

THE HERACLITEANISM OF AENESIDEMUS

JOHN M. RIST

THE CONCLUSIONS PROPOSED by this paper will be tentative, as is fitting in a discussion of one of the more interesting of the ancient Sceptics, but they will be offered as a solution to a problem of some importance in the history of Scepticism in antiquity which has often been avoided or "solved" unsatisfactorily. What follows could not have been written if we did not possess Dal Pra's excellent study of Aenesidemus,¹ but, although we must follow Dal Pra in many things, it is clear that certain difficulties still remain.

Most of our evidence about Aenesidemus' views—and the evidence is substantial in Diogenes Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, Photius, and elsewhere—leads us to treat him as a hard-line Sceptic, but in a few places Sextus attributes to him theories of a different kind. It is said that Aenesidemus regarded Scepticism as leading to Heracliteanism,² and that "following Heraclitus" he held various dogmatic views about the corporeal nature of time and of being, about the intellect and the nature of truth.³ Miss Charlotte Stough, the latest writer on Aenesidemus, finds it hard to reconcile Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism with his Scepticism, and proposes to leave it aside,⁴ though in fact she makes some important suggestions about apparently dogmatic positions of Aenesidemus which must be related in some way to his Heracliteanism.⁵ Miss Stough appears not to know the important discussion of the problem by Dal Pra.⁶ The crucial passage from which all interpreters have begun is from Sextus, as we have seen. We read that the supporters of Aenesidemus used to say that the Sceptic way of life is a road to Heraclitean philosophy, since the idea that opposite facts *appear* to be the case about a subject leads on to the view that opposite facts *are* true (*ὕπαρχειν*) about that subject itself. These neo-Heracliteans, Sextus continues, are to be distinguished from genuine Sceptics: Sceptics assert the appearance of opposite attributes; Heracliteans go on (*μετέρχονται*) to assert the reality of opposite attributes.

The first point about this is that neo-Heracliteanism is seen as a development of some kind of Scepticism. Sceptical arguments are used

¹M. dal Pra, *Lo Scetticismo greco* (Milan 1950) 276–330.

²Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 1.210–212. Following most interpreters I do not distinguish between Aenesidemus and the followers of Aenesidemus.

³Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 3.138; *Math.* 7.349 ff.; 8.8; 9.337; 10.216–217; 10.233.

⁴C. L. Stough, *Greek Scepticism: A Study in Epistemology* (California 1969) 10.

⁵*Ibid.* 93–97.

⁶*Op. cit.* (above, n. 1) 314–330.

to lead to it. In other words it would be false to assume that when Aenesidemus held views of this kind, he had disowned Scepticism, or on the other hand that he was not yet a Sceptic of some sort. Some of the older writers on the problem have supposed that Aenesidemus, after being a Pyrrhonist, lapsed (or developed) into dogmatism. Such is the view of Brochard:⁷ in his youth, says Brochard, Aenesidemus passed from the moderated Scepticism of the Academy to radical Scepticism. Why could he not have gone from Scepticism to dogmatism? The argument seems strong, and Brochard has done good service by eliminating the views of Zeller that Aenesidemus was merely misunderstood by Sextus Empiricus, and of Natorp that his Scepticism and Heracliteanism can be reconciled as an ultimate belief in phenomenalism. But Brochard himself makes the seemingly unfounded assumption that Aenesidemus' dogmatism must have *followed* his radical Scepticism. That, as Dal Pra has shown, need not be the case.⁸ Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism could have preceded the final version of his Scepticism. In other words a possible sequence of Aenesidemus' thought may be Academic Scepticism, Scepticism combined with Heracliteanism, radical (or Pyrrhonian) Scepticism of the kind described at length by Sextus and other sources. A look at the historical situation of Scepticism in the first century B.C. may help to establish this sequence more firmly.

