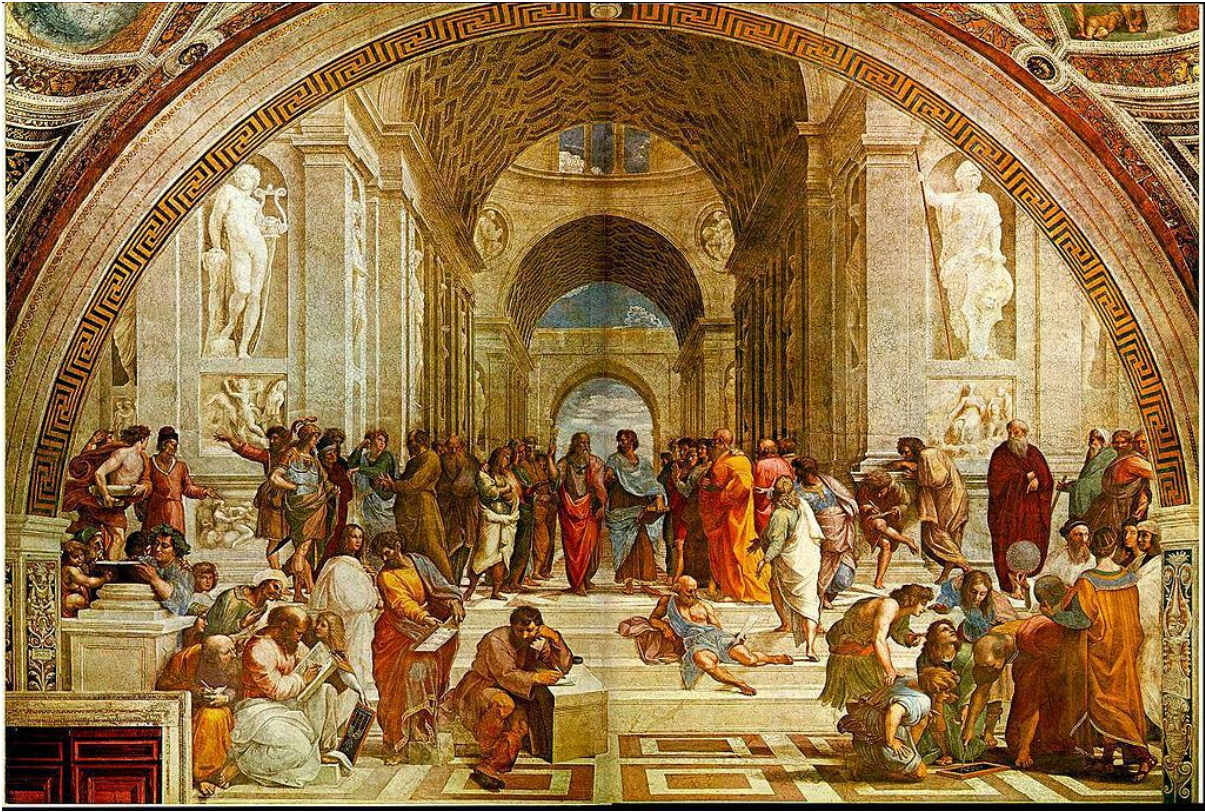


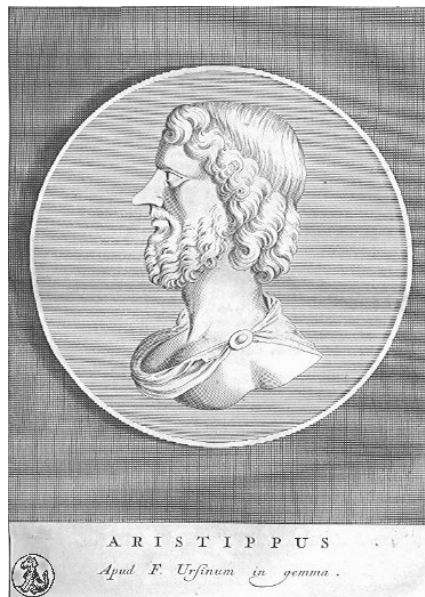
BELLARIA LXXXVI



School of Athens (Raphael, 1632)

Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*

III ARISTIPPUS c. 435-356 BC



From a 1692 edition published in Amsterdam

Introduction

Aristippus was a teacher of rhetoric and an associate of Socrates, but known for his luxurious lifestyle and advocacy of hedonism. Socrates directed an account of the Choice of Heracles ('vice or virtue') at him. He does not come across as particularly admirable.

His fees

65 Aristippus was by birth a citizen of Cyrene [in Libya] and was drawn to Athens by the fame of Socrates. Having come forward as a lecturer or sophist he was the first of the followers of Socrates to charge fees and to send money to his master. And on one occasion the sum of twenty minae which he had sent was returned to him, Socrates declaring that the supernatural sign would not let him take it; the very offer, in fact, annoyed him. Xenophon was no friend to Aristippus; and for this reason he has made Socrates direct against Aristippus the discourse in which he denounces pleasure. Not but what Theodorus abuses him, and so does Plato.

