or elenctic principles.<sup>21</sup> It is in this sense that the question with which the dialogue begins, "Who?" retains primacy in the *Euthydemus*' representation of Socratic philosophy.<sup>22</sup> As I hope to show in more detail, Socratic philosophy begins as a sincerely undertaken effort to ask this question about oneself.<sup>23</sup>

17. Gill 1992, 164–65. On the portrayal of Socrates in the genre of Socratic dialogues, see also Kahn 1996, 1–100, and Clay 1994.

18. Clay 1994 discusses the literary appropriation of the historical Socrates.

19. Cf. Long 1996a and 1996b for an account of the Socratic schools in Hellenistic philosophy. Later, we shall see that the *Euthydemus* has Socrates combatting eristic and logic-chopping in favor of moral exhortation, in a way that recalls both Aristo and the Cynics (for Aristo, cf. Long 1996, 22, and on Aristo as a critic of ethical theorizing, see Porter 1996).

20. For these aspects of Cynicism as it manifests itself in Rome, see Griffin 1996.

21. In this article I do not have room to address the question of how the Socratic precepts are tied in to the elenchus. Most scholars agree that Socrates avers the truth of these precepts at least partially on the grounds that they remain undefeated in elenctic arguments. Furthermore, Socrates thinks that all people will agree to these same precepts, given time to reflect about them and despite their initial protestations to the contrary. Why is it that these precepts alone arise from the elenchus as indefeasible moral truths?

While Socrates' interlocutors nearly always defer to Socrates' brand of virtue-centered eudaimonism, experience confirms that conflicts between virtue and self-interest are inevitable. Scholars have tried to explain the compliance of Socrates' interlocutors in several ways. Irwin 1995, 63, has suggested that, in the end, Socrates must rely on the self-evidence of the proposition that virtue always benefits the person who possesses it. Brickhouse and Smith 1994, 73–102, following Vlastos, suggest that for success in the elenchus Socrates relies upon a latent but universally held belief system that equates with his own views.

22. On the *Euthydemus* as foundational for a supposed system of Socratic ethics, see Irwin 1995, 48–65. Irwin applies an Aristotelian analysis to the primacy of wisdom thesis developed in the *Euthydemus*, and so raises puzzles about the relative weight of various external goods as components or sufficient conditions for happiness. In this article, I emphasize the origins of the elenchus in self-inquiry, rather than as a foundation for a systematic ethical philosophy.

23. On the connections between the elenchus and self-knowledge see Griswold 1989, 7–8.

This orientation, self-inquiry, is revealed in many of the dialogue's most telling images and is blatantly announced by the interlocutor least likely to embrace it, when Dionysodorus asks Socrates, "Tell me, do you think you know what belongs to yourself?" (301e6). Formally, the dialogue's relentless sophisms, as we will shortly see, turn on fallacies of predication, on identities that are misplaced, or falsely attributed to inappropriate subjects.<sup>24</sup> Taken together, these fallacies make for an annoying read even if they do hold some kind of dialectical interest. Dionysodorus and Euthydemus rehearse their mistakes but fail to gain ground in transmitting the art of refutation. Why does Plato bother us with these quibbling siblings?

To use fallacies in order to gain an unfair dialectical advantage is the primary tactic of those who practice *antilogia*. No doubt Socrates went out of his way to distinguish his own methods from the disputational *technai* practiced by some of his contemporaries, and no doubt Plato is jealous of the Socratic reputation, refusing to allow it to fall into the wrong hands.<sup>25</sup> However, the sophisms in this dialogue also assist in the development of its central theme, which involves locating, defining, or predicating the self. Dionysodorus and Euthydemus are not just guilty of technical errors in the realm of logic; they also go seriously astray in their attempts at self-definition.

FROM "YOUR FATHER IS A DOG" TO FATHER OF THE DOGS:  
ANTISTHENES IN THE *EUTHYDEMUS*

Not a few have tried to locate a defining theme in the dialogue, but the *Euthydemus* notoriously features whole sequences of conversation that seemingly defy all canons of composition as well as argument. The absurd conclusions so defiantly drawn for the victims of eristic as well as the hopelessly irrelevant, flash-in-the-pan quality of many of the episodes make for skewed reading. Consider the following sequence, for example (*Euthydemus* 298d):

[Dionysodorus asks Ctesippus]: "Tell me then, do you have a dog?" "Yes, a wretched one at that." "Does the dog have puppies?" "Yes, [he has] other dogs just as wretched." "The dog is the father of puppies?" "I myself saw him mounting the mother." "But isn't the dog yours?" "Yes indeed." "Therefore since the father is yours, it turns out that the dog is your father and that you yourself are the brother of puppies!"

Aristotle cites the sophistries of the *Euthydemus* in his *Sophistici Elenchi* as examples of equivocation, ambiguity, and fallacy. Perhaps in this passage there lies just one more fallacy, but one wonders about the brothers' powers of free association, as they randomly pull dogs and deceptions out of their bag of tricks. Another way of interpreting this passage is to suggest that Plato here alludes to Antisthenes, disputed father of the Dogs, or Cynic philosophers.<sup>26</sup>

24. See Caizzi 1996, "appendice 2: I Sofismi," for the categories of fallacy displayed in the *Euthydemus*. Drawing on Arist. *Soph. el.*, Caizzi lists five classes: fallacies of homonymy, amphiboly, a dicto simpliciter ad dictum secundum quid and vice versa, and fallacies associated with accident.

25. Chance 1992, passim, and Caizzi 1996, 17, who discusses previous interpretations of the work that emphasized its nature as a reply to Isocrates; also, on Isocrates and the *Euthydemus*, see Tarrant 1996.

26. For a summary of arguments that contest the idea of Antisthenes as the first Cynic, see most recently Long 1996b, 31–37; cf. also Goulet-Cazé 1996, 414–16, and Giannantonio 1990b, 223–34.

In what follows, I argue for a critical mass of philological evidence that, taken together, allows us to locate the dialogue's Cynic associations; clearly the burden of proof falls on someone attempting to isolate a single episode, *Euthydemus* 298d, from the chaotic congeries of bad arguments and treat it as a theme central to the dialogue. By reading several of the dialogue's sophisms in light of anecdotal information from Diogenes' *Lives* combined with material culled from Antisthenean fragments, we can identify allusions to Antisthenes. Not all of the evidence is of equal weight and surely no one could argue that the cumulative effect of weak evidence adds up to a strong case. Hence the first task will be to discuss material that is, at least in other contexts, almost certainly recognizable as Antisthenean.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps the most Antisthenean passage in the *Euthydemus* is the signature phrase at 285e2: οὐκ εἶναι ἀντιλέγειν (loosely translatable as, "it is not possible to contradict/gainsay another's logos"). Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1024b32–34, *Top.* 104b21), Alexander (*in Arist. Top.*; *in Arist. Metaph.*), Proclus (*in Pl. Crat.*), and Diogenes all clearly attest to the Antisthenean origins of this saying (*Metaph.* 1024b32): διὸ Ἀντισθένης ᾤετο εὐήθως μὴθὲν ἀξιῶν λέγεσθαι πλὴν τῷ οἰκειῷ λόγῳ, ἐν ἑφ' ἐνός· ἐξ ὧν συνέβαινε μὴ εἶναι ἀντιλέγειν ("Wherefore Antisthenes mistakenly thought that there is no reference, except by means of the proprietary account, one [word] referring to one [non-linguistic referendum]. From this it results that it is impossible to gainsay another's logos").