We do not know much about Aenesidemus' life. Most sources say he came from Cnossos, but Photius disagrees.⁹ Photius does, however, say that he dedicated his work to a friend in the Academy who was a man of some importance at Rome, Lucius Tubero, and Brochard and Robin have rightly identified this figure with one of the philosophical and scholarly friends of Cicero.¹⁰ Naturally this dating has not been alone in the field. Zeller and others have supposed that Aenesidemus lived at the beginning of the Christian era. They argue that Cicero knows nothing of him, despite his interest in Scepticism. Therefore he is later than Cicero. Aristocles says that he lived in Alexandria *ἐχθὲς καὶ πρῶν*,¹¹ and Aristocles lived in the late second century A.D. At least the first century A.D. might make *ἐχθὲς καὶ πρῶν* sound more reasonable than the first century B.C. Maccoll indeed took Aristocles' words even more at their face value and dated Aenesidemus at A.D. 130.¹² But taking Aristocles at his word might suggest even this to be too early. In fact all Aristocles may mean is that Aenesidemus is a latter-day Sceptic, that is, a man

⁷V. Brochard, *Les Sceptiques Grecs* (Paris 1887) 280-289.

⁸*Op. cit.* (above, n. 1) 320.

⁹Photius *Myriobib.* 212 (169b).

¹⁰Brochard, *op. cit.* (above, n. 7) 241-246; L. Robin, *Pyrrhon et le Scepticisme grec* (Paris 1944) 137-139; Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.3.10; *Lig.* 7.21; 9.27. Cf. Gellius 1.22.7.

¹¹*Ap. Euseb. Praep. Evang.* 14.18.29.

¹²N. Maccoll, *The Greek Sceptics* (London, Cambridge 1869) 68-69.

who began a new direction different from that of the New Academy of Carneades and Clitomachus.

A stronger argument against a date in the first century B.C. is that Cicero speaks of the thought of Pyrrho as dead,¹³ but it should be observed that he is thinking of Pyrrho's ethical theories of indifference when he talks in this way. And we should admit that it is possible that Aenesidemus, who lived in Alexandria, was *not* known to Cicero, even though he was his contemporary. As Brochard has argued strongly, a phrase of Photius' suggests that Aenesidemus should in fact be placed in the first century B.C., the time of Aelius Tubero, the friend of Cicero. Photius tells us that in the first book of his *Pyrrhonean Discourses* Aenesidemus accused the New Academy of dogmatism. The philosophers of the Academy, he says, particularly those of the present Academy, are at times the purveyors of Stoic theories and, to tell the truth, they seem to be Stoics fighting against Stoics.¹⁴ The text cannot but remind us of the description of Antiochus of Ascalon which appears in Cicero's *Academica*. He was called an Academic, it is said, but if he had changed a few points he would have been a pure Stoic (*germanissimus Stoicus*).¹⁵ And Antiochus of Ascalon is not the only figure of this period to whom a section of Photius seems appropriate.

Another complaint of Aenesidemus, Photius tells us, is the general dogmatism of the Academy in other areas. With an obvious glance at Carneades himself, he observes that they dogmatize about probability, and he adds that their doubts only seem to be about *καταληπτική φαντασία*, that is, about the recognizable presentations which the Stoics held to be the criteria of truth. We should compare a passage of Sextus Empiricus about Philo of Larissa, Antiochus' predecessor as head of the Academy. For Philo, says Sextus, things (*τὰ πράγματα*) are unrecognizable (*ἀκατάληπτα*) by the Stoic criterion, that is, by recognizable presentations, but recognizable so far as concerns the nature of the things themselves.¹⁶ At first sight it might seem that this sentence of Sextus bears out the view of Aenesidemus. In the area of theory of knowledge, Philo seems to be implying that it is only the Stoic criterion which is inadequate. Other ways to the truth may be found. At this point it would be helpful to know exactly what Philo's position was and whether he is one of the targets of Aenesidemus' attack.

Dal Pra has argued, contrary to earlier writers on Philo, that his divergencies from the New Academy in the direction of dogmatism were not as great as has been supposed, that by conceding that things are

¹³Cf. *Fin.* 2.35; 5.73; etc. See further Brochard, *op. cit.* (above, n. 7) 244, n. 5.

