

## CHRYSIPPUS ON VIRTUOUS ABSTENTION FROM UGLY OLD WOMEN (PLUTARCH, SR 1038E–1039A)

### I

Plutarch, at *De Stoicorum repugnantibus* 1038e–1039a (= *SVF* iii. 211), quotes and briefly discusses a fragment from Chrysippus' *On Zeus* (*Περὶ τοῦ Διός*). This quotation is to some extent paralleled by the scrap, taken from Chrysippus' *On the Gods* (*Περὶ Θεῶν*), which immediately follows at SR 1039a (= *SVF* iii. 212). Both quotations are again referred to by Plutarch at *De communibus notitiis* 1061a (a testimony also included in *SVF* iii. 212). Although the correct constitution of the text is controversial, it is at least clear that the fragment from the *On Zeus* deals with the fact that not all virtuous acts are *ipso facto* also praiseworthy. Plutarch characteristically creates a first and more general contradiction between the *On Zeus* text and other passages in which Chrysippus argued that virtue and vice do not admit of gradations.<sup>1</sup> In addition, he creates a specific contradiction between it and another quotation, this time from the *On the Honourable* (*Περὶ Καλοῦ*), in which Chrysippus seems to draw the conclusion that the good is praiseworthy.<sup>2</sup>

As it is, the *On Zeus* fragment itself has up till now mainly been the subject of textual criticism by the editors of Plutarch's text, probably because from a philosophical point of view it was thought to represent a rather uninteresting piece of casuistry.<sup>3</sup> It has generally been assumed that the text as transmitted was unsound. Although the emendations proposed in Wyttenbach's early nineteenth-century edition were usually taken over by subsequent editors, the resulting text still did not satisfy everybody. Pohlenz even inserted an obelus and advocated some additional changes;<sup>4</sup> yet other emendations were proposed by Cherniss.<sup>5</sup> It appears, therefore, that the problem of the constitution of the text still deserves our attention. In the next section I shall argue (contrary to the prevailing opinion of editors) that the MSS. reading of the Chrysippean fragment can by and large be made sense of, and that at least some of the proposed emendations are unnecessary if not patently wrong.

The final section of this paper briefly studies the philosophical context of the fragment. I shall deal in particular with the question whether and to what extent Plutarch does justice to Chrysippus by the way he presents and attacks the latter's alleged views. It will turn out, or so I believe, that once again Plutarch's presentation is rather hostile and one-sided. These findings will at the same time allow us to add some comments on a passage in Sextus, *Adversus Mathematicos* 9.153 (= *SVF* iii. 274), which to a degree resembles the *On Zeus* fragment, as well as on the rival interpretation endorsed by Irwin.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the whole of Plutarch, SR 1038c–1039d.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, SR 1039c (= *SVF* iii. 29).

<sup>3</sup> The only treatment of its philosophical aspects which is known to me is T. Irwin, 'Stoic and Aristotelian Conceptions of Happiness', in M. Schofield, G. Striker (edd.), *The Norms of Nature* (Paris, 1986), 205–45, pp. 211–12 briefly discussed at the end of the present paper.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Pohlenz, 'Plutarchs Schriften gegen die Stoiker', *Hermes* 74 (1939), 1–33, 10 n. 1; for the resulting reading of the text see also M. Pohlenz, R. Westman, *Plutarchi Moralia* vi. 2 (Leipzig, 1959), p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> H. Cherniss (ed.), *Plutarch's Moralia* xiii. 2 (London, 1976), p. 458.

## II

As a starting point for our discussion we shall take the Greek text as printed in the most recent critical edition, namely Cherniss' edition in vol. xiii. 2 of the Loeb Plutarch:<sup>6</sup>

...ἐπαινεῖν δὲ μὴ πᾶν τὸ πραττόμενον κατ' ἀρετὴν κελεύειν ἐμφαίνει τινὰ τῶν κατορθωμάτων διαφοράν. λέγει δὲ οὕτως ἐν τῷ περὶ τοῦ Δίος. ἔργων γὰρ κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς ὄντων οἰκείων<sup>7</sup> ἔστι τὰ <μὴ> προενεχθέντα<sup>8</sup> καὶ τούτων οἷον ἀνδρείως τὸν δάκτυλον ἐκτείνει καὶ ἐγκρατῶς ἀποσχέσθαι δυσθανατώσεως γραδός, καὶ ἀπροπτῶτως ἀκοῦσαι τοῦ τὰ τρία τέσσαρα [μὴ]<sup>9</sup> εἶναι τελέως· τινὰ<sup>10</sup> ἐμφαίνει ψυχρίαν ὅ διὰ τῶν τοιούτων ἐπαινεῖν τινὰς ἐγχειρῶν καὶ ἐγκωμιάζειν.