65 Ἀριστίππος τὸ μὲν γένος ἦν Κυρηναῖος, ἀφιγμένος δ' Ἀθήναζε κατὰ κλέος Σωκράτους. οὗτος σοφιστεύσας πρῶτος τῶν Σωκρατικῶν μισθοὺς εἰσεπράξατο καὶ ἀπέστειλε χρήματα τῷ διδασκάλῳ. καί ποτε πέμψας αὐτῷ μνᾶς εἴκοσι παλινδρόμους ἀπέλαβεν, εἰπόντος Σωκράτους τὸ δαιμόνιον αὐτῷ μὴ ἐπιτρέπειν· ἐδυσχέραине γὰρ ἐπὶ τούτῳ. Ξενοφῶν τ' εἶχε πρὸς αὐτὸν δυσμενῶς· διὸ καὶ τὸν κατὰ τῆς ἡδονῆς λόγον Σωκράτει κατ' Ἀριστίππου περιτέθεικεν. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ Θεόδωρος ἐκάκισεν αὐτὸν καὶ Πλάτων.

The pleasure-lover



Dionysius II points out the sword overhanging Damocles (Richard Westall, 1812)

66 He was capable of adapting himself to place, time and person, and of playing his part appropriately under whatever circumstances. Hence he found more favour than anybody with Dionysius [II, tyrant of Syracuse, 367-357 BC], because he could always turn the situation to good account. He derived pleasure from what was present, and did not toil to procure the enjoyment of something not present. Hence Diogenes called him the king's poodle. Timon, too, sneered at him for luxury in these words:

‘Such was the luxurious nature of Aristippus, who dealt in lies.’

He is said to have ordered a partridge to be brought at a cost of fifty drachmae, and, when someone censured him, he inquired, ‘Would not you have given an obol for it?’ and, being answered in the affirmative, rejoined, ‘Fifteen drachmae are no more to me.’

66 Ἦν δὲ ἱκανὸς ἀρμόσασθαι καὶ τόπῳ καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ προσώπῳ, καὶ πᾶσαν περίστασιν ἀπμοδίως ὑποκρίνασθαι· διὸ καὶ παρὰ Διονυσίῳ τῶν ἄλλων εὐδοκίμει μᾶλλον, ἀεὶ τὸ προσπεσὸν εὖ διατιθέμενος. ἀπέλαυε μὲν γὰρ ἡδονῆς τῶν παρόντων, οὐκ ἐθήρα δὲ πόνῳ τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν τῶν οὐ παρόντων· ὅθεν καὶ Διογένης βασιλικὸν κύνα ἔλεγεν αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ Τίμων παρέφαγεν ὡς θρυπτόμενον, οὕτωςί πως εἰπὼν·

οἷά τ’ Ἀριστίππου τρυφερὴ φύσις ἀμφαφώωντος ψεύδη.

τοῦτόν φασί ποτε κελεῦσαι πέρδικα πεντήκοντα δραχμῶν ὠνηθῆναι· αἰτιασαμένου δέ τινος, ‘σὺ δ’ οὐκ ἄν,’ εἶπεν, ‘ὀβολοῦ τοῦτον ἐπρίω;’ ἐπινεύσαντος δέ, ‘τοσοῦτον,’ ἔφη, ‘ἐμοὶ δύνανται αἱ πεντήκοντα δραχμαί.’

Flexible opinions



Judgement of Paris, Adriaen van der Werff 1716

67 And when Dionysius gave him his choice of three courtesans, he carried off all three, saying, 'It gave no advantage to Paris to prefer the one out of three.' And when he had brought them as far as the porch, they say, he let them go. To such lengths did he go both in choosing and in disdain. Hence the remark of Strato, or by some accounts of Plato, 'You alone are endowed with the gift to flaunt in robes or go in rags.' When Dionysius spat on him, he bore with it, and to one who took him to task he replied, 'If the fishermen let themselves be drenched with sea-water in order to catch a sardine, ought I not to endure to be sprinkled with spit in order to catch an anchovy' [also means 'drooler', i.e. Dionysius.]