¹⁴Phot. 212 (170a).

¹⁵Cic. *Acad.* 2.132; cf. Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 1.235.

¹⁶Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 1.235.

recognizable in so far as their nature is concerned he has conceded almost nothing, since no other approach to the problem of knowledge was even on the horizon.¹⁷ Cicero to some degree supports an interpretation of this sort, at least when discussing the position of Philo in the *Academica*. Cicero agrees with Sextus that Philo had no confidence in recognizable presentations and says that Philo's objection to them had led him into the position where he could not distinguish between what is knowable and what is not.¹⁸ Hence the result is that nothing can be grasped. This much would correspond with Dal Pra's view of Philo's basic scepticism; but Cicero then adds that the idea that nothing can be grasped was very far from what Philo wanted. In other words Cicero is agreeing with the obvious reading of Sextus that Philo thought that things themselves *could* be the objects of knowledge, but that the Stoic recognizable presentations were of no avail for this purpose.

Cicero's attitude seems to be that, if the Stoic theory of knowledge is rejected, Scepticism must result. It is an attitude typical of the New Academy. Recent scholarship, particularly that of Couissin,¹⁹ has shown us that the temper of the Scepticism of both Arcesilaus and Carneades is in fact a product of the Stoic theory. Academic theories about the suspension of judgment are to be clearly associated with the Stoic view that there are times when the wise man will suspend judgment; the argument about the criterion of truth is an argument largely about the Stoic criterion. In one interesting respect this should be noticed when we think of Carneades. It was the view of Carneades that the Stoics were wrong to suppose that any *φαντασῖαι* necessarily represent the objects from which they originate. Nevertheless, some representations are "clearer" and therefore more credible than others. We should, for practical purposes, rely on them as our guides to action. Now the term Carneades used for the credible representation was *εἰμφανσις*,²⁰ which means the reflection of an object as in a mirror. Hence, Carneades seems to have thought, we do see the objects themselves in their mirror-images—or at least it is very probable that we do. In other words we have access to the world of "things"; we are not merely prisoners in the world of sense-data. But our judgments about this world must necessarily be based on likelihood and cannot ever be regarded as certain truths.

The position of Philo should be related to this Carneadean theory. Philo too is saying that we have access to a real world, but that the Stoic

¹⁷Dal Pra, *op. cit.* (above, n. 1) 234–239.

¹⁸Cic. *Acad.* 2.18.

¹⁹J. Couissin, "L'Origine et l'évolution de l'ἐποχή," *REG* 42 (1929) 373–397; "Le Stoicisme de la Nouvelle Académie," *Rev. d'Histoire de la Phil.* 36 (1929) 241–276.

²⁰Sext. *Emp. Math.* 7.169.

criterion does not allow us to know what the nature of that world is. Thus far Dal Pra is right to think that the difference between Carneades and Philo is small. But Philo, according to Sextus, says that we can *grasp* the nature of things—something which Carneades would never have said; and Cicero similarly adds that Philo certainly did not wish to say that things cannot be *grasped* (*comprehendi*), even though, in Cicero's view, he unwillingly falls into that position.

In fact it was always open to a philosopher to offer other "criteria" than that proposed by the Stoics. It was only the preoccupation of the New Academy with Stoicism which could have led Cicero to think that if Philo rejected recognizable presentations he had no serious claim to access to the world at all. It was in a rather different context that we saw Aenesidemus complaining that the Academy were Stoics in disguise fighting against Stoics, but even when the Academy was not neo-Stoic it was apparently already thinking about the criterion (either pro or con) in the idiom worked out by Zeno and Chrysippus. There might seem to be no reason why Philo should not, for example, have fallen back on inference as a means of understanding τὰ πράγματα in themselves in an Epicurean manner, or at least considered the possibility of doing so. Do we know that he was so convinced that the Epicureans had been completely demolished by the arguments of the Stoics that he did not need to waste his time on them? Whatever may be the answer to that, however, we have to admit that despite the arguments of Dal Pra, Philo has exaggerated the dogmatic elements already present in the thought of Carneades when he admits that the nature of things can somehow be grasped. He has left the door open for further attempts to reach the certainty which Carneades had thought of as unattainable. And, as we have already recalled, his successor Antiochus moved more firmly in the dogmatic direction, becoming in the eyes of many almost indistinguishable from a Stoic.