Later we will examine Antisthenes' philosophy of language, and especially his notion of the proprietary account. For now, it is important to discuss the context of the phrase, "it is not possible to contradict," as it occurs in Plato's dialogue. Dionysodorus introduces the doctrine as part of an elaborate defense against accusations of lying; Socrates then draws a comparison between Dionysodorus' denial that falsehood is possible (resorting to the Antisthenean paradox) and to Protagoras' (man-the-measure) doctrine. That Socrates in this particular dramatic setting would misidentify an Antisthenean motto and wrongly attribute it to Protagoras is a result of the historical relationships expressed in the dialogue. Socrates could not very well, without violating the dialogue's verisimilitude, attribute the saying to Antisthenes, since Antisthenes at the time of the dramatic date had not yet formulated this doctrine. Nevertheless we, as readers who stand outside the dramatic date and are familiar with the origin of οὐκ εἶναι ἀντιλέγειν have every reason to identify the author of the doctrine as Antisthenes.<sup>28</sup>

The other pointed reference to a well-known Antisthenean subject is the *Euthydemus*' version of Heracles' battle against the Sophists. This war against hyper-intellectualism is again a signature piece of Antisthenes, and

27. In surveying allusions to Antisthenes in the *Euthydemus*, I am well aware of nineteenth-century *Quellenforschungen* that specialize in "Antisthenes sightings." Wilamowitz, Hick, and Joël's monumental study of the Xenophontic Socrates come to mind. Perhaps scholarship in our day has grown beyond the belief that Plato's fictional representations can be identified with historical certainties, and I am certainly not advocating that position here. Rather, the point of this work is to show that Plato's dialogue provides evidence for a Platonic Socrates who nevertheless is in some ways a proto-Cynic.

28. Indeed ancient writers recognized this phrase as Antisthenean, since the tradition sprang up that Antisthenes, as a result of seeing his signature doctrine mocked in Plato's *Euthydemus*, wrote the anti-Platonic polemic, *Sathon*, in revenge. See Giannantoni 1990b, nota 30 (p. 291).

in the traditions informed by his Heracles writings it came to be known as the *Tuphomachia*. At 297, just prior to Ctesippus' entry, Socrates indulges in his usual ironic self-disparagement (*Euthydemus* 297c):

[Socrates speaking]: I seem to be proving much inferior to Heracles, who was not enough to beat the Hydra (she was far too clever) on his own. If he cut off one head of the argument, she cleverly grew many in its place. [Nor did he match] a certain crab, newly arrived from the sea, another sophist, or so I think. And when it had caused him so much grief, biting and talking on the left, he called on his cousin Iolaus for succor, and he proved enough for the job. But if my Iolaus comes, he might rather accomplish just the opposite.

In his author's catalogue, Diogenes Laertius attributes three works on the subject of Heracles to Antisthenes: Ἡρακλῆς ὁ μείζων ἢ περὶ ἰσχύος; Ἡρακλῆς ἢ Μίδας; Ἡρακλῆς ἢ περὶ φρονήσεως ἢ περὶ ἰσχύος.<sup>29</sup> The Heracles writings of Antisthenes were among the most widely known of his works; their influence is discernible in the Plutarch story cited below and (in all probability) in Xenophon's "Heracles at the Crossroads,"<sup>30</sup> where the Cynic hero must choose between a life of pleasure and a life of toil. A passage from Julian attests to the role of Heracles as a Cynic icon (*Or.* 9.8.187b–c = *SSR* VA 26):

It is not an easy task to determine the founder of the Cynic school, and so it seems that Oinomaus was not mistaken when he said, 'Cynicism is neither Antisthenism nor Diogenism.' The better sort of Cynic affirms that the great Heracles was not only a great benefactor of humankind, but that his greatest gift was to establish the paradigm for the [Cynic] way of life.

The Cynic patron features heavily in the polemics between sophists and philosophers that Socrates is forced to wage. Socrates models a form of Cynic *ponos*, undertaking the heroic toils of the philosopher in defeating these Sophists.<sup>31</sup> Socrates fights the *tuphomachia*, the battle against "theory," we might say in contemporary academic parlance, just as Diogenes perfected the anti-intellectual art of the Cynic gesture, holding up a plucked chicken, saying "Behold Plato's 'Man,'" as an example of "featherless biped."

That Heracles represents the Cynic aversion to sophistry is reflected in the *Euthydemus*' story about the Hydra and the Crab (and echoed in Plut. *de E apud Delphi*, 387D). Here Heracles comes off as young and boorish, and having not yet encountered the Sophists Chiron, Atalanta, and Prometheus, he dismisses "dialectic and scoffs at the whole business of 'If the first, then the second.'" In another version of the same story, Heracles rescues the repentant sophist Prometheus, whose regenerative liver was a sign of his "*tuphos* and love of eristic."<sup>32</sup> A glance at the later tradition suggests that this Socratic

29. For details as to the actual number of Antisthenes' Heracles writings, see the excursus of Giannantonio 1990b, 310–12.

30. Xen. *Mem.* 2.1 attributes the story to Prodicus.

31. In conjunction with this theme, we should notice that in the *Apology* (22), as well, Socrates uses the word *ponoi* to describe his own labors.

32. For these stories, see Caizzi 1966, nota to frags. 22–25 and Giannantonio 1990b, nota 32 (pp. 309–22). Giannantonio also suggests that the *Euthydemus* passage reflects Antisthenes' Heracles treatise: "a questa opera, infatti allude con ogni probabilità Platone *Euthy.* 297c" (1990b, 313). Perhaps the *Heracles* was written in the form of a Socratic dialogue that included a digression on the life of Heracles, or perhaps it took the form of a dialogue between Chiron (the preceptor of Heracles) and the hero.

combat against practitioners of *antilogia* anticipated the Antisthenean motto, reported by Diogenes, according to which (6.104): "those who have achieved self-mastery can dispense with learning literature, lest they be distracted by matters that do not pertain to them (*ἄλλοτρίους*)." In this quotation, Antisthenes' rejection of traditional education exactly mirrors the Socratic revolt against Sophistic education represented throughout the dialogue.<sup>33</sup>

These Antisthenean trademarks, the denial of contradiction and the *tuphomachia*, are easy to recognize and difficult to account for. Why does Plato toss in allusions to Antisthenes and how do they serve the dialogue's philosophical and artistic ends? Readers who recognize these rather obvious allusions are now in a position to read some of the less transparent material with greater appreciation. In fact, I will go on to argue that the dialogue is rife with allusions to Antisthenes in particular, as well as Cynic motifs in general.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps it is the very ludic or (to use a more properly Cynic tag) serio-comic quality of these references that underscores the Cynic themes of the dialogue. In the nineteenth century, students of the dialogue tried to read it as forming part of the ongoing *literarische Fehden*, or disputes between rival schools, operating in Plato's own day.<sup>35</sup> If in the *Euthydemus* Plato invokes a literary genre such as the *spoudaio-geloion*, in this most comic of Plato's works it is in keeping with its proto-Cynic subtext. From the outset, Plato suggests that the sight of Socrates, at his advanced age, taking lessons from the two recently educated brothers<sup>36</sup> will be a comedy, and his first lesson begins with their giggles as they admit that they really "aren't serious" about legal affairs.

