

## **Do the wise always succeed?**

### **A split-level reading of *Euthydemus* 278-282**

#### **ABSTRACT**

At *Euthydemus* 278-282, Socrates produces an argument that has almost universally been agreed to entail that wisdom is sufficient for happiness, necessary for happiness, or both. According to these standard readings, this is because Socrates ties wisdom to correct use of one's assets. Since wisdom is necessary or sufficient for correct use and correct use is necessary or sufficient for happiness, wisdom bears the same relation(s) to happiness, *mutatis mutandis*. I propose a split-level reading of this passage. On the level of *natures*, Socrates aims to establish that a causal-explanatory relation holds between the nature of wisdom and correctness such that wisdom by nature always produces correctness; ignorance, conversely, by nature never produces correctness. However on the level of *individuals*, the causal relations are defeasible such that the wise sometimes fail and the ignorant sometimes succeed. Thus this reading does not entail that having wisdom is necessary or sufficient for correct use or for happiness. If this split-level reading is correct, then this passage, the *locus classicus* for the necessity and sufficiency theses, fails to establish either.

**Keywords:** wisdom, happiness, Socrates, Euthydemus, fortune

The argument Socrates presents to Cleinias, his interlocutor, at *Euthydemus* 278–282 appears to promote an extreme position with confusing and inadequate support. On standard readings, Socrates argues that only the wise are happy, or that being wise alone is enough to make one happy, or both. In other words, he claims that wisdom is necessary or sufficient for happiness, or both.<sup>1</sup> This is so, according to the standard readings, because Socrates ties wisdom to correct use of one’s assets, and correct use to happiness. Socrates often invokes the expertise of craftsmen when arguing that wisdom is tied to correct use. Take the expert carpenter. The expert carpenter always correctly uses the tools of carpentry (per the sufficiency thesis), and the novice attempting carpentry always incorrectly uses the tools of carpentry (per the necessity thesis).<sup>2</sup> Yet, one might object, surely the expert at times makes mistakes and the novice attempting carpentry at times gets it right. An apprentice might even reliably get it right, yet in adverse circumstances the expert might reliably fail. Further, Socrates appears to be aware that at times the inexpert carpenter will correctly use the tools of carpentry and the expert will sometimes fail. In short, it is hard to see how these extreme theses match the cases of expertise that, on standard readings, Socrates uses to establish them.

This is not all that might seem unpalatable about the argument. Under the necessity thesis, another consequence seems to be that no one is happy. The wisdom that Socrates seeks is an extremely high cognitive achievement. Neither Socrates nor anyone he has ever encountered has obtained it. If *this* is the kind of wisdom that is necessary for happiness, then the result of this argument would seem to be that no one is happy, not even Socrates. Russell Jones accepts precisely this conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> See Jones, “Wisdom and Happiness in *Euthydemus* 278–282”, for a survey of literature in support of each thesis (p. 1–2 n. 3). Fox, “Complex Wisdom in the *Euthydemus*”, has also recently argued that Socrates is committed to the sufficiency thesis (190 n. 4).

<sup>2</sup> The relation between wisdom and correct use is also standardly characterized in terms of necessary or sufficient conditions: For all humans, if they are wise, they correctly use their assets (and are thus happy). For all humans, if they are not wise, they incorrectly use their assets (and are thus unhappy).

At 280b–281d, Socrates argues that wisdom is necessary for correct use, that correct use is necessary for benefit, and that benefit is necessary for happiness. From this he concludes that wisdom is necessary for happiness” (“Felix Socrates?”, 16).

As Jones sees it, Socrates’ view of the human condition is rather bleak. Since Socrates lacks precisely this wisdom, Jones concludes that Socrates considers himself and seemingly everyone else to be unhappy.<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Smith, on the other hand, denies the sufficiency thesis and defends a weak version of the necessity thesis for primarily philosophical reasons.<sup>4</sup> Smith argues that if we accept the ‘standard’ reading, according to which “one is either a master craftsmen or one falls short of that achievement”, then “we will understand Socrates to be claiming that only the master craft of carpentry brings about the right use of wood. The problem with this, of course, is that it is plainly false” (“Socrates on the Human Condition”, 83).