If we work on the hypothesis that Aenesidemus dedicated his treatises to Tubero, the friend of Cicero, we shall have to recognize that his philosophical activities are to be dated to a period at which the Scepticism of the New Academy is breaking up. This squares well with the suggestion that he revolted against the stoicizing tendencies of the Academy. Presumably it was at some stage in the return to dogmatism that Aenesidemus rebelled. And if this is approximately what happened, we can see why he returned not to Carneades or to Philo, but, at least as he thought, to the views of a different kind of Sceptic, Pyrrho as interpreted by himself. He would be the more ready to proceed along this path if he thought that Carneades' positions could not be prevented from sliding into the neo-dogmatism first of Philo and then of Antiochus. The crucial issue, it seems, may have been whether Carneades was right

to suppose it highly likely that "things" are mirrored informatively in sense-data, or whether this was a baseless assumption. Aenesidemus' attention could have been drawn to this by Antiochus, who apparently argued that if we can distinguish false representations we must have a correct idea of what is false, not merely of what seems false. The point is that even to talk about the probability of going behind sense-data could be argued as a denial of the principles of scepticism.

Antiochus was apparently in Alexandria in 87/86;²¹ Aenesidemus philosophized, as we have seen, in Alexandria. Again, we must remember, we are dealing in probabilities. Aenesidemus could have been on the spot when Antiochus rejected Philo's moderate concessions to dogmatism to make a further plunge into Stoicism, a plunge which he alleged was a return to the original (i.e., Platonic) doctrines of the Academy. We can see then that the philosophical scene at the time which we suggest fits Aenesidemus is ideal for the appearance of a hard-line Sceptic who opposes the new trends among his former philosophical allies. The mood of the New Academy is now dogmatic; a man meeting that mood among his former philosophical associates is unlikely to reject it immediately and totally. It is psychologically more likely that he will adopt a kind of dogmatism himself, though of a less extreme and controversial kind, that is, of a different kind from the Stoicism which he might have thought Carneades had already disposed of.

Let us return to the crucial passage of Sextus Empiricus. Aenesidemus and his friends hold that the Sceptic way leads to Heracliteanism. Opposite appearances lead to a belief that opposite characteristics are to be predicated of the objects themselves and not merely of phenomena. Here we should notice a curious compromise between the positions of Carneades and Antiochus. According to Carneades sense-data can often be held to give a credible account of the nature of things. Antiochus for his part believes that to discriminate between appearances means that we can discriminate between things. Even Philo allows at least the theoretical possibility that things can be known in some way. If we accept from Carneades that appearances can mirror realities and agree with Philo against Antiochus that the Stoic criterion of recognizable presentations is inadequate, we are already approaching the reported position of Aenesidemus. All the Sceptics rely on the fact that judgment must be suspended because a proposition in favour of any theory can easily be opposed by another proposition of equal weight suggesting something else. Since this thesis is the nearest the Sceptics come to a dogmatic assertion of their views, what could be more natural than that some of them might take it as informative about the world? This seems to have been the position of the friends of Aenesidemus to whom Sextus

²¹Cic. *Acad.* 2.11.

refers. Let us admit the possibility (with Philo) that we can know something about things themselves (τὰ πράγματα), not merely about sense-data. A way of approaching this possibility might be to start with what we know about appearances; and what we know about appearances is that they are ambiguous: the same thing, for example, seems at different times or to different people bitter and sweet. If this contrary experience is a mark of appearances—and that seems to be as certain as anything can be—then it has an *a priori* claim to be a mark of things themselves. And to say that a thing *is* both bitter and sweet could sound very Heraclitean. Probability at least could thus lead the enquirer from Scepticism towards “Heraclitean” dogmatism—as it did, it seems, in the case of Aenesidemus.