In the *Euthydemus* Plato seems to be meditating on Socratic philosophy and its various (mis)recognitions. Present-day scholars who engage in Socratic reconstruction may or may not have recourse to works outside the Platonic corpus in formulating their versions of Socrates.<sup>37</sup> Likewise, we are entitled to imagine that Plato himself was aware that Socrates in his own day was a controversial figure, easy to misconstrue, whose conversations could and did give rise to various, often conflicting, interpretations.<sup>38</sup> Plato tolerated the notion that people of differing intellectual bents inhabited the

33. On Antisthenes' views on education see Brancacci 1992, 4061–63, and idem 1990, 85–118.

34. Some of the allusions are more far-fetched or admit of greater doubt than the Antisthenean signatures discussed above. At times, the reader is hard pressed to decide whether one is encountering a somewhat less pointed allusion or a strange coincidence. For example, the dialogue's opening words, *Τίς ἦν*, are very much related to Antisthenes' formula for a definition, as reported by Diogenes (6.3.1): *λόγος ἐστὶν ὁ τὸ τί ἦν ἢ ἔστι δηλῶν*.

Another example of the more doubtful kind of allusion is the statement that wisdom can be taught, at *Euthydemus* 282c (*ἡ σοφία διδασκτόν*), which could be compared to Diogenes' report concerning Antisthenean maxims. Diogenes (6.10) includes *διδασκτὴν ἀπεδείκνυε τὴν ἀρετὴν* ("he used to demonstrate that virtue can be taught").

35. Teichmüller 1881.

36. On this theme, see Tarrant 1997, 110, who regards an allusion to Antisthenes in the *Euthydemus* as plausible, since Antisthenes was called a late learner.

37. Thus Vlastos appeals to Aristotle's testimony concerning Socrates' identity as a teacher of ethics in order to recreate his historical Socrates from Plato's elenctic dialogues. Similarly, Vander Waerdt 1993 used Xenophon's *Symposium* to argue for a particularly Socratic notion of justice, based on the practice of self-sufficiency.

38. According to O'Connor 1994, not just Plato but also Xenophon tolerated the possibility of a Socratic pluralism perhaps better than present-day scholars (p. 154): "perhaps the 'true' Socrates as Xenophon perceived him is more the locus of dispersion of a discourse than a stable and unified focal point."



Socratic circle, as *Phaedo* 59b5–8 makes clear.<sup>39</sup> In this passage, we see Antisthenes in the company of other Socratics attending Socrates on the day of his death.<sup>40</sup>

It is just this mythology surrounding Socratic genealogy that the playful sequence, “your father is a dog,” is intended to capture. We return for the moment to Antisthenes. It turns out that fatherlessness also has a cultic significance of possible relevance for our dialogue. In his *Life of Antisthenes* (6.13), Diogenes Laertius records the now almost universally rejected scholastic succession of the Cynic-Stoic branch of the Socratic family: Socrates, Antisthenes, Diogenes, Crates, Zeno.<sup>41</sup>

He used to hold discussions in the gymnasium at Cynosarges not far from the gates, whence some [conclude] that the Cynic school derived its name from that district . . . And he was the first, Diocles tells us, to double his cloak and be content with that one garment and to take up a staff and a wallet.

Cynosarges was in the district of Diomeia, near the beach of the battle of Marathon; it was also the locus of a gymnasium.<sup>42</sup> An inscription, datable to ca. 430–415 B.C.E., indicates that Cynosarges was also the locus of a cult dedicated to Heracles.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the membership of this cult was composed of the inhabitants of the district, which turns out to have been the particular province of the *nothoi*.<sup>44</sup> Tradition explains this cult’s affiliations with Heracles. He is the patron deity of *nothoi* since he can be numbered among them: ἐξ οὗ καὶ τοὺς νόθους ἐκεῖ συντελεῖν, ὅτι καὶ Ἡρακλῆς νόθος ἦν, ἴσα θεοῖς ἐτιμήθη.<sup>45</sup> It seems very likely that Antisthenes conversed in the Cynosarges district, perhaps because he too was *metroxenos*.<sup>46</sup> And this district was an intellectual center as well as a cultic center, housing a gymnasium and a *Herakleion*.<sup>47</sup> In the anecdote quoted above, Diogenes embellishes his information with citations from Diocles, a first-century B.C.E. author, who wrote both a collection of philosophical *Lives*, as well as a

39. Most 1993.

40. On the Socratics in the *Phaedo* and their connections to the Socratic writings, see Clay 1994.

41. For a nuanced discussion of the philosophical significance of this succession see Long 1996a, with appendix. See also Goulet-Cazé 1992.

42. For this brief summary of the history of the Cynosarges district, I rely on the meticulous researches of Marie-Françoise Billot 1993, who brilliantly gathers together the relevant texts and scholarship; see also Giannantoni 1990b, 223–26.

43. For details of this decree, including dating, copying, and documentation, see Billot 1993, 79–80 and the references she cites. In particular see the work of Humphreys 1976. I do not wish to get too embroiled in the legalistic details of exactly what kind of *nothoi* are referred to both in this decree and, more generally, in association with Cynosarges. A passage from Demosthenes suggests, at any rate, that *nothos* could denote both one whose mother was not an Athenian citizen (*metroxenos*—the standard form of *nothos* after the decree of Pericles) and also perhaps one whose father was not an Athenian citizen, but whose mother in fact was, or a *patroxenos* (*Contra Aristocratem* 213).

44. “The priest will complete the monthly sacrifice together with the *parasitoi*. These will be chosen from among the *nothoi* and their sons according to ancestral custom. Action will be brought before the court concerning those who do not wish to be *parasitoi*” (Polemon F78 Preller apud Athenaeus 234e). On the activities of the *nothoi* in Cynosarges, see Ogden 1995, 199–202.