Cherniss' translation of this passage runs as follows:

... by his injunction not to praise every act performed in accordance with virtue he indicates that there is some difference in right actions. This is what he says in the treatise *On Zeus*: 'For, although deeds done in accordance with the virtues are congenial, even among these there are those that are <not> cited as examples, such as courageously extending one's finger and continently abstaining from an old crone with one foot in the grave and hearing without precipitate assent that three is exactly four; – one who undertakes to praise and eulogize people by means of such examples gives evidence of a kind of insipidity.'

Wytttenbach's emendation *οἰκείων* for the MSS. *οἰκείον* has been accepted by all editors. Indeed, it has to be admitted that the only way to make sense of the transmitted *οἰκείον* is to assume either (1) that we are dealing with a rather harsh *ellipse* of the supplementary infinitive *ἐπαινεῖν* ('it is fitting (*οἰκείον*) to praise...'), or (2) that such a supplementary infinitive was suppressed in the course of the transmission of the text. Palaeographically the latter possibility seems hard to account for, whereas (1) would leave us with fairly odd Greek. Moreover, Wytttenbach's emendation certainly has some *prima facie* transcriptional plausibility, confusion of *ο* and *ω* (due to pronunciation) being not uncommon in the manuscripts. In this particular case the occurrence of the word *ἔστι* directly after the original *οἰκείων* may well have caused confusion with the familiar expression *οἰκείον ἔστι*.

Still, it should not be overlooked that the resultant phrase, though stylistically and syntactically correct, is difficult to make sense of. If we follow Cherniss' interpretation – reading, that is, the phrase *ἔργων...οἰκείων* as a genitive absolute and concomitantly translating *οἰκείων*, in its specifically Stoic technical sense, as 'congenial' – we will have to admit that it is not immediately clear why Chrysippus would have introduced the notion of the 'congenial' in this particular context. As Plutarch's introduction of the fragment – as well as the parallel fragment from the *Περὶ Θεῶν*<sup>11</sup> – indicates, the point Chrysippus wanted to make was not so much that some deeds are *congenial*, while not being praiseworthy, but rather that some deeds are *virtuous* (i.e. that they are *katorthomata*) while still not praiseworthy. Of course virtuous actions are *ipso facto* also congenial, but the reverse does not hold:<sup>12</sup> the

<sup>6</sup> See previous note.

<sup>7</sup> *οἰκείων* Wytttenbach: *οἰκείον* MSS.

<sup>8</sup> ἔστι τὰ <μὴ> προενεχθέντα Cherniss: ἔστι τὰ προενεχθέντα (προσενεχθέντα g) MSS.: ἔστι τιν' ἀποπροαχθέντα Pohlenz.

<sup>9</sup> [μὴ] secl. Wytttenbach (followed by von Arnim).

<sup>10</sup> τελέως τίνα g: τελέως τινὰ cett.: τελέως <τε> τιν' Pohlenz.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Plutarch, SR 1039a, where the following quotation from Chrysippus' *Περὶ Θεῶν* is presented: ...ἔτι γὰρ οἶμαι...τοὺς ἐπαίνους ἀλλοτριώσεσθαι κατὰ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν συμβαινόντων ἀπ' ἀρετῆς κτλ.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *Comm. Not.* 1070a (= SVF iii. 123), τὰ αὐτὰ πράγματα...οἰκεία καὶ οὐκ ἀγαθὰ, and the polemical remark at ps.-Alex. *De An. Mant.* 167, 13ff. Bruns (= SVF iii. 145), τὰ οἰκεία προηγμένα καὶ εὐχρήστα καὶ ἀξίαν ἔχοντα πρὸς τί ποτε ταύτας ἔχει τὰς ὀνομασίας, εἰ μὴδὲν συνεργεῖ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν;

classes of virtuous actions on the one hand and of congenial actions on the other are not coextensive.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, if we want to retain the smoothly running Greek sentence resulting from Wyttenbach's emendation, I would at least propose to interpret ἔργων...οἰκείων not as a genitive absolute, but as a *genitivus partitivus* going with ἔστι τὰ προενεχθέντα ('among the deeds which are congenial in accordance with the virtues there are those which are cited as examples').<sup>14</sup> In this interpretation the expression κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς aptly qualifies the word οἰκείων, so that there is no implication that the mere congeniality of the acts is opposed to their lack of praiseworthiness. Nevertheless, though on this interpretation Chrysippus' use of οἰκείων is not *inappropriate* (as it would seem to be on Cherniss' interpretation), it still appears to be *redundant*: why did Chrysippus not just speak of deeds which are κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν?<sup>15</sup>