Interpreters differ methodologically about how to best interpret texts in which the textual evidence seems to favor a philosophically dubious, or ‘plainly false’, view. As I see it, we are not left with such a dilemma. In the reconstruction that follows, I argue for a split-level reading of *Euthydemus* 278–82 in which Socrates develops a precise account of the explanatory relations that hold between goods in virtue of their natures. On the level of natures, wisdom by nature causes success and ignorance by nature causes failure. However, these causal relations do not entail that wisdom is necessary or sufficient for happiness. This is the case because wisdom and ignorance are defeasible when instantiated. On the level of individuals, the wise at times fail and the ignorant at times succeed. As this passage is the *locus classicus* for the necessity and

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<sup>3</sup> See Jones, “Felix Socrates?” and “Socrates’ Bleak View of the Human Condition”.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, “Socrates on the Human Condition”, appeals primarily to the *Apology* and *Gorgias* for support. Smith accepts a weak version of the necessity thesis under which wisdom is gradable; the highest degree of wisdom is not necessary for happiness, although some lower degree of wisdom is. I argue here that even this weak version of the necessity thesis is not entailed by this argument.

sufficiency theses, if this split-level causal reading is correct it will undercut the primary textual support for these doctrines.

### Reconstructing the Argument

Let's begin by examining Socrates' summary of the argument at *Euthydemus* 282a1–7.

Since [1] we all want to be happy, and since [2] we appear to become so by using things and using them correctly; and since [3] knowledge<sup>5</sup> produces correctness and good fortune, [4] it seems to be necessary that every man should prepare himself by every means to become as wise as possible.<sup>6</sup>

This looks like a good piece of practical reasoning that Socrates offers Cleinias, his interlocutor: *Since you want to be happy, Cleinias, prepare to become as wise as possible. Why? Because we become happy by using things correctly and wisdom produces correct use.*<sup>7</sup> If the protreptic is effective, it will turn Cleinias toward the pursuit of wisdom.

Since Socrates expends almost all of his argumentative energy supporting the second and third premises, I will track the lines of support for each, contrasting the split-level and standard readings along the way. Yet, as sometimes occurs in Socratic discourse, some of the premises initially accepted by Socrates' interlocutors are revised or outright rejected by the end. Since, as I will argue, Socrates is leading Cleinias from a vulgar notion of the goods that make one happy to a more philosophically precise notion of what is good in itself and what makes one happy, I take it that the argument begins with the vulgar view that Cleinias initially accepts but ultimately

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<sup>5</sup> I take 'knowledge' (ἐπιστήμη) and 'wisdom' (σοφία) to interchangeable in this argument. Cf. Jones "Wisdom and Happiness in Euthydemus 278–282", 5 n. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Unless otherwise specified, all translations are from Sprague 1993 (lightly edited for terminological consistency).

<sup>7</sup> The Greek term for 'what produces', ἡ παράγουσα, makes it clear that this is a causal relation.

rejects: having goods makes one happy and one needs good fortune to obtain these goods. Let's turn to the vulgar view.

### **The Vulgar View of Happiness**

Socrates' argument exhorting Cleinias "to devote himself to wisdom and virtue" (278d2–3) follows a long speech in which Socrates explains to Cleinias what the two eristic brothers, Euthydemus and Dionysidorus, have just done to Cleinias. The eristic brothers at first promised to demonstrate their wisdom by showing that they are "best able to exhort one to philosophy and the practice of virtue" (274e8–275a2). Yet, rather than exhorting Cleinias to practice virtue, they have been playfully exploiting verbal ambiguities to lead Cleinias into contradiction as he replies to their lines of questioning. Socrates then tells Cleinias that this is merely an initiation ritual used by the brothers to teach Cleinias about the "correct use of words" (277d–e). Socrates calls this the "frivolous" part of the brothers' skill before asking them to stop jesting and to present a serious exhibition of philosophical protreptic (278b–d). Socrates then exhibits the kind of protreptic he seeks and, within it, the argument that will be our main concern. Socrates begins with a few 'obvious' premises.

Do all humans wish to do well (εὖ πράττειν)? Or is this question one of the ridiculous ones I was afraid of just now? I suppose it is stupid even to raise such a question, since there could hardly be a human who would not wish to do well (278e3–6).