45. Pausanias the Atticist, s.v. Εἰς Κυνόσαργες (cited by Billot 1993, 115–16).

46. Conclusion to Billot 1993.

47. Billot 1993, 93–116.

Summary of their doctrines.<sup>48</sup> Diogenes combines the etymological derivation of the Cynic school from Cynosarges with Diocles' "proof" that Antisthenes was the first Cynic, as he adopted the uniform of the putative Cynic *hairesis*,<sup>49</sup> the doubled cloak that signified self-reliance.

Although Hellenistic literary genres shape Diogenes' account, nevertheless it confirms the links between Heracles, genealogy, and the Cynics that are beginning to surface in the *Euthydemus*. As the dialogue unfolds its central drama—the battle between Socrates along with his followers and Dionysodorus and Euthydemus together with theirs—some of the sequences that inform it become more intelligible when understood as contributing "proto-Cynic" motifs. For example, Socrates fights against the excesses of logos under the patronage of Heracles, and Ctesippus wins the first victory for the Socratic side by alluding to another Cynic prototype, as we will now see.

Presumably the Cynics' costume, the doubled *tribon*, was an all-weather garment that suited their lives of homelessness or secular mendicancy. This device of wearing suitable philosophical attire is not unique to the Cynics, if we are to believe both Plato and Aristophanes. For evidently those who styled themselves Socratics also affected a certain look—pale and thin, according to Aristophanes, or barefoot, according to Plato.<sup>50</sup> But who designed the Cynic costume? What factors in particular inform their counter-cultural mien? In their articles "Cynicism Before the Cynics?" and "Anacharsis and the Cynics," James Romm and Richard Martin have each detailed the Cynic appropriation of the legendary Scythian sage Anacharsis.<sup>51</sup> As Martin explains, Herodotus introduces Anacharsis in Book 4, where he is praised precisely for his wisdom, which paradoxically amounts to a thoroughgoing repudiation of urban culture (4.46):

Round the Black Sea—the scene of Darius' campaign—are to be found, if we except Scythia, the most uncivilized nations in the world. No one could claim that the rest have any of the arts of civilized life, or have produced any man of distinction—again with a simple exception: namely, Anacharsis. The Scythians, however, though in most respects I do not admire them, have managed one thing, and that the most important in human affairs, better than anyone else on the face of the earth: I mean their own preservation. For such is their manner of life that no one who invades their country can escape destruction, and if they wish to avoid engaging with an enemy, that enemy cannot by any possibility come to grips with them. A people without fortified towns, living, as the Scythians do, in wagons which they take with them wherever they go . . . (Trans. de Sélincourt)

The homelessness of the Scythians, their fortitude and self-reliance, all anticipate the Cynic emphasis on *karteria* as well as Cynic cosmopolitanism.

48. Goulet-Cazé 1992, 3933–34; see the references cited there for information about Diocles as an author.

49. That is, Diogenes' formulation of the Cynics as a definite philosophical school with tenets that were then appropriated by the Stoics is a Hellenistic fabrication promulgated by Stoic philosophers who wish to claim Socrates as their forebear, as did the other Hellenistic *haireses*.

50. Ar. *Nub.* 1017; Pl. *Symp.* 173b2.

51. Romm 1996; Martin 1996.

Martin and Romm suggest that Anacharsis' Scythian background allows Herodotus to articulate Sophistic musings on the *nomos/phusis* controversy. He figures into the Herodotean construction of Hellenic self-reflection, providing the gaze of an outsider who visits Greece in search of wisdom and comes away believing that only the Spartans are wise. The Scythians are an icon of cultural criticism, bridging the intellectual divide between Sophists and Cynics, as, for example, the second-century B.C.E. "Epistles of Anacharsis"<sup>52</sup> very clearly illustrate;<sup>53</sup> for this reason, it seems appropriate that they should make a proto-Cynic appearance in Plato's *Euthydemus*. Plato, like Herodotus and the author of the Cynic epistles,<sup>54</sup> deploys the image of Scythian nomadism within the context of critiquing conventional Greek ethics.

Turning to the Scythians of the second century, pseudo-Anacharsis' *Letter 9* in particular encapsulates the Cynic themes of self-reliance, *karteria*, and secular mendicancy through a prolonged meditation on the landscape of Scythia, pictured here as a Cynic utopia. The Cynic formulae in this letter include renunciation of pleasure (ἡδονήν . . . ἐκβαλεῖν) and freedom of speech (ἐλευθέρως λέγων). Also Cynic is the parable of the empty ship floating freely down the Danube, which then sinks because its crew loads it down with foreign goods (ἀλλοτριῶν χρημάτων).<sup>55</sup> That Scythians become a feature of later Cynic self-representation has implications for reading the *Euthydemus*.

In our dialogue, Socrates and Ctesippus have just emerged from their encounter with Heracles and the dog father, only to encounter another eristic trap, this time centering on the question of what counts as valuable or good. Dionysodorus sets the snare by obtaining Ctesippus' assent to the proposition that wealth, and gold in particular, should be counted as a good (*Euthydemus* 299d1–e10):

[Dionysodorus asks Ctesippus:] "So don't you think that one should try to keep hold of it always and in all places?" "Absolutely." "And you agree that gold is a good?" "Yes, you have my assent," said he. "So one ought to try to possess it at all times and in all places, especially on one's person, and the happiest person would be the one who had three talents of gold in his stomach, a talent in his skull, and a stater in each eye?" Ctesippus replied, "They say, Euthydemus, that those happiest and best of men are Scythians, who keep a great quantity of gold in skulls that turn out to be their own, just as you were now using 'dog,' to predicate 'father,' and what is even more remarkable is that they drink from the skulls that are their own, and they see this gold inside, when they hold their own skulls in their hands."

The Scythian motif once more underscores the Cynic feel of this comedy, but there is a serious point being made, consonant with the Cynic abhorrence of wealth and the poverty of both Socrates and Antisthenes. In Xenophon's *Symposium*, Antisthenes teaches the virtues of poverty through a strikingly similar device, the analogy of the purse: "Tell me, Callias, in

52. Malherbe 1977.

53. Cf. Rankin 1983, chaps. 5 and 6, on Cynic utopianism.

54. There are ten extant letters of Anacharsis, which date probably from 300–250 B.C.E. On the contents of the letters see Reuters 1963.

55. Malherbe 1977, 48 (*Epistle 9*).

your opinion do human beings carry justice in their purses or in their souls?' 'In their souls,' he replied. 'And yet how is it that you make them more just in their souls by putting silver in their purses?'" (SSR VA 81–83). In our example, the gilded skulls of the Scythians are infinitely preferable to the inconvenience of lugging around gold in one's body, but the example begins to play upon a Cynic tenet, and this is the *oikeion/allottrion* distinction, to which we now turn.