It will be clear that these objections do not apply if the transmitted reading οἰκείον – which in combination with ἔστι would simply bear the non-technical meaning of 'it is fitting' or 'it is appropriate'<sup>16</sup> – is retained. Moreover, there is another strong argument in favour of the MSS. reading, which editors seem to have overlooked. There can hardly be any doubt that Plutarch (or his source) did read οἰκείον, since he elsewhere paraphrases the passage at issue by saying that according to Chrysippus it is ἀλλότριον, i.e. that it is *not* οἰκείον (ἀλλότριον being invariably used as the opposite of οἰκείον) to praise anyone for the deeds described in the actual fragment.<sup>17</sup> It appears, in other words, that either (1) Plutarch (or, for that matter, his source) had a version of Chrysippus' text at his disposal which *did* in fact contain the infinitive ἐπαινεῖν and that he himself left it out,<sup>18</sup> or (2) that he faithfully quoted the Chrysippean text while having no trouble understanding the elliptical sentence. I propose, therefore, to stick to the transmitted οἰκείον and to assume that the infinitive ἐπαινεῖν has to be supplied in thought.<sup>19</sup>

The next thing which appears to have bothered the subsequent editors is the transmitted τὰ προενεχθέντα. Pohlenz here even inserted a dagger and suggested

<sup>13</sup> To be sure, Chrysippus at times spoke as if he restricted the congenial to what is strictly speaking ἀγαθόν, i.e. to the actions of the wise; thus, at Plutarch, *SR* 1038b (= *SVF* iii. 674) we find Chrysippus saying that τῷ μὲν ἀστείῳ ἀλλότριον οὐδὲν τῷ δὲ φαύλῳ οὐδὲν οἰκείον ἐστίν. Such statements, however, should be viewed against the background of familiar Stoic sweeping statements of the kind that only the wise is 'truly free', 'truly king' etc. In a similar fashion only the actions of the wise may be said to be *truly* congenial. (Note, by the way that this very contrast between 'congenial' and 'truly congenial' is skilfully exploited by Plutarch at *SR* 1038b.) However, even if the quotation from *On Zeus*, which is discussed in the text above, uses the word 'congenial' in this restricted sense, it remains unclear why Chrysippus should introduce the contrast congenial/not praiseworthy instead of simply speaking of deeds which are *virtuous* without being praiseworthy.

<sup>14</sup> On my interpretation of προενεχθέντα see below, note 22.

<sup>15</sup> See above, n. 13.

<sup>16</sup> For yet another instance of this non-technical use of οἰκείον by Chrysippus see Plutarch, *SR* 1035c, where a quotation from Chrysippus' *Φυσικαὶ Θέσεις* (= *SVF* iii. 68) contains the word οἰκειότερον in the sense of 'more suitable'.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *Comm. Not.* 1061a (= *SVF* iii. 212): λέγει...Χρύσιππος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τοῦ Διὸς συγγράμματι...ψυχρὸν εἶναι καὶ ἀτοπον καὶ ἀλλότριον τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀπ' ἀρετῆς συμβαινόντων ἐπαινεῖν. Compare also the passage from *Περὶ Θεῶν* quoted above (note 11), where Chrysippus himself speaks of the danger that τοὺς ἐπαινούς will ἀλλοτριώσεσθαι when deeds like abstaining from an old crone are being praised.

<sup>18</sup> Note that the phrase with which Plutarch introduces the fragment already contains the word ἐπαινεῖν.

<sup>19</sup> Incidentally, it should be noted that in antiquity Chrysippus was well known for his uncouth style; cf. Diog. Laert. 7.180 (= *SVF* ii. 1): ...τὴν λέξιν οὐ κατῶρθωσε; also Cicero's verdict, *De Oratore* 1.50 (= *SVF* ii. 26) that Chrysippus ...non habuerit hanc dicendi...facultatem.

altering the MSS. reading into τὰ ἀποπροαχθέντα.<sup>20</sup> However, as was shown by Cherniss, this emendation is unacceptable. The use of ἀποπροαχθέντα – normally speaking actions which are morally *indifferent*, but which are nevertheless in general not to be recommended – would be out of place in a context dealing with *virtuous* actions which are merely not praiseworthy (not being praiseworthy of course does not imply that they are actions people should be dissuaded from).<sup>21</sup> Rather, as Cherniss pointed out, the use of προενεχθέντα is fitting in the present context, one of the attested meanings of προφέρειν being ‘to cite as an example’.<sup>22</sup> This, however, leaves us with the problem that the examples actually adduced are precisely examples of actions which are *not* προενεχθέντα. For this reason Cherniss’ proposal to read τὰ <μῇ> προενεχθέντα surely has some *prima facie* appeal, even if there is no obvious reason for the negative to have fallen out in the transmission.<sup>23</sup> Before pursuing this further, it should be noted that yet another problematic passage is constituted by the words τοῦ τὰ τρία τέσσαρα [μῇ] εἶναι τελέως τινὰ κτλ. The deletion of [μῇ] appears to be obligatory if the verb εἶναι is taken – as indeed it has usually been – to belong with τὰ τρία τέσσαρα. For, given what seems to be the required meaning of ἀπροπτώτως (‘without precipitate assent’, as Cherniss correctly translates),<sup>24</sup> the example has to refer to someone wisely withholding precipitate assent to the proposition that three *does equal* four (τὰ τρία τέσσαρα εἶναι), not, of course, to the proposition claiming that it does *not* (τὰ τρία τέσσαρα μὴ εἶναι).