It might be supposed that, in moving from the Stoicizing tendencies of the successors of Carneades to a brand of Heracliteanism, Aenesidemus was shifting a minimal distance, that is, that Heracliteanism in the first century B.C. could be read as itself a version of Stoicism, since so much of Stoic physics was claimed to be of Heraclitean origin. This attitude to the evidence receives no support from the kind of views Aenesidemus himself apparently regarded as Heraclitean. We hear, for example, that he believed that the first principle, according to Heraclitus, is air.²² The Stoic theories about “constructive fire” might seem more genuinely Heraclitean. In other words Aenesidemus’ Heracliteanism does not seem to reflect the Heracliteanism of the Stoics. Sharp disagreement with the Stoics can be seen in another area of the new Heracliteanism also. According to the Stoics time is an incorporeal; according to Aenesidemus’ version of Heraclitus it is a body, for “it does not differ from being and the first body (σῶμα)”. This theory seems to have been mentioned elsewhere in the works of Aenesidemus, but in particular to have occurred in a book called *Primary Introduction* (ἡ πρώτη εἰσαγωγή), which is only known from a single reference in Sextus.²³ Could it be that this work was written in Aenesidemus’ Heraclitean period, and that it became superseded when he moved on to a more radical variety of Scepticism? There is a further theory of “Heraclitus” to which Aenesidemus refers; again it seems peculiarly un-Stoic. Sextus remarks that before Aenesidemus it had been held by the Peripatetic Strato.²⁴ The theory is that the mind (διάνοια) is “outside” the body—this presumably means separate from the rest of the body rather than a condition of the body, a view attributed by Sextus to Democritus—and that it is to be identified with the senses as something that “peers through” the sense organs.

²²Sext. Emp. *Math.* 10.233; *Pyr.* 3.138.

²³Sext. Emp. *Math.* 10.216.

²⁴Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.350. Other “Heraclitean” theories included a fresh analysis of motion (Sext. Emp. *Math.* 10.38).

It is not easy to see what Aenesidemus meant by saying that the mind is "outside" the body, but we should probably explain our passage in relation to other sections of Sextus where it is said that "according to Heraclitus" we become intelligent by breathing in (*δι' ἀναπνοῆς*) the divine reason (*λόγος*).²⁵ This doctrine looks like the Heracliteanism of Aenesidemus rather than the Heracliteanism of Heraclitus, and it helps us to improve our understanding of the nature of the neo-Sceptical theory. Mind is outside us, that is, it is shared by all men in so far as they breathe it in. A related idea is attributed to "the Stoics and Aenesidemus" in Tertullian²⁶ in a passage where it is argued that the *anima* is produced in a new-born child as a result of its contact with air immediately after birth.

Unbeknown, apparently, to the latest scholar to study Aenesidemus, Brochard had already realized that Aenesidemus' theory about the "common" nature of the mind helps us to explain another difficult section of Sextus. It runs as follows: "The followers of Aenesidemus (following Heraclitus) and Epicurus fell back on sensibles (as "true") but differed in explaining their position. The friends of Aenesidemus say that there is a difference among phenomena. Some appear to all men in common, others to individuals separately. Those that appear to all men in common are true, the other kind are false. Hence that which does not escape (*τὸ μὴ λήθον*) common opinion (*τὴν κοινὴν γνώμην*) is by a change of negative prefix (*α* for *μη*) called true (*ἀληθές*)."²⁷ The point is that what the common opinion of all recognizes in the same way can be called true. As Miss Stough realizes, there are two ways in which this passage can be interpreted.²⁸ Either Aenesidemus is arguing that phenomena which appear to all provide a criterion of truth, or he is saying that we can re-define the word "true" to mean "phenomena appearing to all in common." Miss Stough prefers the second of these alternatives because she wishes to harmonize Aenesidemus' argument here with his Ten Tropes in favour of the suspension of judgment, that is, with a radically Sceptical position. But the passage reports views specifically attributed by Sextus to Aenesidemus when he is following Heraclitus; that is, it does not need to be harmonized with radical Scepticism, but with a Scepticism which leads to a specific kind of dogmatism. And in fact, as Brochard saw, an argument that common opinion (*κοινὴ γνώμη*) is the

²⁵Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.129. Cf. Brochard, *op. cit.* (above, n. 7) 275.