### OIKEION/ALLOTRION

Already we have seen that Plato anticipates the Stoic doctrine of *adiaphora* in the *Euthydemus*.<sup>56</sup> "in all these things we said at first were good, our account is not that they are in themselves good by nature, but the position, it seems, is as follows. If ignorance controls them, they are greater bads than their opposites" (281d).<sup>57</sup> One scholar has particularly investigated the Socratic-Cynic continuity by comparing the renegade Stoic (or retro-Cynic) Aristo and his demotion of the moral value of the Stoic category known as "preferred indifferents" to what we find here. In the *Euthydemus*, "Socrates takes himself to have established that so-called 'goods' such as health, and so-called 'bads' such as sickness, strictly speaking are neither good nor bad."<sup>58</sup> In fact, Socrates argues that wisdom is the only good, because it alone can lead up to happiness. At *Euthydemus* 281d6–e5 Socrates develops the following line of argument:

"It would appear, Cleinias, that in the case of all those things which we first said were good, our account is that it is not in their nature to be good just by themselves, but the position, it seems is as follows. If ignorance controls them, they are greater bads than their opposites . . . but if they are controlled by wisdom, they are greater goods, though in neither case do they have any value just by themselves. . . . Of the other things, none is either good or bad but of these two things, one—wisdom—is good and the other—ignorance—is bad."<sup>59</sup>

As Cicero tells us, Aristo became embroiled with the orthodox Stoic Chrysippus over the question of whether the Stoic indifferents (things in between virtue and vice) could be ranked as valuable in any way.<sup>60</sup> According to the orthodox Stoic position, the only thing that possesses any value is virtue; virtue alone can be classified as a good. So-called external goods, such things as birth, wealth, health and natural assets, are all morally indifferent but naturally preferable. Aristo, in denying that something can be naturally

56. Cf. Striker 1994 and Long 1996a, 24–25.

57. By switching interlocutors Plato can examine theses earlier put forth by Socrates; now Ctesippus agrees when Dionysodorus asks him if he thinks gold is good (he twice secures Ctesippus' assent), a proposition to which Socrates could never assent. In fact the sequence reintroduces a rejected utilitarian definition of happiness formulated by Socrates at 280e1: "Then this is a sufficient condition for happiness, to possess goods and to make use of them." Quite possibly this utilitarian formulation was itself the center of a controversy in Socratic circles. Certainly many of the anecdotes in Diogenes' *Lives* suggest a utilitarian bent to Antisthenes' ethical views.

58. Long 1996a, 27.

59. Translated as in Long 1996a, 24–25; cf. also Gill 1998. On this passage, see Irwin 1995, 57.

60. *Fin.* 3.50; on this passage see Long and Sedley 1987, 359, and Porter 1996, 160. Aristo himself was a student of Zeno, and it was then Chrysippus who defended "Stoic doctrine both against criticism from the outside and against heresies from within the school" (Striker 1996, 232).

preferable if it remains morally neutral, is accused of reverting to the Cynic camp.<sup>61</sup> And this radical denial of value to anything but virtue as a component of human happiness seems to be the conclusion of Socrates' argument above. Socrates here endorses a position, the value-neutral status of all things other than virtue (the virtue that Socrates has in mind is wisdom), which is only again clearly articulated in the later, Hellenistic dispute between Aristo and the orthodox Stoics.<sup>62</sup>

But even for those scholars who see a connection between the Socratic and the Cynic refusals to drag extraneous matters into the question of human happiness, there remains the worry that the thesis that Socrates proposes, that wisdom is the only good, is left without argument on its behalf.<sup>63</sup> What support is there for this thesis within the terms of the dialogue? Why should external assets not be classified as components of happiness? That is, why would Socrates not want to admit that these external advantages are lesser goods, rather than claim that wisdom is the only good? This is where the *allotrion/oikeion* distinction can offer some guidance.

Antisthenes is said to have taught that "evil is constituted by everything that is foreign" (Diog. Laert. 6.12), a doctrine we find elaborated in Epicurus' *Dissertationes* 3.24.67 (= SSR VB 22):

ἐξ οὗ μ' Ἀντισθένης ἡλευθέρωσεν, οὐκέτι ἐδούλευσα . . . ἐδίδαξέν με τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ οὐκ ἐμὰ. κτήσις οὐκ ἐμή. συγγενεῖς, οἰκεῖοι, φίλοι, φήμη, συνηθεῖς τόποι, διατριβή, πάντα ταῦτα ἀλλότρια.

Since the time Antisthenes set me free I have no longer been a slave . . . he taught me [the distinction between] what is mine and what is not mine. Property is "not mine." Relatives, servants, friends, reputation, accustomed haunts, pastimes, [he taught] are foreign.

The *allotrion/oikeion* distinction informs the Cynic-Stoic tradition throughout; traces of it can also be detected in the Socratic literature.<sup>64</sup> For example, Xenophon represents a conversation between Antisthenes and Socrates on the subject of inner wealth: "it is not in their houses that human beings keep their wealth or their poverty, but in their souls" (Xen. *Symp.* 4.36 = SSR VA 82).<sup>65</sup> Both here and in the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon portrays Socrates and Antisthenes as practitioners of self-reliance, exhibiting the tough, pragmatic, anti-hedonistic bent of Cynic-Socratic ethics.<sup>66</sup> It comes as no

61. *Fin.* 3.50, and also Diog. Laert. 6.105: "Whatever is intermediate between virtue and vice they [sc. the Cynics], in agreement with Aristo of Chios, account indifferent."

62. It must be said that Gregory Vlastos disagrees with the "Cynic" interpretation of the *Euthydemus* in his "Happiness and Virtue in Socrates' Moral Theory" (1991, p. 220 and esp. n. 74). He cites John Ackrill's comparison between the Socratic ethics expressed at *Euthydemus* 291d-e and *Eth. Nic.* 1129b2-4: "[Prosperity] would not be good for a bad man."

63. Again see Irwin 1995, 58.

64. Cf. Ioppolo 1980, 83-89, who discusses the Socratic influence on Cynic and Cynicizing authors. Cf. also Long 1996b, who discusses the Socratic sufficiency of virtue thesis in connection with Aristo.