67 Διονυσίου δέ ποτε τριῶν ἑταίρων οὐσῶν μίαν ἐκλέξασθαι κελεύσαντος, τὰς τρεῖς ἀπήγαγεν εἰπών, 'οὐδὲ τῷ Πάριδι συνήνεγκε μίαν προκρῖναι' ἀπαγαγὼν μέντοι, φασίν, αὐτὰς ἄχρι τοῦ θυρῶνος ἀπέλυσεν. οὕτως ἦν καὶ ἐλέσθαι καὶ καταφρονῆσαι πολὺς. διό ποτε Στράτωννα, οἱ δὲ Πλάτωννα, πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεῖν, 'σοὶ μόνῳ δέδοται καὶ χλανίδα φορεῖν καὶ ῥάκος.' Διονυσίου δὲ προσπτύσαντος αὐτῷ ἠνέσχετο. μεμψαμένου δέ τινος, 'εἴτα οἱ μὲν ἀλιεῖς,' εἶπεν, 'ὑπομένουσι ῥαίνεσθαι τῇ θαλάττῃ, ἵνα κωβιὸν θηράσωσιν' ἐγὼ δὲ μὴ ἀνάσχωμαι κράματι ῥανθῆναι, ἵνα βλέννοι λάβω.'

Aim of philosophy



68 Diogenes, washing the dirt from his vegetables, saw him passing and jeered at him in these terms, 'If you had learnt to make these your diet, you would not have paid court to kings,' to which his rejoinder was, 'And if you knew how to associate with men, you would not be washing vegetables.' Being asked what he had gained from philosophy, he replied, 'The ability to feel at ease in any society.' Being reproached for his extravagance, he said, 'If it were wrong to be extravagant, it

would not be in vogue at the festivals of the gods.' Being once asked what advantage philosophers have, he replied, 'Should all laws be repealed, we shall go on living as we do now.'

68 Παριόντα ποτὲ αὐτὸν λάχανα πλύνων Διογένης ἔσκωψε, καί φησιν, 'εἰ ταῦτα ἔμαθες προσφέρεσθαι, οὐκ ἂν τυράννων αὐλὰς ἐθεράπευες.' ὁ δέ, 'καὶ σύ,' εἶπεν, 'εἴπερ ἦδεις ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλεῖν, οὐκ ἂν λάχανα ἔπλυνες.' ἐρωτηθεὶς τί αὐτῷ περιγέγονεν ἐκ φιλοσοφίας, ἔφη, 'τὸ δύνασθαι πᾶσι θαρρούντως ὁμιλεῖν.' ὀνειδιζόμενός ποτ' ἐπὶ τῷ πολυτελῶς ζῆν, 'εἰ τοῦτ', ἔφη, 'φαῦλον ἦν, οὐκ ἂν ἐν ταῖς τῶν θεῶν ἑορταῖς ἐγίνετο.' ἐρωτηθεὶς ποτε τί πλέον ἔχουσιν οἱ φιλόσοφοι, ἔφη, 'ἐὰν πάντες οἱ νόμοι ἀναιρεθῶσιν, ὁμοίως βιωσόμεθα.'

The extravagant life



69 When Dionysius inquired why philosophers went to rich men's houses, while rich men no longer visited philosophers, his reply was that 'The one know what they need while the others do not.' When he was reproached by Plato for his extravagance, he inquired, 'Do you think Dionysius a good man?' and the reply being in the affirmative, 'And yet,' said he, 'he lives more extravagantly than I do. So that there is nothing to hinder a man living extravagantly and well.' To the question how the educated differ from the uneducated, he replied, 'Exactly as horses that have been trained differ from the untrained.' One day, as he entered the house of a courtesan, one of the young men with him blushed, whereupon he remarked, 'It is not going in that is dangerous, but being unable to go out.'

69 ἐρωτηθεὶς ὑπὸ Διονυσίου διὰ τί οἱ μὲν φιλόσοφοι ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν πλουσίων θύρας ἔρχονται, οἱ δὲ πλούσιοι ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν φιλοσόφων οὐκέτι, ἔφη, 'ὅτι οἱ μὲν ἴσασιν ὧν δέονται, οἱ δ' οὐκ ἴσασιν.' ὀνειδιζόμενός ποτ' ἐπὶ τῷ πολυτελῶς ζῆν ὑπὸ Πλάτωνος, ἔφη, 'ἄρα φαίνεται σοι Διονύσιος ἀγαθός;' τοῦ δ'

ὁμολογήσαντος, 'καὶ μὴν,' ἔφη, 'ζῆ ἔμοῦ πολυτελέστερον' ὥστ' οὐδὲν κωλύει καὶ πολυτελῶς καὶ καλῶς ζῆν.' ἐρωτηθεὶς τίνι διαφέρουσιν οἱ πεπαιδευμένοι τῶν ἀπαιδευτῶν, ἔφη, 'ὥπερ οἱ δεδαμασμένοι ἵπποι τῶν ἀδαμάστων.' εἰσιῶν ποτε εἰς ἑταίρας οἰκίαν, καὶ τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ μειρακίων τινὸς ἐρυθριάσαντος, 'οὐ τὸ εἰσελθεῖν,' ἔφη, 'χαλεπὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι ἐξελθεῖν.'