However, I think there is a convenient way of reading the transmitted text which renders both Cherniss’ addition of <μῇ> before προενεχθέντα and Wyttenbach’s deletion of [μῇ] before εἶναι superfluous. For one could read a *comma* after προενεχθέντα, taking the subsequent καὶ τούτων as a partitive genitive going with μῇ

<sup>20</sup> See above, note 4.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Cherniss, *op. cit.*, p. 458, n. 5. Irwin, *art. cit.*, pp. 211–12, note 9, proposes to read τὰ προαχθέντα, a reading which is susceptible to the same objections as the one suggested by Pohlenz.

<sup>22</sup> In addition to the parallels adduced by Cherniss (*viz.* Plutarch, *Pelop.* 289a and Aristotle, *Cat.* 4a 12) one could point to Aristotle, *EN* 1173b21 (πρὸς δὲ τοὺς προφέροντας τὰς ἐπονειδίστους τῶν ἡδονῶν λέγοι τις ἂν κτλ.) and *Pol.* 1288a20. Note that in principle τὰ προενεχθέντα might just refer to ‘the examples just adduced’, i.e. to actual examples in Chrysippus’ original text. However, I would suggest that in the present case the word has a more general meaning: ‘the deeds which are [*sc.* generally] cited as exemplary’ (cf. Plutarch, *Comm. Not.* 1075a: οἱ γοῦν ἄθεοι προσαγορευθέντες οὗτοι). Thus it would appear that the προφέρειν (or προφέρεισθαι) to which Chrysippus refers is in some way connected with what is elsewhere called σεμνύνεσθαι: the wise man may be proud of his deeds and refer to them as an example, as appears from the following passage from the third book of Chrysippus’ *On Nature*, *ap.* Plutarch, *SR* 1038c (= *SVF* iii. 526): ὥσπερ τῷ Διὶ προσήκει σεμνύνεσθαι ἐπ’ αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ βίῳ... οὕτω τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς πᾶσι ταῦτα προσήκει κτλ.; see also Chrysippus *ap.* Plutarch, *SR* 1039c (= *SVF* iii. 29). I would therefore surmise that προενεχθέντα is the Greek equivalent of the *prae se ferendum* which is mentioned as one of the characteristic properties of the Stoic good at Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 5.43 (part of *SVF* iii. 37) and which is there also connected – *via* the *gloriosum* (= σεμνόν) – with the *laudabile* (ἐπαινετόν): ‘quod tale autem (*sc.* *prae se ferendum*), id etiam gloriosum; si vero gloriosum, certe laudabile.’ On the texts here referred to see also below, note 30.

<sup>23</sup> Another solution was opted for by Bréhier, *Les Stoiciens* (Paris, 1962), p. 102, who apparently assumed that the word οἶον did not introduce a number of examples of προενεχθέντα, but that it should be connected with the clause τίνα... ἐγκωμιάζειν (probably reading τίνα, thus creating a somewhat loosely constructed sentence which he translates (*loc. cit.*) as follows: ‘...par exemple allonger courageusement le doigt, s’abstenir par continence d’une vieille près de la mort, comprendre sans faillir que trois n’est pas quatre, quelle vanité de nous faire un mérite de telles choses et d’en faire l’éloge’).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. e.g. Diog. Laert. 7.46 (= *SVF* ii. 130) where ἀπροπτωσία is defined as ἐπιστήμη τοῦ πότε δεῖ συγκατατίθεσθαι.

εἶναι ('to those...do not belong'), and interpreting the whole phrase *καὶ τούτων...εἶναι* as an *accusativus cum infinitivo*. In that case the acts exemplified figure as the subjects of εἶναι: 'and to those (i.e. the *προενεχθέντα* just mentioned) acts such as courageously extending one's finger...and hearing without precipitate assent "Three equals four" do not belong'.<sup>25</sup>

At this point it might be objected that the quotation itself contains no verb on which the accusative – and – infinitive construction could depend, so that the shift from a finite verbal form (ἐστί) in the first sentence to a construction with an infinitive in the second is extremely abrupt. However, such shifts are actually not that uncommon in Greek.<sup>26</sup> More importantly, a very close parallel can be found in another Chrysippean fragment, a passage preserved by Galen from the first book of Chrysippus' *On the Soul*, where the phrase ἡ ψυχὴ πνεύμα ἐστί (indicative) σύμφυτον ἡμῖν συνεχές παντὶ τῷ σώματι διήκον is followed by ...ταύτης...τὸ διήκον...εἰς τὴν τραχεῖαν ἀρτηρίαν φωνὴν εἶναι (infinitive) κτλ.<sup>27</sup> At the very least this proves that – especially in the present case, where the full context is lacking anyway and where we do not know whether the preceding sentences contained a verb on which the infinitive construction could depend – one should not *a priori* assume that the text as transmitted cannot have been what Chrysippus actually wrote.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, contrary to what has been suggested by Cherniss, the word *τελέως* should

<sup>25</sup> In that case the expression τὰ τρία τέσσαρα ('three equals four') lacks a verb, but the suppression of finite forms of εἶναι in such cases is not exceptional.