²⁶Tert. *De Anima* 25. Robin (*op. cit.* [above, n. 10] 171) tries unconvincingly to suggest that Tertullian (or Soranus, his source) knows nothing about Aenesidemus and is merely assimilating him to the Stoics.

²⁷Sext. Emp. *Math.* 8.8.

²⁸Stough, *op. cit.* (above, n. 4) 96-97.

criterion is in accordance with a Heraclitean view of the common intellect Heraclitus calling this common intellect a common *logos*. It is clear outside the body and shared by all men. Aenesidemus would find elsewhere in Sextus²⁹ that the Heracliteans—in this context he clearly means Aenesidemus and his followers—used the example of bitter and sweet when talking about the common opinion (here *πρόληψις*) of mankind; it is probably not by chance that Sextus himself uses this very argument when he rejects the suggestion that common opinion is any kind of criterion at all.³⁰ He is aiming at Aenesidemus and he is rejecting the “Heraclitean” view as in complete contradiction to the basic principles of Scepticism. It is very hard to imagine that a radical Sceptic could suddenly adopt common opinion as a criterion, which would be the case if Aenesidemus progressed in time from radical Scepticism to Heracliteanism; nor is it easy to believe that, at the same time as he argued that there is nothing which is true, he held that common opinion is the criterion of truth.³¹ Of course, this difficulty would not arise if in the passage about common opinion he was only talking about re-defining the word “true” to refer to phenomena (sense-data) alone, but he is not doing that. On the contrary he is talking about truth in a Heraclitean context where a theory of the nature of mind provides access to the world itself and enables us to transcend phenomena. In short, we have to conclude that the criterion of common assent and the Heraclitean phase of Aenesidemus’ thought in general is neither contemporaneous with his radical Scepticism nor a development of it, but preceded it. In this preceding period Aenesidemus was using traditional Sceptic positions to advance to Heracliteanism. Later, we argue, he decided that these same positions, presumably developed further, provided no basis for any dogmatism, however limited.

It can probably be assumed that, when Aenesidemus was writing his *Pyrrhonian Discourses*, his Heracliteanism had vanished. The contents of these books are well known to us both through Sextus and through Photius. We have no reason to believe that the *Pyrrhonian Discourses* contained any Heracliteanism at all. Yet one of the ideas which had helped to produce that Heracliteanism can still be seen. In the fourth book Aenesidemus, arguing against phenomenal “signs” of a meta-

²⁹Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 1.211.

³⁰Sext. Emp. *Math.* 8.54.

³¹Sext. Emp. *Math.* 8.40. Miss Stough’s attempt to be rid of this text (*op. cit.* [above, n. 4] 95, n. 33) lacks credibility. She says that Aenesidemus may be only repudiating “the true” as understood by Stoics and Epicureans, but Aenesidemus is said to reject any notion of approaching truth through what is sensible or intelligible. In 8.8, on the other hand, Aenesidemus is trying to reach the truth through sensibles which appear to all men in common.