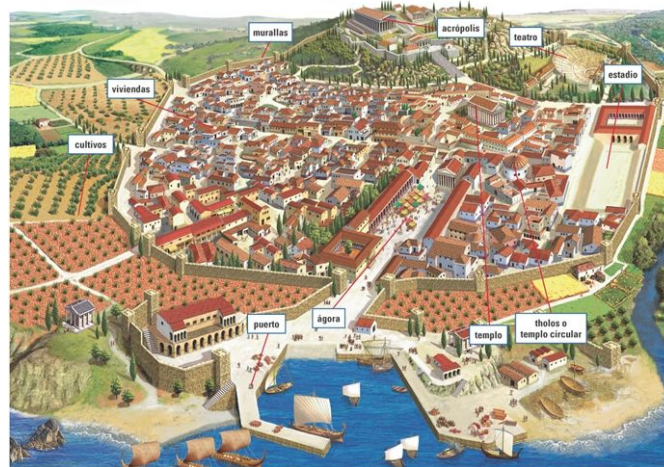
Money or education?



70 Someone brought him a knotty problem with the request that he would untie the knot. 'Why, you simpleton,' said he, 'do you want it untied, seeing that it causes trouble enough as it is?' 'It is better,' said he, 'to be a beggar than to be uneducated; the one needs money, the others need to be humanized.' One day, being reviled, he tried to slip away; the other pursued him, asking, 'Why do you run away?' 'Because,' said he, 'as it is your privilege to use foul language, so it is my privilege not to listen.' In answer to one who remarked that he always saw philosophers at rich men's doors, he said, 'So, too, physicians are in attendance on those who are sick, but no one for that reason would prefer being sick to being a physician.'

70 Αἴνιγμά τινος αὐτῷ προτείναντος καὶ εἰπόντος, 'λύσον,' 'τί, ὦ μάταιε,' ἔφη, 'λύσαι θέλεις, ὃ καὶ δεδεμένον ἡμῖν πράγματα παρέχει; ἄμεινον ἔφη ἐπαίτην ἢ ἀπαιδευτον εἶναι· οἱ μὲν γὰρ χρημάτων, οἱ δ' ἀνθρωπισμοῦ δέονται. λαιδορούμενός ποτε ἀνεχώρει· τοῦ δ' ἐπιδιώκοντος εἰπόντος, 'τί φεύγεις;' 'ὅτι,' φησί, 'τοῦ μὲν κακῶς λέγειν σὺ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχεις, τοῦ δὲ μὴ ἀκούειν ἐγώ.' εἰπόντος τινὸς ὡς ἀεὶ τοὺς φιλοσόφους βλέποισι παρὰ ταῖς τῶν πλουσίων θύραις, 'καὶ γὰρ καὶ οἱ ἰατροί.' φησί, 'παρὰ ταῖς τῶν νοσοῦντων ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τοῦτό τις ἂν ἔλοιτο νοσεῖν ἢ ἰατρεύειν.'

Useful learning



Ancient Corinth

71 It happened once that he set sail for Corinth and, being overtaken by a storm, he was in great consternation. Someone said, ‘We plain men are not alarmed, and are you philosophers turned cowards?’ To this he replied, ‘The lives at stake in the two cases are not comparable.’ When someone gave himself airs for his wide learning, this is what he said: ‘As those who eat most and take the most exercise are not better in health than those who restrict themselves to what they require, so too it is not wide reading but useful reading that tends to excellence.’ An advocate, having pleaded on his behalf and won the case, thereupon put the question, ‘What good did Socrates do you?’ ‘This much,’ was the reply, ‘that what you said of me in your speech was true.’

71 Εἰς Κόρινθον αὐτῷ πλέοντί ποτε καὶ χειμαζομένῳ συνέβη ταραχθῆναι. πρὸς οὓν τὸν εἰπόντα, ‘ἡμεῖς μὲν οἱ ἰδιῶται οὐ δεδοίκαμεν, ὑμεῖς δ’ οἱ φιλόσοφοι δειλιᾶτε,’ οὐ γὰρ περὶ ὁμοίας,’ ἔφη, ‘ψυχῆς ἀγωνιῶμεν ἑκάτεροι.’ σεμνυνομένου τινὸς ἐπὶ πολυμαθείᾳ ἔφη, ‘ὥσπερ οὐχ οἱ τὰ πλεῖστα ἐσθίοντες καὶ γυμναζόμενοι ὑγιαίνουσι μᾶλλον τῶν τὰ δέοντα προσφερομένων, οὕτως οὐδὲ οἱ πολλὰ ἀλλ’ οἱ χρήσιμα ἀναγινώσκοντές εἰσι σπουδαῖοι.’ πρὸς τὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ λογογράφον δίκην εἰπόντα καὶ νικήσαντα, ἔπειτα φάσκοντα πρὸς αὐτόν, ‘τί σε ὤνησε Σωκράτης;’ ἔφη, ‘τοῦτο, τοὺς λόγους, οὓς εἶπας ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, ἀληθεῖς εἶναι.’