<sup>26</sup> Such a shift from a finite indicative to an infinitive may have different explanations on different occasions. Thus (1) a writer may be tempted to shift to a construction with an infinitive because the preceding context implicitly contains a verb which may be thought of as governing the infinitive construction (see e.g. Sextus, *P* 1.232, where it is said of Arcesilaus that ...οὔτε κατὰ πίστιν ἢ ἀπιστίαν προκρίνει τι ἕτερον ἑτεροῦ, ἀλλὰ περὶ πάντων ἐπέχει. καὶ τέλος μὲν εἶναι τὴν ἐποχὴν κτλ., where the infinitive in the latter phrase may be thought to depend on a 'he thinks' which is implicit in the two verbs προκρίνει and ἐπέχει). Alternatively, (2) a sentence with a finite verbal form may constitute a break – as it were by way of an 'aside' – in an otherwise coherent series of (accusative and) infinitives. Or (3) the shift may be inexplicable and irregular (for some examples in the tragedians see A. F. Braunlich, 'Notes on the Text of Euripides', *AJPh* 83 (1962), 405–6). I would suggest that in the present case we are dealing with an example of either (2) or (3).

<sup>27</sup> Galen, *PHP* 2, p. 170, 9ff. De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 885). It is true that here also an attempt has been made to smooth the construction and read φωνὴν <φάμεν> εἶναι (Müller, followed by von Arnim), but this addition, appealing though it may at first glance appear, badly fits the rest of the sentence (which contains a second infinitive which can hardly be dependent on φάμεν) and has been rightly rejected in De Lacy's critical edition. A somewhat different, but no less harsh instance can be found in the Chrysippean fragment at *PHP* 2, p. 104, 29ff. De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 895): οὕτως δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐγὼ λέγομεν, κατὰ τοῦτο δεικνύντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐν ᾧ φαίνεσθαι διάνοιαν εἶναι κτλ. De Lacy, *ad loc.*, comments: 'A verb of saying or thinking must govern the infinitive φαίνεσθαι. Perhaps Chrysippus means that persons who point to their chest when they say "I" are saying, in effect, that that thought appears to be there. Chrysippus' Greek is difficult at best.'

<sup>28</sup> Alternatively, as the Editors have pointed out to me, we could take the infinitive with οἰκείον. Note, however, that also in this case we would be left with an oddly constructed sentence ('it is fitting (for us) to praise...and that among the *προενεχθέντα*...do not belong'). On the other hand this reading has the advantage of explaining the infinitive as well as the use of μὴ instead of οὐ. On balance, I slightly prefer the interpretation proposed in the text, especially since the infinitive is perhaps not *that* anomalous (on which see the previous notes) whereas μὴ instead of οὐ, particularly with infinitives, is not at all uncommon in Hellenistic Greek: cf. E. Schwyzler, A. Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik* (München, 1949), pp. 594–5. I found some comparably 'irregular' occurrences of μὴ (and the compound μηδέν) in fragments from Chrysippus' *On the Soul* in Galen *PHP* 3, p. 200, 29 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 891): οὕτω δὲ λέγεσθαι καὶ μηδὲν αὐτοῖς τούτων καταβαίνειν; *PHP* 3, p. 202, 28 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 892): λέγομεν μὴ καταβαίνειν τὰ λεγόμενα; *PHP* 3, p. 192, 19 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 902): καθ' ὃ φάμεν μὴ ἔχειν τινὰς ἐγκέφαλον.

be taken to emphasize the following rather than the preceding words. It is preferable not to punctuate before the enclitic *τινα*. And, it may be added, this gives better sense anyway.<sup>29</sup> Thus we should translate: 'One who undertakes to ... gives perfect (τελέως) evidence of a kind of insipidity.'

All this results in the following reading of the actual fragment:

ἔργων γὰρ κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς ὄντων οἰκεῖον ἐστι (sc. ἐπαινεῖν) τὰ προενηχθέντα, καὶ τούτων οἷον ἀνδρείως τὸν δάκτυλον ἐκτείνει καὶ ἐγκρατῶς ἀποσχέσθαι δυσθανατώσης γραδὸς καὶ ἀπροπτῶτως ἀκοῦσαι τοῦ τὰ τρία τέσσαρα μὴ εἶναι. τελέως τινὰ ἐμφαίνει ψυχρίαν ὃ διὰ τῶν τοιούτων ἐπαινεῖν τινὰς ἐγχειρῶν καὶ ἐγκωμιάζειν.