65. On this passage see Brancacci 1992, 4065.

66. Perhaps it is due to the untheoretical nature of Xenophon that inner wealth turns out to have a cash value in the Xenophontic writings, as it is changed into the currency of contentment, managing resources, and political independence. We need not assume that Xenophon's pragmatic elaboration of the concept is a direct reflection of Antisthenes' no doubt more theoretical formulations. Cf. Prince 1997, chap. 4: "A Vision of the City."

surprise that Xenophon identifies Aristippus, self-styled hedonist among the followers of Socrates, with perpetual *alienation*: "in order to avoid suffering such things [as slavery or ruling others], neither do I submit myself to any form of constitution, but I am an alien everywhere" (Xen. *Mem.* 2.14–16 = Aristippus SSR IVA 163: ἀλλὰ ξένος πανταχοῦ εἰμι). Xenophon's meaning is surely political, but it is not difficult to see the implication, that remaining a *xenos* in the sense of identifying with what is alien to one is associated with inner poverty and dependence on others.<sup>67</sup>

At *Euthydemus* 301e5, Dionysodorus asks Socrates whether or not he is able to recognize "what is his own" and formulates a definition of what is *oikeion* in terms of detachable property or chattels. One way of presenting the absurdity, from a Socratic point of view, of marking out property as constituting the definition of "one's own" is the Scythian gold example: it is best, Dionysodorus says, to keep gold everywhere and constantly in one's possession. Thus it will be best to have three talents in one's belly, a talent in one's skull, and a stater in each eye (299e). The absurdity follows from construing "oneself" as the body. We know that the practice of delimiting the self was the theme of a number of Stoic meditations.<sup>68</sup> Marcus Aurelius describes an exercise that consists in circumscribing the self, starting from the body, thought, and intellect. The exercise finally results in a completely self-enclosed identity, the person of supreme self-sufficiency that Aurelius compares to the *sphairos* of Empedocles (12.3.1). Antisthenes seems to anticipate this "interior citadel" of the Stoa (Diog. Laert. 6.10–13 = SSR VA 134): "virtue is a weapon that no enemy can capture," and "wisdom is a wall that cannot be breached; no one can break it down and no one can betray it. This defense is furnished by one's own unassailable thoughts."<sup>69</sup>

This theme of self-scrutiny plays itself out in the metaphors of the *Euthydemus*: at 285c3 and following, Socrates poses as a would be late-learner and offers to entrust himself to the tutelage of Dionysodorus, "as if he were the famous Medea of Colchis. Let him destroy me, and if he likes let him boil me down . . . only he must make me good." Ctesippus, inspired by the example of Socrates, offers himself "to be skinned by the strangers even more, if they choose, than they are doing now." Shedding one's skin or having it forcibly stripped is a metaphor that continues the wrestling images often associated with *paideia* in the Platonic dialogues: to strip naked and wrestle with one's opponent signifies the requisite honesty and vulnerability that attend any true meeting of minds. But here the theme of self-exposure is related at once to the frightening wizardry of the duo along with its dangerous results, and to the quest for self that defines the ethical telos of the dialogue.

67. On the topic of Socratic self-sufficiency, see also O'Connor 1994, who reads this passage as almost entirely political and does not really pick up on the implications of the word *xenos* in terms of the *allotriion/oikeion* distinction in Cynic-Socratic ethics.

68. Cf. Hadot 1992, 130.

69. No doubt the aspect of *ponos* as military training, emphasizing preparedness and the austerity of military discipline, lends itself easily to this kind of image. On the militaristic side of Antisthenean thought, see the wildly speculative but nonetheless telling volume 2 of Joël, devoted to uncovering this theme in the Xenophontic dialogues.

Consider once more the gold example: “what is even more astonishing is that they drink from their own gilded skulls and they actually see [them] inside, all the while holding the skull that is their very own in their hands” (299e7). Here the gold migrates from hand to eye as the Scythians look at what they are holding. In fact the gold turns out to be inside “their skulls,” so that by perceiving the gold they bring it inside. Those who perceive or have a soul will be those who are able to keep gold in their heads. In our passage, the Scythian warriors/proto-Cynics keep their gold inside their heads; like Antisthenes, they possess inner wealth. The dialogue continues to play with the theme of discerning the real person or self hidden beneath clothes or skin, as the *himatia* example makes clear (*Euthydemus* 300a1–10): “‘Do the Scythians, and in fact all other human beings, perceive objects that admit of perceiving or objects that do not admit [of perceiving]?’ said Euthydemus. ‘Those that do.’ ‘And the same is true of you?’ ‘Yes, of me as well.’ ‘Now do you see our cloaks?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Therefore they are capable of perceiving.’” Cloaks, of course, cannot perceive—any more than corpses can perceive gold. In fact the seat of sentience in the person is, as Socrates attempts to interject at 295b3, the soul, that by means of which one knows anything at all: “[Euthydemus:] ‘And tell me, do you know with that whereby you have knowledge, or with something else?’ [Socrates:] ‘With that whereby I have knowledge: I think you mean the soul, or is not that your meaning?’” This seat of consciousness or sentience is exposed once the skin has been stripped off, the person flayed, his cloak removed. Dionysodorus’ question to Socrates (301e5), “Do you think you know what is your own?” reflects the ethical theme of the dialogue, which we might describe as delimiting or discerning the self, discriminating between what is *oikeion* (301e2, e3: οἰκεῖον) and what is *allotrion*. Hence the Socratic practice of self-discrimination coincides with the Cynic *allotrion/oikeion* distinction.

Returning, then, to the Socratic/proto-Cynic ethics of the *Euthydemus*, we can see that there is a difference between two systems of ethical valuation. Virtue, vice, and that which is neither virtuous nor vicious (the *adiaphora* of Stoic ethics) is one method of classification. We find this schema anticipated in Socrates’ delineation: ignorance, wisdom, and all other forms of advantage. *Oikeion* and *allotrion*, what belongs and does not belong to the self, is the other method. Obviously, in the *Euthydemus*, Socrates enumerates categories that sound almost identical to the later Stoic gradations. And yet, the potential problem that the *adiaphora* present is that the categories of *allotrion* and *oikeion* can become confused. That is, people can mistakenly identify with external goods, or can take what is *allotrion* for what is *oikeion*. Socrates suggests that most people assume that things that are not inherently good are in fact inherently good. According to Socrates their goodness is itself *allotrion*, or extrinsic.

By studying this contrast, we can begin to understand some of the Socratic paradoxes explored in the *Euthydemus*. For example, though Socrates argues that wisdom is the only inherently good thing, at 291c–292d, he sets out as a criterion for this wisdom that it can have no utility (292d3): “It must not be a manufacturer of any of those products that are neither good

nor bad, and it must not transmit any knowledge, except itself." Just as Antisthenes taught that the wise person should learn to discriminate between the self and what is alien, so Socrates suggests that this wisdom he is in search of is self-knowledge.

#### SELF-PREDICATION IN THE *EUTHYDEMUS*

It comes as no surprise that self-scrutiny features heavily in the images and allusions of the *Euthydemus*. After all, the dialogue purports to pit Socratic wisdom against the various alternatives<sup>70</sup> for higher education in Athens, a very common feature of Socratic dialogues (e.g., *Alcibiades* 1, *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Hippias Major*). In these dialogues, Socratic elenchus is counterposed against sophistic *logographia* or eristic, as the case may be. Self-inquiry, the demand for an account of one's life, is the pivot of the elenchus; the *Euthydemus*, exceptionally, alludes constantly to this dimension of Socratic teaching, without in fact displaying the elenchus.