Doing well is intimately connected to happiness, if not identical to it, in this argument. As we have seen in the Socratic summary of the argument, the first premise is that we all want to be happy. The phrases, 'doing well' and 'being happy', are used interchangeably throughout the

argument, so it appears that Socrates takes the implicit answer to his initial question as equivalent to the first premise of the protreptic: all humans wish to be happy.<sup>8</sup> There is no further defense of this premise by Socrates, but it is taken as a datum and an obvious one at that.

However, the next ‘obvious’ claim is rejected in the course of the argument. This statement will be part of the vulgar view of happiness that it seems Cleinias pre-theoretically accepts, but ultimately rejects.

Well then, I said, the next question is, since we wish to do well, how are we to do so? Would it be through having many good things? Or is this question still more simple minded than the other, since this obviously must be the case too (279a1–4).

Cleinias accepts that we do well by having many good things. I take this assumption to be one part of a larger package that I am calling the vulgar view of happiness.

To fill out the vulgar view of happiness, Socrates’ next steps are to determine which things are good and how to get them. The list of goods Socrates surveys is long; each good falls into one of four categories: *external goods* such as wealth; *goods of the body* such as health and good looks; *goods of status* such as noble birth; and *goods of the soul* such as courage. Wisdom too is said to be on the list of goods, as is “the greatest good of all”, good fortune (279a–c). This section establishes a second component of the vulgar view: we do well (and are happy) by having many of *these* goods (e.g. wealth, health, status, courage).

If the argument were to have stopped here, Cleinias would have accepted two of the three components of the vulgar view of happiness. The vulgar view would look something like this:

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<sup>8</sup> The first use of the term for ‘being happy’ shows up in this argument at 280b6: “We decided, I said, that if we had many good things, we should be happy and do well (εὐδαιμονεῖν ἂν καὶ εὖ πράττειν).” This provisional conclusion is ultimately rejected. The καὶ here is likely expegetic. As such, to be happy is either identical to doing well or they are inter-entailing.

We all want to do well. We do well by having many of these good things. If we compare it to the Socratic argument it parallels, there is a significant lacuna. The lacuna concerns how one acquires these goods. Perhaps we can think of the vulgar view as lacking a real answer to this question. If so, then the vulgar view would be that one simply happens to have strength, wealth, noble birth, or natural courage. One is certainly not fully in control of acquiring a number of goods on the list. If this is right, then the transition to a discussion of good fortune is fitting. What ‘accounts’ for the acquisition of goods? Good fortune, on the vulgar view.<sup>9</sup> Since Socrates immediately shifts to discussing good fortune (εὐτυχία), this suggests that the final (albeit tacit) piece of the vulgar view is this: one acquires many of these goods and is happy through good fortune.

### **Wisdom Produces Good Fortune**

As Socrates begins to challenge the vulgar view of happiness, he wonders whether he and Cleinias have made a mistake by adding good fortune to the list of goods. To include good fortune in the list would be to “say the same thing all over again” because “wisdom surely is good fortune”, according to Socrates. He adds that “this is something even a child would know” (279d2–7).

There is much dispute about how to interpret the extraordinary claim that wisdom is good fortune. Interpretive choice points abound: What is the relationship between wisdom and good fortune that Socrates describes here? This is a *prima facie* identity statement. Yet in the conclusion of this part of the argument Socrates asserts that “wisdom makes men fortunate in every case” (280a6) and in his summary of the overall protreptic he claims that “knowledge

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<sup>9</sup> This account of the functional role that good fortune plays in the vulgar view of happiness is what I take to be the best explanation of these peculiar moves in the argument. Thus, the initial list includes both first order goods *and* that by which one acquires the first order goods.

produces good fortune” (282a4). It is hard to see how knowledge could produce good fortune if wisdom were identical to good fortune. Further, what does ‘good fortune’ mean? Is it good luck that is beyond agential control or is it success that is within agential control? And if it is agential success, is it *internal* success or *outcome* success?<sup>10</sup>

Socrates clarifies the claim that wisdom is good fortune with the following epagoge in which he cites the good fortune of experts and of those affected by the actions of experts. This epagoge will help in navigating the interpretive choice points outlined above.

- (i) Flute players have the “best fortune when it comes to success (εὐπραγίαν) in flute music.”
- (ii) Writing masters have the best fortune when it comes to success in reading and writing.
- (iii) “As a general rule (ὡς ἐπὶ πᾶν εἰπεῖν)”, no ship captains have better fortune than wise ones.
- (iv) It is preferable to “share the danger and the fortune” with wise rather than ignorant generals when on campaign.
- (v) It is preferable to “take a chance” with a wise doctor than with an ignorant one.
- (vi) It is more fortunate to do things in the company of wise men than ignorant ones.