Among the deeds which are in accordance with the virtues it is fitting <to praise> those which have in fact been adduced as exemplary. Not figuring among the latter, however, are acts such as courageously extending one's finger, and continently abstaining from an old crone with one foot in the grave, and hearing without precipitate assent 'Three equals four'. One who undertakes to praise and eulogize people by means of such examples gives perfect evidence of a kind of insipidity.

To resume, I think this reading of the text is preferable to that proposed by Cherniss or Pohlenz because (1) it involves no changes in the text as transmitted, whereas we saw that the most striking 'anomaly' (the shift from indicative to infinitive) is not unparalleled in Chrysippus, (2) it better tallies with Plutarch's paraphrase, and (3) Chrysippus' use of the term *οἰκεῖον* can thus be made better sense of.

### III

It may be appropriate to add some observations concerning the role which the ideas expressed in the *On Zeus* fragment played within the broader context of Chrysippean ethics, starting from the contradictions Plutarch constructs on Chrysippus' behalf. This will allow us, in passing, to evaluate the variant account in Sextus *M* 9.153 (= *SVF* iii. 274), and to express doubts on the interpretation of the *On Zeus* fragment proposed by Irwin.

In the text immediately following our fragment, at *SR* 1039c, Plutarch renders two quotations from Chrysippus' *Περὶ Καλοῦ* which list a number of predicates underlining the elevated status of the good. These quotations are: (1) τὸ ἀγαθὸν αἰρετόν. τὸ δ' αἰρετόν ἀρεστόν· τὸ δ' ἀρεστόν ἐπαινετόν· τὸ δ' ἐπαινετόν καλόν. And: (2) τὸ ἀγαθὸν χαρτόν, τὸ δὲ χαρτόν σεμνόν, τὸ δὲ σεμνόν καλόν.<sup>30</sup> He adds that these arguments are in conflict with the argument from the *On Zeus* (οὗτοι δὲ οἱ λόγοι μάχονται πρὸς ἐκείνους). In what follows Plutarch appears to argue<sup>31</sup> that either each and every good – and hence also the wise man's virtuous abstention from an old

<sup>29</sup> Cherniss put a comma *after* εἶναι τελέως and translated 'hearing without precipitate assent that three is *exactly* four' which makes little sense; Pohlenz rightly put a comma *before* τελέως, and changed the MSS. reading into τελέως <τε> τιν' ἐμφαίνει κτλ., no doubt to avoid asyndeton. However, it may well be that the demonstrative pronoun τοιούτων was thought to constitute a sufficient link with the preceding sentence, so that a connecting particle was not obligatory. Cf. Chrysippus at Galen *PHP* 3, p. 206, 24 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 896): ὁρμῶμεν κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος κτλ. (no particle); and the Chrysippean fragment at p. 206, 15 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 896): τούτοις πᾶσι συμφώνως καὶ τοῦνομα τοῦτ' ἔσχηκεν κτλ. (no particle, although in the fragment at *PHP* 3, p. 204, 4 De Lacy (= *SVF* ii. 892) we find: τούτοις δ' ἀκολουθῶς ἀνεμείν τέ τινὰς φαμεν τὰ φανέντα κτλ.).

<sup>30</sup> Note that comparable lists of predicates survived in the doxographical tradition, as appears from Cicero, *Fin.* 3.27; 4.50 (where it is claimed that this list issued from a *sortes*), and *Tusc. Disp.* 5.43 and 45 (all subsumed under *SVF* iii. 37), Diog. Laert. 7.98 (= *SVF* iii. 87), and Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2, p. 100. 15ff. W. (= *SVF* iii. 208).

<sup>31</sup> Here the transmitted text is difficult to make sense of and perhaps lacunose. For some proposed emendations see the critical apparatus in Cherniss' edition.

crone – is praiseworthy, or else it is also pointless to argue that each and every good is enjoyable (*χαρτόν*) and grand (*σεμνόν*). For ‘how can it be insipid to praise others for such things and yet not ridiculous to make them reason for one’s own gratification and glorification?’

On closer view Plutarch’s verdict turns out to be too harsh. The fragment qualifies rather than contradicts the statement, to be found in the *Περὶ Καλοῦ*, that the good is praiseworthy. In fact Chrysippus appears to have made a point of emphasizing that some of the characteristics usually attributed to the good do not apply in all circumstances. This may be clear from another passage in Plutarch, *SR* 1046d (= *SVF* iii. 210), where it is pointed out that in the sixth book of his *Ethical Investigations* Chrysippus himself argued that neither (1) did joy (*χαρά*) equally apply to every good,<sup>32</sup> nor (2) was every right action (*κατόρθωμα*) worthy of glorification (*σεμνολογία*). According to Plutarch, Chrysippus added, in the same context, a third example, namely (3) that if a man would acquire prudence (*φρονήσις*) for only one instant or just for his final moment, he ought not to even stretch out his finger on behalf of such a virtue. Of these statements (1) and (2) clearly qualify the general claims that the good is *χαρτόν* and *σεμνόν*. It is perhaps not too bold to suggest that (3) qualifies the claim that the good is *αἰρετόν*, though it must be admitted that the text itself contains no explicit clues. The *On Zeus* fragment apparently makes a similar point concerning the general thesis that the good is praiseworthy.