A brief comparison with the *Hippias Major* will underscore Socrates' associations with self-inquiry or self-scrutiny. At 292a6 Socrates voices his worries over what might happen if a certain acquaintance should catch him carelessly accepting one of Hippias' answers: "If he happens to have a staff, he'll surely try to beat me, unless I manage to get away from him." Hippias replies, "What do you mean? Is this fellow your master, and if he does this won't he be arrested and punished?" This interchange between Socrates and Hippias is ironic; the annoying fellow, Socrates himself, was "arrested and punished," perhaps for his persistent refusal to accept bad answers from his interlocutors.

Here Plato chooses a humorous ploy to underscore Socrates' associations with the search for an authentic self, one that lurks behind the scenes, listening and checking up on Socrates' elenctic conversations. Later in the dialogue (*Hp. Mai.* 301e1–10) Plato introduces the same topic as part of a digression on predication. Quantitative predicates cannot, while qualitative predicates can, range freely over an indefinite number of subjects. For example, Socrates proceeds to ask, "Are we both one, you and I, or are you two and I two?"

This banter about persons being one or two, odd or even, continues to thematize the Socratic search for self. Hippias, when he wants to show what the fine really is, plots the career of a bodily self that should ideally end, as he tells us, with "a decent burial": "In all cases the finest thing for every man is to be wealthy, healthy, honored by the Greeks, having attained to a ripe old age . . . finally to be buried by his offspring in a magnificent fashion" (*Hp. Mai.* 291e1). Socrates' puzzles about the structure of subjectivity extend to a scrutiny of the affective self. During the elenchus, habits of thought, emotional reactions, and entrenched opinions begin to surface: Hippias reveals his fondness for pretty women, fine horses, and lots of money

70. Although the major contender against Socratic wisdom is eristic, Socrates' interludes with Crito, in which he briefly dismisses *logographia*, the art of making speeches for others (289d and 305), seem to suggest that higher education as training in rhetoric is also under attack.



(288a–c5). These attachments indicate something about the structure of Hippias' personal desires as well as about the locus of value in the community to which he belongs. Once aware that he has these values, Hippias becomes free to question their authenticity. In his encounter with Socrates, he is required to display a certain amount of detachment from his passions, states of mind, and desires, and to notice their contingency upon a set of unquestioned assumptions. The aporetic structure of self-inquiry derives first and foremost from this radical detachment from the personal that emerges in the process of *elenchus*.

During the course of their conversation, Socrates manages to refine Hippias' conception of the fine, distracting Hippias from his inexhaustible catalogue of beautiful objects. In suggesting that aesthetic pleasures, "pleasures through hearing or seeing" (299a–300b1), are the locus of beauty, Socrates brings beauty inside the world of experience, and not outside of the person. Although this definition is resisted through the influence of Socrates' alter ego,<sup>71</sup> this formulation bears some resemblance to the "inner wealth" and the gold on the inside of the head that we earlier encountered among the Cynics.

In any case, the dialogue raises some questions about the nature of the self that both Socrates and Hippias have in mind: Is it a bodily self? What relationship does the self have to the objects of experience? In short, what is it to be a person; is each of us two (body and soul) or are we simply one (the body alone)? If self is the mind, what properties does it then possess?

In the *Euthydemus* the theme of self-inquiry also converges with the overt subject of the work, which is predication fallacy. In order to see this connection, it will be helpful to review some of the linguistic work of Antisthenes, whose ethical views we have already touched on.<sup>72</sup> At *Euthydemus* 285c6–d1, Antisthenes' signature phrase, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντιλέγειν, becomes the foundation for another sophism, the denial of falsehood.<sup>73</sup> When Socrates hears the brothers introduce this topic, he immediately associates it with Protagoras, and goes on to draw a series of inferences from the thesis, "it is not possible to contradict"; for example, that it is impossible to speak or to think what is false.<sup>74</sup> While some of the associated topics in this section of the dialogue are Eleatic (e.g., it is not possible to think what is not), they also figure into (what we know of) Antisthenes' theory of accounts, according to which there is only one possible way of referring to any object of discourse, and this is by means of the *oikeios logos*, or proprietary account: "Wherefore Antisthenes mistakenly thought that there is no reference, except by means of the proprietary account, one [word] referring to

71. On this sequence in the dialogue, see Tarrant 1994, 115, who discusses the possible Cynic tendencies of Socrates' teaching on pleasure. See also Brancacci 1993, 35–55.

72. In this section of the article, I rely heavily on the meticulous work of Brancacci 1990, on Giannantonio 1990b, nota 38 (pp. 365–85), on the earlier and still important work of Caizzi 1966, on the unpublished dissertation of Professor Susan Prince (1997), and finally on Burnyeat's (1990) treatment of Antisthenes' theory of definition in his commentary on Plato's *Theaetetus*.

73. Arist. *Top.* 104b19–21: ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντιλέγειν, καθάπερ ἔφη Ἀντισθένης.

74. On the Eleatic aspect of the dialogue, see Caizzi 1996, 70 and *passim*.

one [non-linguistic referendum]. From this it results that it is impossible to gainsay another's logos" (SSR VA 152).<sup>75</sup>

One obvious convergence between Antisthenes' ethics and his philosophy of language is the *allotrion/oikeion* distinction, which forms the basis of his theory of reference as well as his principle of moral decision making. The *allotrion/oikeion* distinction thus functions as a global criterion, operating at once in the fields of epistemology, ontology, and ethics. Above, the ethical applications of this distinction were shown to relate to the Socratic sufficiency of virtue thesis, the Stoic doctrine of indifferents, and the Cynic practice of self-reliance. In this entire complex of ideas, the central philosophical quest, whether pragmatic or theoretical, revolves around the search for what is *oikeion*, what belongs essentially to the subject.

This search for the *oikeion* surfaces in Antisthenes' worries over the possibility of definition, preserved for us by Aristotle in *Metaphysica* 194b23–32, where he reports a puzzle propounded by the "Antisthenians and similarly uneducated persons to the effect that you cannot define what a thing is 'for a definition is a long logos' though you can teach what it is like."<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps, as has been suggested by Burnyeat, by the *oikeios logos* or proprietary account, Antisthenes meant something like a complete discursive mapping of all distinguishing features of an object, "which would be the one and only statement that was genuinely about o [the object] and nothing else. It would be a statement that was simultaneously the simplest adequate identification of o and an exhaustive description of o."<sup>77</sup> The problem with this notion of definition, as Aristotle saw,<sup>78</sup> is that it does not distinguish between accidental and essential features of an object, between "Socrates" and "musical Socrates."

And yet it is just this failure to distinguish between accidental and essential predicates that shows up in several of the sophisms in the *Euthydemus*. Recall that we saw one instance above of what Aristotle calls "fallacies connected with accident" (*Soph. el.* 166b28), where "father" is accidentally predicated of two distinct individuals. In another instance, we find Socrates agreeing that "whatever possesses a soul" is a living being (*Euthydemus* 302b1) and that those living beings over which he exercises property rights are said to be his. In this case, "being alive" is an essential predicate of "living being," while "belonging to a given owner" is accidental. Failure to observe this distinction results in Socrates being forced to claim that he exercises property rights over the civic gods.