*Conclusion:* Wisdom makes men fortunate in every case (279d8–280a6).

Socrates offers a diverse list of experts to explicate his claim that wisdom is good fortune. It is difficult to see initially what makes each case an instance of good fortune. The first two cases are examples of experts who achieve success and good fortune in their domain of expertise. The

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<sup>10</sup> See Jones “Wisdom and Happiness in *Euthydemus* 278–282”, and Fox, “Complex Wisdom in the *Euthydemus*”, for a similar analysis of the theoretical choices available here. As I am in substantial agreement, the initial part of this section briefly reviews and supplements Jones’ navigation of these choice points. My interpretation departs from Jones and Fox as I do not opt for the ‘moderate’ reading but offer a ‘split-level’ reading.



flute player successfully plays the piece of flute music and the writing master successfully reads and writes. However, when Socrates turns to the ship captain, he qualifies the achievement. Socrates posits that the expert captain has better fortune “as a general rule”. This shows that Socrates is sensitive to conditions that might defeat the efficacy of wisdom to bring about good fortune. Socrates makes plain his awareness that sometimes expert ship captains are less fortunate than non-experts, although this is not the case as a general rule. The last two cases of expertise and the summary statement all seem to be distinct from the other cases in the following respect. In these cases it is not agents, but patients who have good fortune because of the successful exercise of expertise of the general, the doctor and the wise men respectively.

Let us reconsider our theoretical choices in light of this epagoge. Is “wisdom is good fortune” an identity statement? Jones analyzes the case of the wise physician and ignorant patient as he explains why “wisdom is good fortune” cannot be an identity statement:

The important point here is that the wisdom is the physician’s (but not yours) and the good fortune is yours (but not the physician’s). But this means that wisdom and good fortune are not identical, for you can have one without the other (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 6).

Jones notes that the good fortune of patients and the misfortune of some who are wise show that this cannot be an identity statement, since some who are wise do not have good fortune (e.g. some ship captains), and some who are not wise have good fortune (e.g. some patients). If wisdom were identical to good fortune this would be impossible. While this precludes the identity of wisdom and good fortune, it is still unclear what relationship holds between them based solely on this epagoge. The relationship must be quite strong if we need not include

fortune on the list of goods since its inclusion would somehow reduplicate wisdom. I return to the nature of this relationship shortly.

The second set of theoretical choices concerns the meaning of ‘good fortune’. Does it refer to what is within agential control or what is outside of agential control? It is certainly possible to take the Greek for ‘good fortune’ (εὐτυχία) as pure luck that is not up to us. Yet it can also refer to success quite generally, not merely favorable circumstances or outcomes that are beyond our control.<sup>11</sup> In the first example of expertise in the epagoge above, Socrates uses another term that denotes success in action (εὐπραγίαν), thus specifying what sort of success is under consideration. In doing so, Socrates makes the first part of our second theoretical choice explicit: good fortune refers to success due to action, whether the agent or patient is deemed fortunate.

Does ‘good fortune’ refer to internal or outcome success?<sup>12</sup> As Jones notes, if it referred to internal success, then it could only be achieved by the experts themselves, not the patients who are also deemed fortunate in (iv) and (v) (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 8-11). Those who “share the luck” of the general cannot be sharing the general’s internal success. The patient is not exercising any expertise when she is healed by the doctor. In sum, according to this epagoge, ‘good fortune’ must refer to outcome success that is due to the activity of some agent.

However, if *this* is what Socrates means by good fortune, the following lines appear to be false and unsupported by the cases of expertise Socrates just cited:

So wisdom makes humans fortunate (εὐτυχεῖν) in every case, since I don’t suppose she would ever make any sort of mistake but must necessarily act

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<sup>11</sup> See *LSJ* s.v. εὐτυχία. Since εὐτυχία is ambiguous, I will use ‘good fortune’ for agential outcome success and ‘luck’ for what is out of one’s control.