To us such a qualification of the rather sweeping statement in the *Περὶ Καλοῦ* may seem hardly more than a sound and obvious piece of common sense. It should be recalled, however, that in many other respects Chrysippus’ conception of the good was hardly on the side of common sense, as has time and again been pointed out by opponents and commentators. In Cicero’s *De Finibus* the representative of Antiochus’ philosophy accuses the early Stoics of setting up a moral goal for a disembodied mind rather than for a human being, and of constructing a kind of moral ‘two world-doctrine’.<sup>33</sup> Alexander of Aphrodisias claimed that the Stoic insistence on the fact that only the wise man is rich, beautiful, blessed etc., amounted to an abuse of the way in which these terms were commonly applied.<sup>34</sup> We may add Eduard Zeller’s description of Stoicism as ‘eine Philosophie welche ihr sittliches Ideal den herrschenden Begriffen ... schroff entgegensetzt’.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Note that this tallies with the information provided by Stobaeus (Arius Didymus) and Diogenes Laertius, namely that the state of being wise is *not always* accompanied by joy; cf. Diog. Laert. 7.98 (= *SVF* iii. 102): ... καὶ αἰεὶ μὲν παρόντα (sc. ἀγαθὰ) αἱ ἀρεταί, οὐκ αἰεὶ δὲ οἷον χαρά...; Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2, p. 68. 24ff. W. (= *SVF* iii. 103). It appears, therefore, that Seneca’s statement, *Ep.* 59. 2 (= *SVF* iii. 435), that ‘... gaudio autem iunctum est non desinere nec in contrarium verti’ is in need of qualification, at least so far as the early Stoics are concerned. For although *gaudium* (= *χαρά*) could never turn into its opposite, *λύπη* having no counterpart at the level of the *eupatheiai*, it could nevertheless cease to be present. On the so-called *eupatheiai* (*χαρά*, *εὐλάβεια*, *βούλησις*) in general see esp. Diog. Laert. 7.116 (= *SVF* iii. 431), and Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 4.12 (= *SVF* iii. 438). Useful comments in D. Tsekourakis, *Studies in the Terminology of Early Stoic Ethics* (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 92–6; A. A. Long, D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* i (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 421–2.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Cicero, *Fin.* 4.42 and 4.39.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Alexander, *In Top.* 147.12ff. Wallies (= *SVF* iii. 595): εἰ γὰρ τῶν πολλῶν πλοῦσιον λεγόντων μόνον τὸν πολυκτῆμονα μὴ κατὰ τούτου τις χρώτο τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ, κατὰ δὲ τοῦ σοφοῦ καὶ τοῦ τὰς ἀρετὰς ἔχοντος παραβαίνοι ἂν τὴν κείμενον τῆς τῶν ὀνομάτων χρήσεως διορισμόν; cf. also *ibid.*, 147.22ff. and 124.13 (= *SVF* iii. 594). On a similar shift of meaning of the word ‘useful’ as applied to the Stoic good see M. Forschner, *Die stoische Ethik* (Stuttgart, 1981), pp. 178–9. See also Tsekourakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–75, esp. p. 74.

<sup>35</sup> E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*<sup>8</sup> iii. 1 (Hildesheim, 1963), p. 258.

Such criticisms are in general much to the point. Indeed, there are various claims which, given his conception of the perfect rationality of the wise man and the concomitant elevated conception of the good, Chrysippus could consistently endorse, but at which common sense would no doubt balk. Examples are the claim that the wise man is *always* happy (hence even while being roasted in the bull of Phalaris),<sup>36</sup> and that he does everything well, so that even a trivial action like abstaining from an old crone is in his case to be called virtuous. However, if such is the overall picture of Chrysippean ethics, the fragments from the *On Zeus* and from the *Ethical Investigations* quoted above allow us to sketch in a few finer shades. For although Chrysippus believed that in most cases the predicates *χαρτόν* and *ἐπαινετόν* could be applied to the good, he must have recognized that by no conceivable stretching of the common use of these terms could the wise man's being roasted be said to be enjoyable to him, nor his abstention from an ugly old lady praiseworthy. Even Chrysippus, in other words, was in some respects less 'Stoic' than the tradition would have us believe.

The second contradiction detected by Plutarch – is it not the case that the *On Zeus* fragment implies that there are gradations in virtue? – even appears to vanish altogether. For the fragment can fairly easily be squared with the Chrysippean contention that there are no gradations in virtue. The wise man's continent abstention from an old crone is as virtuous as is his continent abstention from the sexy Phryne or Laïs (two legendary courtesans, mentioned in Sextus' account); it is just not something to be particularly proud of and it is not praiseworthy.