The price of education

72 He gave his daughter Arete the very best advice, training her up to despise excess. He was asked by someone in what way his son would be the better for being educated. He replied, ‘If nothing more than this, at all events, when in the theatre

he will not sit down like a stone upon stone.’ When someone brought his son to him as a pupil, he asked a fee of 500 drachmae. The father objected. ‘For that sum I can buy a slave.’ ‘Then do so,’ was the reply, ‘and you will have two.’ He said that he did not take money from his friends for his own use, but to teach them upon what objects their money should be spent. When he was reproached for employing a rhetorician to conduct his case, he made reply, ‘Well, if I give a dinner, I hire a cook.’

72 Τὰ ἄριστα ὑπετίθετο τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἀρήτῃ, συνασκῶν αὐτὴν ὑπεροπτικὴν τοῦ πλέονος εἶναι. ἐρωτηθεὶς ὑπὸ τινος τί αὐτοῦ ὁ υἱὸς ἀμείνων ἔσται παιδευθεὶς, ‘καὶ εἰ μηδὲν ἄλλο,’ εἶπεν, ‘ἐν γοῦν τῷ θεάτρῳ οὐ καθεδεῖται λίθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ’. συνιστάντος τινὸς αὐτῷ υἱὸν ἤτησε πεντακοσίας δραχμάς· τοῦ δ’ εἰπόντος, ‘τοσοῦτου δύναμαι ἀνδράποδον ὠνήσασθαι,’ πρίω,’ ἔφη, ‘καὶ ἕξεις δύο.’ ἀργύριον εἶπε παρὰ τῶν γνωρίμων λαμβάνειν, οὐχ ἴν’ αὐτὸς χρῶτο, ἀλλ’ ἴν’ ἐκεῖνοι εἰδεῖεν εἰς τίνα δεῖ χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἀργυρίοις. ὀνειδιζόμενός ποτε ὅτι δίκην ἔχων ἐμισθώσατο ῥήτορα, ‘καὶ γάρ,’ ἔφη, ‘ὅταν δεῖπνον ἔχω, μάγειρον μισθοῦμαι.’

On diving and drinking



73 Being once compelled by Dionysius to enunciate some doctrine of philosophy, ‘It would be ludicrous,’ he said, ‘that you should learn from me what to say, and yet instruct me when to say it.’ At this, they say, Dionysius was offended and made him recline at the end of the table. And Aristippus said, ‘You must have wished to confer distinction on the last place.’ To someone who boasted of his diving, ‘Are you not ashamed,’ said he, ‘to brag of that which a dolphin can do?’ Being asked on one occasion what is the difference between the wise man and the unwise, ‘Strip them both,’ said he, ‘and send them among strangers and you will know.’ [Lack of embarrassment?] To one who boasted that he could drink a great deal without getting drunk, his rejoinder was, ‘And so can a mule.’

73 Ἀναγκαζόμενός ποτε ὑπὸ Διονυσίου εἰπεῖν τι τῶν ἐκ φιλοσοφίας, ‘γελοῖον,’ ἔφη, ‘εἰ τὸ λέγειν μὲν παρ’ ἐμοῦ μανθάνεις, τὸ δὲ πότε δεῖ λέγειν σύ

με διδάσκεις.' ἐπὶ τούτῳ δὴ ἀγανακτήσαντα τὸν Διονύσιον ἔσχατον αὐτὸν κατακλῖναι· καὶ τὸν, 'ἐνδοξότερον,' φάναι, 'τὸν τόπον ἠθέλησας ποιῆσαι.' ἀχοῦντός τινος ἐπὶ τῷ κολυμβᾶν, 'οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ,' εἶπεν, 'ἐπὶ δελφῖνος ἔργους ἀλαζονευόμενος;' ἐρωτηθεὶς ποτε τίνι διαφέρει ὁ σοφὸς τοῦ μὴ σοφοῦ, ἔφη, 'εἰς ἀγνώτας τοὺς δύο γυμνοὺς ἀπόστειλον, καὶ εἴση.' ἀχοῦντός τινος ἐπὶ τῷ πολλὰ πίνειν καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθαι, 'τοῦτο καὶ ἡμίονος,' φησί.

On courtesans



Lais

74 To one who accused him of living with a courtesan, he put the question, 'Why, is there any difference between taking a house in which many people have lived before and taking one in which nobody has ever lived?' The answer being 'No,' he continued, 'Or again, between sailing in a ship in which ten thousand persons have sailed before and in one in which nobody has ever sailed?' 'There is no difference.' 'Then it makes no difference,' said he, 'whether the woman you live with has lived with many or with nobody.' To the accusation that, although he was a pupil of Socrates, he took fees, his rejoinder was, 'Most certainly I do, for Socrates, too, when certain people sent him corn and wine, used to take a little and return all the rest; and he had the foremost men in Athens for his stewards, whereas mine is my slave Eutyichides.' He enjoyed the favours of Lais.