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Russell, *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, and Dimas, “Happiness in the *Euthydemus*”, for interpretations of good fortune as internal success. See, e.g., Jones, “Wisdom and Happiness in *Euthydemus* 278–282”, and Fox, “Complex Wisdom in the *Euthydemus*”, for interpretations of good fortune as outcome success.

correctly (ὀρθῶς πράττειν) and be fortunate (τυγχάνειν) – otherwise she would no longer be wisdom (280a6–8).

We finally agreed (I don't know quite how) that, in sum, the situation was this: if a man had wisdom, he had no need of any good fortune in addition (280b1–3).

How could these claims, the apparent conclusion of the epagoge, be true when 'good fortune' is read as 'agential outcome success'? Socrates has just acknowledged that wise ship captains are sometimes unsuccessful at providing safe passage. This is simply false if the claims above are read as entailing the sufficiency thesis. Is there any good way to make sense of this conclusion?

Terence Irwin has distinguished a moderate and an extreme reading of this passage. On a moderate reading, the passage is qualified in some way – here by a *ceteris paribus* clause; "...wisdom ensures more success, other things being equal, than we can expect if we lack wisdom" (*Plato's Ethics*, 55). The adverse circumstances that might defeat the ability of wisdom to make one fortunate are bracketed on this reading. On an extreme reading, there is no such qualification; wisdom guarantees success in all circumstances. Irwin opts for the extreme reading, although he admits that Socrates has given us "no argument for the extreme claim about wisdom and success" (*Plato's Ethics*, 56).

Daniel Russell, who also argues for an extreme reading, expresses the distinction between the two readings in terms of a 'gap' between wisdom and success. On the moderate reading there is a gap, with the result that wisdom does not guarantee success. Yet, according to Russell, the passage makes it explicit that there is no such gap. If there were, what could Socrates mean by claiming that wisdom *is* good fortune and that good fortune is already on the list of goods? Russell too thinks that Socrates does not adequately support this claim with the epagoge that precedes it. Since Socrates qualifies his claims about the good fortune of ship

captains with “as a general rule”, Russell also thinks that Socrates is *aware* that his argument does not support such a strong conclusion (“Plato on Pleasure”, 36-42).

The moderate readings most relevant for us are those that posit causal, or nomological, readings of this passage in which a law-like, yet contingent, relation holds between wisdom and good fortune.<sup>13</sup> Jones, who argues that “the relation between wisdom and good fortune is explicitly causal” (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 6), unpacks the relation between wisdom and success as follows: “In every circumstance, wisdom produces the greatest outcome-success possible given that circumstance” (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 10). Because the nomological readings in the literature qualify ‘wisdom never errs’ and read the claim as applying primarily to wisdom *instantiated*, these readings deny the sufficiency thesis. Under such a reading, there will be cases in which the wise fail to produce success although this will not occur as a general rule.

It seems, then, that one is left with a choice between two readings with unresolved tensions. On an extreme reading there is no gap between wisdom and success. The tension on this reading lies in the lack of support for this extreme conclusion of the epagoge. Although Socrates acknowledges that at times wise ship captains are unsuccessful, the extreme reading precludes this.<sup>14</sup> On a moderate reading, the cases of expertise in the epagoge support the moderate conclusion. However, on this reading the tension lies in the ‘gap’ between wisdom and success. It is hard to read Socrates’ unqualified claims - wisdom *never* errs<sup>15</sup> and wisdom *necessarily* acts correctly (emphasis added) - as qualified claims about wise individuals that allow the wise to err. These unqualified statements *prima facie* exclude such a possibility.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Smith, *Socrates on Self-Improvement* and Reshotko, *Socratic Virtue*.

<sup>14</sup> Adams also supports the extreme reading: “[Socrates] says absolutely that wisdom everywhere makes us to be fortunate (*eutuchein*, 280a6), not ‘to be more fortunate than we otherwise would have been’ or ‘more fortunate than those lacking in wisdom’” (“Sophia, Eutuchia”, 55).

<sup>15</sup> Literally: “Or do you suppose wisdom would ever err?” (280a6-8)

## A Split-Level Reading

Let us review the passages in question in order to unpack the relation that holds between wisdom and good fortune. Perhaps if we could clarify that relation, we could better see how to navigate the textual tension outlined in the last section. The structure of the passage beginning at 280a6 is a conclusion followed two explanatory clauses.<sup>16</sup> The epagoge leads Socrates to the conclusion: “Therefore, wisdom makes humans fortunate in every case”.<sup>17</sup> Why is *this* is the case? Because wisdom never errs. Why does wisdom never err? Because if wisdom were to err (*per impossibile*), it would not be wisdom. These explanatory clauses concern the *nature* of wisdom itself. Wisdom is of a nature never to err. Wisdom not only fails to produce error because of its nature, but “must necessarily act correctly and be fortunate”. Thus, it is by nature a correctness–producer *and* a success–producer.