Here the series of logical fallacies that create the opportunity for the dialogue to explore a number of Socratic theses (as we saw above, e.g., in

75. Arist. *Metaph.* 1024b26–34; Alexander in Arist. *Metaph.* 434.25–435.20.

76. For a very perceptive discussion of this fragment, see Prince 1997, 180–82, who suggests that the targets of this complaint may in fact be Platonists, whose notion of definition failed to supply any unity of species and genus.

77. Burnyeat 1990, 170.

78. Again, Arist. *Metaph.* 1024b26–34; Alexander in Arist. *Metaph.* 434.25–435.20. As Burnyeat 1990, 170, puts it: "these parts and those qualities make o what it is and are essential to its identity; the rest just happen to belong to o."

connection with the sufficiency of virtue thesis) broadly mirrors the ethical goal of the dialogue, which is the search for self-definition. When Dionysodorus asks, "Tell me, do you think you know what belongs to yourself?" (301e6), he announces that the theme of the dialogue is the inquiry into what is *oikeion* and what is *allotriion*.

In the dialogue, no answer is forthcoming. Socrates tries to point the brothers in the right direction for deepening their search, as when he mentions the soul (287) or when he extols wisdom and renounces external goods. But his hints are continually set aside as the brothers insist that "one's own" must be detachable property, that the word "mine" indicates a proprietary relationship with other objects. Self-predication (not just the Platonic question of whether the Beautiful is beautiful, but perhaps also the Cynic question of how to circumscribe the self) is the central theme of the dialogue, and failures in correct self-predication are the causes of both the logical and ethical errors committed by Dionysodorus and Euthydemus.

We saw above that Antisthenes explores a number of paradoxes associated with predication: is all true predication just tautology; is definition possible; are essential attributes distinguishable from accidental attributes; is an exhaustive description of an individual the only way to achieve unambiguous reference?<sup>79</sup> In many of these paradoxes, the quest for the *oikeion*, as an appropriate description or designation for a (possibly) extra-semantic entity is central. How does the subject of all our identity statements, those that begin "I am . . ." become adequately realized in the various predicates used to complete these statements? Part of the question for Antisthenes may be a search into the difficulties of how linguistic representation of the self is in any way possible. But that topic must be left for another occasion.

Overall the dialogue succeeds in showing us only what is not *oikeion*—it is evidently not the body or any of its possessions, nor is it any of the other so-called goods that appear on Socrates' initial list. Perhaps, as in *Letter 9* of Anacharsis with its parable of the empty ship floating without hindrance down the Danube, the very point of the dialogue is to emphasize this inability to locate the self. It is precisely the Cynic refusal to set up an *oikos*, or rather as we saw in Herodotus, the nomadic ability to carry one's *oikos*, that provides an explanation for what is left unsaid in the *Euthydemus*. One is reminded of the negative terms deployed by the Cynics to express their moral philosophy: "*adiaphoria, atuphia, apatheia* . . ."<sup>80</sup>

This failure to define the self, to itemize its constituents so as to capture uniquely that which belongs to the self and that which does not, has a particular interest for the student of Antisthenes. Such students will recall Antisthenes' puzzle over definition cited above: "to the effect that you cannot define what a thing is, 'for a definition is a long *logos*,' though you can teach what it is like." Although self-knowledge, or as Socrates puts it, knowledge

79. I am indebted to the dissertation of Professor Susan Prince for my acquaintance with Antisthenes' philosophy of language. My brief allusions to some of the issues raised by Antisthenes do not pretend to be any kind of adequate discussion of their complexities. Readers should consult Prince 1997, chap. 3, for some of these topics.

80. Porter 1996, 186.

that imparts "no knowledge but itself alone" (292d), is valorized in the *Euthydemus*, it finally eludes the one person who could be expected to have it: "We are just as far from knowing, or farther, what is that knowledge that will make us happy" (297e5).

Antisthenes is often thought to have held that every meaningful statement is an identity statement; the converse of this strict requirement is that no statement about the self can fully circumscribe it. The virtue that Antisthenes likens to an impregnable fortress, self-knowledge, if it purports to be a discursive and exhaustive knowledge of what does and does not belong to the self, will obviously prove elusive. But does not the *Euthydemus* precisely engage the reader in this fantasy of a kind of universal knowledge, both in Socrates' speculations about a knowledge that can impart happiness and in the brothers' fantastic claims—"Then you know everything, since you know something" (294a1)—about the knower who knows all things before he is even born?<sup>81</sup> This universal knowledge, in which language employs a lexicon that is an exact representation of every extralinguistic item, is not confined to the linguistic paradoxes explored in the *Euthydemus*. In the Socratic meditation on the knowledge that makes all human beings happy and in the eristic parody of this knowledge, we see traces of Antisthenes' theory of language. The *oikeios logos*, whether we construe it as a complete discursive mapping of the network of meanings, or as an exhaustive description of an extralinguistic reality, translates, in Hellenistic philosophy, into the unattainable rationality of the Stoic sage, while the autonomy that such a map would provide the sage approaches the Cynic idea of absolute self-reliance or independence.

#### CONCLUSION: SOCRATES AND THE CYNICS

What, after all, are we to make of the fact that certain Cynic icons appear in this dialogue—Heracles, Antisthenes, Scythian Nomads, and, finally, dogs? The convergence of all these themes in a single dialogue is perhaps too great to be a coincidence, given what we have come to expect from Plato's works of art. Yet it would be much too simplistic to claim that Plato here adumbrates Antisthenean theses or presents a mere tableau of Cynic *placita*. Nor do I advocate a return to the nineteenth century's pursuit of "Antisthenes sightings" in every Platonic dialogue. But if the *Euthydemus* presents evidence that Plato associates the Socratic philosopher Antisthenes with the Cynics or even regards him as the father of the dogs, then we must see this dialogue as helping to write the history of Socratic philosophy. All too often scholars who work on Socrates seize on self-consistency as the primary goal of the elenchus; and so, with this goal of self-consistency in mind they perhaps approach the Platonic Socrates looking for precisely this quality, attempting to recreate, if not the historical Socrates, then at least a monolithic Platonic Socrates. But there is no reason to think that Plato intended to portray a singular Socrates (after all, in the *Hippias Major*, Socrates speaks

81. Of course, phrasing it this way makes it sound like the theory of recollection, but there is not the space to pursue this comparison.

as if his evil doppelgänger regularly subjects him to physical abuse whenever he fails in the elenchus). There is even less reason to suppose that the Platonic Socrates was a systematic philosopher who relied primarily on a limited number of ethical theses. Rather, Socrates, whoever he was, and however multiple his identities, reminds us that we cannot fail to be inconsistent unless and until we sincerely look into the question of what is *oikeion*, of who or what we are.<sup>82</sup>

*University of Michigan*

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