physical reality beyond what we can know through the senses, presents his case as follows:³² If *φαινόμενα* appear alike to everyone in a similar condition, and if signs are *φαινόμενα*, then signs appear alike to everyone in a similar condition. But signs do not appear alike to everyone in a similar condition, while *φαινόμενα* do appear alike to everyone in a similar condition; therefore signs are not *φαινόμενα*. (If p and q, then r; but not-r and p, then not-q.) Explaining this argument Sextus says that by *φαινόμενα* Aenesidemus means *αἰσθητά*, sense-data. What Aenesidemus is trying to show is that the senses do not give signs of anything beyond themselves. Thus even if men in similar circumstances receive similar data from their senses, they cannot go behind this to any underlying reality. This is a purely Sceptic position, and it should be compared with Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism. Both when he is following Heraclitus and in the *Pyrrhonian Discourses* Aenesidemus accepts that we can share sense-data with our fellow men. But in his purely Sceptic period he argues that common experience (the fact of *φαινόμενα* appearing alike to all men) does not afford us any basis for metaphysical speculation because signs are not phenomena. In his Heraclitean period, on the other hand, he held that what is common experience acts as a kind of criterion. For the radically Sceptic Aenesidemus only a sign would justify inference beyond sense-data, and signs (as distinct from sense-data) do not appear alike and are not indeed sense-data themselves. Therefore granting some common sense-data, we cannot transcend Scepticism. The switch from dogmatism to Scepticism is accompanied by a sceptical analysis of the relation between common sense-data and what the dogmatists would need, common signs.

We should notice, of course, that in an important respect the Heraclitean phase of Aenesidemus' thought appears to be confused. In one passage Aenesidemus holds that because opposite predicates appear to be attributable to a given subject, therefore they (or similar opposites) are attributable in fact. Elsewhere, so far from arguing that the criterion is to be found where individuals observe things differently, or presumably where for any other reason opposite predicates can be attributed in different circumstances to the same subject, he holds that it is when appearances are common that we have access to reality. And perhaps there is more even than the obvious contradiction here; there seems also to be a further logical error which Aenesidemus later corrected. This correction would in fact lead beyond Heracliteanism itself if Aenesidemus thought that his Heracliteanism was involved in confusion. The point is that in the talk about common appearances in a Heraclitean context, Aenesidemus does not seem to distinguish between *φαινόμενα* themselves and the signs which they may involve. He seems to think that common

³²Sext. Emp. *Math.* 8.25.

φαινόμενα, or in the other passage a realization of opposing appearances, *indicate* something certain about the things which lie behind the phenomena; this could only be the case if φαινόμενα were signs or necessarily entailed signs. But in the *Pyrrhonian Discourses*, as we have seen, he argues that signs are not φαινόμενα at all, that is, that they are not recognized by the senses. Nor is he prepared to admit that any common understanding of their meaning necessarily follows from the mere fact that they are signs. Certainly people treat φαινόμενα as signs, but there is no justification for this procedure.

We have argued for a sequence of probabilities in this paper. The sequence is as follows: Aenesidemus' activity in the first century B.C., the time of Cicero's friend Tubero, makes sense in terms of the philosophical problems under discussion by Philo and Antiochus. Aenesidemus implies himself that he broke with the Academy over its reversion to Stoicism. We have argued that he may have recognized the difficulties inherent in the Academic tendency to view Scepticism as a refutation of Stoicism and Stoicism alone. Aenesidemus' first reaction was to follow Philo in looking for a new means of getting behind sense-data and dealing with πράγματα, the objects supposedly lying behind sense-data. From here his Sceptical training led him into a "Heraclitean" doctrine about the reality of opposite characteristics in the same subject. Finally he came to reject the view that we can progress behind sense-data at all. The mere existence of opposite qualities in our experience of sense-data is no justification for a Heraclitean resolution of the problem of an ultimate or underlying reality. Heraclitus might be right, but it is better to suspend judgment, and, with the Pyrrhonists, say οὐδὲν ὀρίζω.³³

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO

³³It will be apparent that the thesis argued here bears some resemblances to that presented by Saisset (*Le scepticisme: Aénésidème, Pascal, Kant* [Paris 1865]), but Saisset thinks that Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism is of little interest or importance. According to Saisset, when Aenesidemus went over to Pyrrhonism, he tried to cover up his former dogmatism by saying that Heracliteanism is the best of all possible dogmatisms.