74 Πρὸς τὸν αἰτιώμενον ὅτι ἐταίρα συνοικεῖ, 'ἄρά γε,' εἶπε, 'μή τι διενέγκαι ἂν οἰκίαν λαβεῖν ἐν ἧ πολλοὶ ποτε ὄκησαν ἢ μηδεὶς,' εἰπόντος δὲ οὐ, 'τί δὲ πλεῦσαι ἐν νηὶ ἢ μυριοὶ ποτὲ ἐνέπλευσαν ἢ μηδεὶς;' 'οὐδαμῶς.' 'οὐδ' ἄρα γυναικί,' ἔφη, 'συνεῖναι ἧ πολλοὶ κέχρηται ἢ μηδεὶς.' πρὸς τὸν αἰτιώμενον ὅτι Σωκράτους μαθητὴς ὢν ἀργύριον λαμβάνει, 'καὶ μάλα,' εἶπε· 'καὶ γὰρ Σωκράτης, πεμπόντων αὐτῷ τινῶν καὶ σῖτον καὶ οἶνον, ὀλίγα λαμβάνων τὰ λοιπὰ ἀπέπεμπεν· εἶχε γὰρ ταμίας τοὺς πρῶτους Ἀθηναίων, ἐγὼ δ' Εὐτυχίδην ἀργυρώνητον.' ἐχρῆτο καὶ Λαΐδι τῇ ἐταίρᾳ.

Expensive tastes



75 To those who censured him his defence was, 'I have Laïs, not she me; and it is not abstinence from pleasures that is best, but mastery over them without ever being worsted.' To one who reproached him extravagance in catering, he replied, 'Wouldn't you have bought this if you could have got it from three obols?' The answer being in the affirmative, 'Very well, then,' said Aristippus, 'I am no longer a lover of pleasure, it is you who are a lover of money.' One day Simus, the steward of Dionysius, a Phrygian by birth and a rascally fellow, was showing him costly houses with mosaic pavements, when Aristippus coughed up phlegm and spat in his face. And on his resenting this he replied, 'I could not find any place more suitable.'

75 πρὸς οὖν τοὺς μεμφομένους αὐτῷ ἔφη, 'ἔχω Λαΐδα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔχομαι· ἐπεὶ τὸ κρατεῖν καὶ μὴ ἡττᾶσθαι ἡδονῶν ἄριστον, οὐ τὸ μὴ χρῆσθαι.' πρὸς τὸν ὄνειδίσαντα αὐτῷ πολυτελεῖ ὀψωνίαν ἔφη, 'σὺ δ' οὐκ ἂν τριωβόλου ταῦτ' ἐπρίω;' ὁμολογήσαντος δέ, 'οὐκέτι τοίνυν,' ἔφη, 'φιλήδονος ἐγώ, ἀλλὰ σὺ φιλάργυρος.' Σίμου ποτὲ τοῦ Διονυσίου ταμίου πολυτελεῖς οἴκους αὐτῷ καὶ λιθοστρώτους δεικνύντος—ἣν δὲ Φρύξ καὶ ὄλεθρος—ἀναχρεμψάμενος προσέπτυσσε τῇ ὄψει· τοῦ δ' ἀγανακτήσαντος, 'οὐκ εἶχον,' εἶπε, 'τόπον ἐπιτηδειότερον.'

Luxury items



Cypriot perfume jars

76 When Charondas (or, as others say, Phaedo) inquired, 'Who is this who reeks with unguents?' he replied, 'It is I, unlucky wretch, and the still more unlucky Persian king. But, as none of the other animals are at any disadvantage on that account, consider whether it be not the same with man. Confound the catamites, who spoil for us the use of good perfume.' Being asked how Socrates died, he answered, 'As I would wish to die myself.' Polyxenus the sophist once paid him a visit and, after having seen ladies present and expensive entertainment, reproached him with it later. After an interval Aristippus asked him, 'Can you join us today?'

76 Πρὸς Χαρώνδαν εἰπόντα, οἱ δὲ πρὸς Φαίδωνα, τίς ὁ μεμυρισμένος; 'ἐγώ,' φησὶν, 'ὁ κακοδαίμων, κάμοῦ κακοδαίμονέστερος ὁ Περσῶν βασιλεύς. ἀλλ' ὄρα μὴ ὡς οὐδὲν τῶν ἄλλων ζώων παρὰ τοῦτό τι ἐλαττοῦται, οὕτως οὐδ' ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος. κακοὶ κακῶς δ' ἀπόλοιτο οἱ κίμαιδοι, οἵτινες καλὸν ἡμῖν ἄλειμμα διαβάλλουσιν.' ἐρωτώμενος πῶς ἀπέθανε Σωκράτης, ἔφη, 'ὡς ἂν ἐγὼ εὐξαίμην.' Πολυξένου ποτὲ τοῦ σοφιστοῦ εἰσελθόντος πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ θεασαμένου γυναικᾶς τε καὶ πολυτελεῆ ὀψωνίαν, ἔπειτα αἰτιασαμένου, μικρὸν διαλιπὼν, 'δύνασαι,' ἔφη, 'καὶ σὺ σήμερον μεθ' ἡμῶν γενέσθαι;'