At this point we may add some comments on Sextus' variant account. At *M* 9.153 (= *SVF* iii. 274) it is alleged that the abstention from an old woman with one foot in the grave is *not* to be regarded as an *instance of continence* at all: 'For a man, they say, is continent not when he abstains from an old woman with one foot in the grave, but when he has the power of enjoying Laïs or Phryne or some such charmer and then abstains.'<sup>37</sup> This information, however, should certainly not be taken at face value. In the first place, Sextus' 'interpretation' of the Stoic example seems to be dictated by the context which deals with various fragrant absurdities that would follow from the thesis that God is virtuous. Thus, e.g., if God possesses continence, there must be things which are hard for God to abstain from. In order to support this absurd conclusion Sextus needs an example which shows that we may only speak of continence with regard to things which are difficult to abstain from. This is why he

<sup>36</sup> For the example see Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epist.* 32 (= *SVF* iii. 585).

<sup>37</sup> Bury's translation in the Loeb edition of Sextus. Note that Sextus' interpretation of the Stoic example might at first glance appear to be supported by one of the definitions of continence which he provides (viz. ἀρετὴ ὑπὲρ πάντων ποιοῦσα ἡμᾶς τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι δυσάποσχέςτων). However, this definition is most probably of his own making. For, contrary to the other definition provided by Sextus (διάθεσις ἀνυπέρβατος τῶν καθ' ὁρθὸν λόγον γιγνομένων), it is not attested anywhere else. Moreover its wording (in particular the use of ἀρετή, rather than e.g. ἐπιστήμη, as a genus) does not square with the early Stoic habit of defining all virtues either in terms of ἐπιστήμη, or in terms of ἐξίς (in some accounts διάθεσις), as becomes obvious if one compares the various texts printed as *SVF* iii. 262–94. Finally, the presentation suggests that the definition is an interpretative addition of Sextus' own making, which is itself dependent on his interpretation of the Stoic examples of the old woman and Phryne or Laïs (in fact the examples are connected with this definition by γάρ); the same goes for the alternative definition and the examples of καρτερία, adduced some lines further on, at *M* 9.154. Of course this should not be taken to suggest that the interpretation of the examples as provided by Sextus is new with him. In fact, in the end he may well have been dependent on the same polemical tradition as Plutarch, one of whose contradictions, we may recall, also centred on an implicit misinterpretation of the Chrysippean examples as dealing with actions being more or less *virtuous* (rather than more or less *praiseworthy*).



introduces the example of the old woman as opposed to a Lais or Phryne. In the second place, Sextus does not provide a literal quotation. The value of his testimony is inferior to that of the two *verbatim* fragments in Plutarch. Sextus, in other words, appears to be freely exploiting a Stoic motif for purposes of his own. Therefore, his variant account need not affect our interpretation of the fragment from Chrysippus' *On Zeus*.

A final remark on the interpretation of the *On Zeus* fragment by Irwin may be in order. Irwin claims that the fragment showed that 'the results of virtue may be quite trivial; if a temperate man happens to meet only ugly old women, the results of his temperance will be quite unimpressive; but if he is really temperate, the expression of his temperate state in these results is still praiseworthy'.<sup>38</sup> The foregoing analysis shows, or so I hope, that this interpretation mistakes Chrysippus' purpose. Moreover, as may appear from section (2), it is not supported by any of the proposed readings of the text.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Loc. cit. (n. 3). Unfortunately Irwin does not provide a literal translation. It is difficult to see how he could find support for his interpretation in the text as it stands. Indeed, both the last sentence of the fragment itself and Plutarch's paraphrase make clear that Chrysippus is arguing *against* praising trivial actions. In a footnote (note 9), however, Irwin does offer some arguments. He there argues that Plutarch relies on an equivocation in 'things done according to virtue', which might sometimes refer to 'actions, as expressing virtue' [my ital.], and at other times to the *results* of these actions (in which connection he refers to SR 1039a, the quotation from *On the Gods*, which speaks of τῶν συμβαινόντων ἀπ' ἀρετῆς). According to Irwin, Chrysippus' position was probably that the former were always praiseworthy, whereas the latter were not. Against this it should be objected that what at 1039a are called συμβαινόντα ἀπ' ἀρετῆς are in the quotation from the *On Zeus* – even following Irwin's reading of the text (on which see above, note 21) – classed among the ἐργων κατὰ τὰς ἀρετάς, which shows that these formulas could be used interchangeably. Indeed, the examples adduced are not so much the *results* of virtuous action as the virtuous actions themselves.

<sup>39</sup> I would like to thank Patty van Hees, Jaap Mansfeld and Teun Tieleman who read and criticised earlier versions of this paper. I am particularly grateful to the Editors for a number of pertinent critical comments and suggestions.