Financial priorities

77 When the other accepted the invitation, Aristippus inquired, 'Why, then, did you find fault? For you appear to blame the cost and not the food.' When his servant was carrying money and found the load too heavy, Aristippus cried, 'Pour away the greater part, and carry no more than you can manage.' Being once on a voyage, as soon as he discovered the vessel to be manned by pirates, he took out his money and began to count it, and then, as if by inadvertence, he let the money fall into the sea, and naturally broke out into lamentation. Another version of the story attributes to him the further remark that it was better for the money to perish on account of Aristippus than for Aristippus to perish on account of the money. Dionysius once asked him what he was come for, and he said it was to impart what he had and obtain what he had not.

77 τοῦ δ' ἐπινεύσαντος, 'τί οὖν,' ἔφη, 'ἐμέμφου; ἔοικας γὰρ οὐ τὴν ὀψωνίαν ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀνάλωμα αἰτιᾶσθαι.' τοῦ δὲ θεράποντος ἐν ὁδοῦ βαστάζοντος ἀργύριον καὶ βαρυνομένου, 'ἀπόχεε,' ἔφη, 'τὸ πλεον καὶ ὅσον δύνασαι βάσταζε.' πλέων ποτὲ ἐπεὶ τὸ σκάφος ἔγνω πειρατικόν, λαβὼν τὸ χρυσίον ἠρίθμει· ἔπειτα εἰς θάλατταν ὡς μὴ θέλων παρακατέβαλε καὶ δῆθεν ἀνώμωξεν. οἱ δὲ καὶ ἐπειπεῖν φασιν αὐτὸν ὡς ἄμεινον ταῦτα δι' Ἀρίστιππον ἢ

διὰ ταῦτα Ἀρίστιππον ἀπολέσθαι. Διονυσίου ποτ' ἐρομένου ἐπὶ τί ἦκοι, ἔφη ἐπὶ τῷ μεταδώσειν ὧν ἔχοι, καὶ μεταλήψεσθαι ὧν μὴ ἔχοι.

Dancing for Dionysius



78 But some make his answer to have been, 'When I needed wisdom, I went to Socrates; now that I am in need of money, I come to you.' He used to complain of mankind that in purchasing earthenware they tested whether it rang true, but had no regular standard by which to judge life. Others attribute this remark to Diogenes. One day Dionysius over the wine commanded everybody to put on purple and dance. Plato declined, quoting the line:

I could not stoop to put on women's robes.

Aristippus, however, put on the dress and, as he was about to dance, was ready with the repartee:

Even amid the Bacchic revelry
True modesty will not be put to shame.

78 ἔνιοι δ' οὕτως ἀποκρίνασθαι, 'ὅποτε μὲν σοφίας ἐδεόμην, ἦκον παρὰ τὸν Σωκράτην· νῦν δὲ χρημάτων δεόμενος παρὰ σὲ ἦκω.' κατεγίνωσκε τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς τὰ σκεύη μὲν ἐν ταῖς ἀγορασίαις κομπούντων, τοὺς δὲ βίους εἰκὴ δοκιμαζόντων· οἱ δὲ τοῦτο Διογένους φασί. καὶ ποτε παρὰ πότον κελεύσαντος Διονυσίου ἕκαστον ἐν πορφυρᾷ ἐσθῆτι ὀρχήσασθαι, τὸν μὲν Πλάτωνα μὴ προσέσθαι, εἰπόντα·

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλυον ἐνδύναϊ στολήν·

τὸν δ' Ἀρίστιππον λαβόντα καὶ μέλλοντα ὀρχήσασθαι εὐστόχως εἰπεῖν·

καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν

οὔσ' ἢ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.

Ears in his feet



[Certainly not] Artaphernes

79 He made a request to Dionysius on behalf of a friend and, failing to obtain it, fell down at his feet. And when someone jeered at him, he made reply, 'It is not I who am to blame, but Dionysius who had his ears in his feet.' He was once staying in Asia and was taken prisoner by Artaphernes, the satrap. 'Can you be cheerful under these circumstances?' someone asked. 'Yes, you simpleton,' was the reply, 'for when should I be more cheerful than now that I am about to converse with Artaphernes?' Those who went through the ordinary curriculum, but in their studies stopped short at philosophy, he used to compare to the suitors of Penelope. For the suitors won Melanthe, Polydora and the rest of the handmaidens, but were anything but successful in their wooing of the mistress.

79 Δεόμενός ποτε ὑπὲρ φίλου Διονυσίου καὶ μὴ ἐπιτυχάνων εἰς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ἔπεσε· πρὸς οὖν τὸν ἐπισκώψαντα, 'οὐκ ἐγώ,' φησὶν, 'αἴτιος, ἀλλὰ Διονύσιος ὁ ἐν τοῖς ποσὶ τὰς ἀκοὰς ἔχων.' διατρίβων ἐν Ἀσίᾳ καὶ ληφθεὶς ὑπὸ Ἄρταφέρνου τοῦ σατράπου πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα, 'καὶ ὧδε θαρρεῖς,' 'πότε γάρ,' εἶπεν, 'ὧ μάταιε, θαρρήσοιμι ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ νῦν, ὅτε μέλλω Ἄρταφέρνῃ διαλέξεσθαι;' τοὺς τῶν ἐγκυκλίων παιδευμάτων μετασχόντας, φιλοσοφίας δὲ ἀπολειφθέντας ὁμοίους ἔλεγεν εἶναι τοῖς τῆς Πηνελόπης μνηστῆρσι· καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνους Μελανθῶ μὲν καὶ Πολυδώραν καὶ τὰς ἄλλας θεραπαίνας ἔχειν, πάντα δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ αὐτὴν τὴν δέσποιναν δύνασθαι γῆμαι.

Teaching boys

80 Again, when Aristippus was asked what are the subjects which handsome boys ought to learn, his reply was, 'Those which will be useful to them when they are grown up.' To the critic who censured him for leaving Socrates to go to Dionysius, his rejoinder was, 'Yes, but I came to Socrates for education and to Dionysius for

amusement.' When he had made some money by teaching, Socrates asked him, 'Where did you get so much?' to which he replied, 'Where you got so little.'

80 Ὁ δ' οὖν Ἀρίστιππος ἐρωτηθεὶς τίνα ἐστὶν ἃ δεῖ τοὺς καλοὺς παῖδας μαθάνειν, ἔφη, 'οἷς ἄνδρες γενόμενοι χρήσονται.' πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα ἐν αἰτίᾳ ὡς ἀπὸ Σωκράτους πρὸς Διονύσιον ἔλθοι, 'ἀλλὰ πρὸς Σωκράτην μὲν,' εἶπεν, 'ἦλθον παιδείας ἕνεκεν, πρὸς δὲ Διονύσιον παιδιᾶς.' ἐξ ὁμιλίας αὐτῷ χρηματισαμένῳ φησὶ Σωκράτης, 'πόθεν σοι τοσαῦτα;' καὶ ὅς, 'ὅθεν σοι τὰ ὀλίγα.'

Rejecting his son

81 A courtesan having told him that she was with child by him, he replied, 'You are no surer of this than if, after running through coarse rushes, you were to say you had been pricked by one in particular.' Someone accused him of throwing out his son as if it was not his offspring. He replied, 'Phlegm, too, and vermin we know to be of our own begetting, but for all that, because they are useless, we cast them as far from us as possible.' He received a sum of money from Dionysius at the same time that Plato carried off a book and, when he was twitted with this, his reply was, 'Well, I want money, Plato wants books.' Someone asked him why he was reproached by Dionysius. 'For the same reason,' said he, 'as the others reproach him.' [All anyone ever wanted was Dionysius' money?]

81 Ἐταίρας εἰπούσης πρὸς αὐτόν, 'ἐκ σοῦ κυῶ,' 'οὐ μᾶλλον,' ἔφη, 'γινώσκεις ἢ εἰ δι' ὀλοσχοίνων ἰοῦσα ἔφασκες ὑπὸ τοῦδε κεκεντῆσθαι.' ἠτιάσατό τις αὐτὸν τὸν υἱὸν ἀπορριπτοῦντα ὥσπερ οὐκ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ γεγονότα· καὶ ὅς, 'καὶ τὸ φλέγμα,' φησὶ, 'καὶ τοὺς φθειράς ἐξ ἡμῶν ἴσμεν γεννωμένους, ἀλλ' ἀχρεῖα ὄντα ὡς πορρωτάτω ῥιπτοῦμεν.' ἐκδεξάμενος τὸ ἀργύριον παρὰ Διονυσίου, Πλάτωνος ἄραντος βιβλίον, πρὸς τὸν αἰτιασάμενον, 'ἐγὼ μὲν γάρ,' εἶπεν, 'ἀργυρίων, Πλάτων δὲ βιβλίων ἐστὶν ἐνδεής.' πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα τίνος ἕνεκα ἐλέγχεται παρὰ Διονυσίου, 'οὗ ἕνεκα,' φησὶν, 'οἱ ἄλλοι ἐλέγχουσιν.'

Next week: Aristotle