We can now see what grounds the conclusion of the epagoge – that wisdom makes men fortunate in every case. It does so because wisdom is by nature a success–producer. Unlike the cases of expertise of the epagoge, here Socrates is considering the causal power of wisdom itself. When Socrates considers the nature of wisdom as such and its relation to success, there is no gap between wisdom and success. Wisdom as such guarantees success.

Does Socrates make these same claims about individual experts, such that individual experts also *necessarily* act correctly and never err? Or does Socrates think that the causal efficacy of wisdom is defeasible when instantiated in wise individuals? Socrates makes it clear that he is sensitive to conditions that might defeat the efficacy of wisdom–instantiated, even though wisdom itself is of a nature to produce success. By qualifying his statement about the ship captain with “as a general rule”, Socrates expresses awareness that at times the wise ship

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<sup>16</sup> The conclusion is marked by the inferential particle, ἄρα, and each explanatory clause is marked by the causal conjunction, γὰρ.

<sup>17</sup> Socrates transitions here from cases of expert action to the explanation of their success in each case: wisdom.

captain fails to safely reach port even though he is an expert exercising his wisdom, which is by its nature a success–producer. Adverse circumstances might throw him off course so that he fails to achieve success despite having what by nature produces it.

Therefore, I propose a split-level causal reading as a way of accounting for *both* Socrates' unqualified claim that wisdom never errs *and* his qualification of the causal efficacy of the wise. How can Socrates accept both? In short, by splitting levels. On the level of natures, it is correct to say that wisdom itself is inerrant. On this level Socrates is concerned with a causal relation that holds between two relata: wisdom itself on the one hand and success (or correctness) on the other. This causal relation, Socrates claims, is inerrant. On the level of wise-individuals, the wise sometimes fail. Here the relata are distinct: wise individuals stand on the left side of the causal relation and their success (or correctness) in action stands on the right. This causal relation is defeasible, according to Socrates, when instantiated. There are cases in which the wise ship captain fails to reach port while exercising the expertise of piloting.

How is this reading distinct from the strict and moderate readings? Unlike extreme interpreters and in accordance with moderate interpreters, on the level of wise individuals Socrates accepts that the wise err. Unlike the moderate readings, this split-level reading takes 'wisdom never errs' to be *unqualified* but reads it as concerning the *nature* of wisdom itself. If we shift our interpretive focus to the nature of wisdom as a power to produce success and correctness, perhaps we will be in a better position to see how the remaining pieces of the argument fall into place.

What kind of relation is employed on the level of natures such that wisdom could be understood as inerrant? I suggest that it is the kind of relation that Socrates takes to hold between a power (*dunamis*) and its function (*ergon*). Socrates makes it explicit that he is eager

to learn the power of the eristic brothers wisdom and he asks them to “demonstrate the power [*dunamis*] of their wisdom” (274d4). This is a reason to expect that Socrates does the same in his demonstration of the kind of speech he expects from the brothers. Yet, if this is right, what exactly is this power and what does it accomplish?<sup>18</sup>

To see what kind of power wisdom might have, let’s for the moment consider a distinction between theoretical and practical cognitive states. Certain cognitive states have correctness built into them. For example, knowledge has correctness built into it by having correct, that is true, content. Knowledge never errs by having false content but is always correct by having true content. It seems that Socrates is thinking similarly about the nature of wisdom since correctness is similarly built into its nature. This practical expertise has a power (*dunamis*) with correctness in action as its function (*ergon*). Wisdom never errs because correctness in action is built into the nature of its power, just as true content is built into the nature of knowledge.

Yet these theoretical and practical cognitive success states differ when instantiated in humans. It cannot be the case that a knower, S, knows that p while p fails to be true. Facts about knower and known travel together, so to speak, in every possible world. However, in the practical domain Socrates expresses awareness that the wise can fail and thus that the practically wise do not always travel with corresponding correct actions in all possible worlds. This is because the practically wise are not omnipotent but are subject to defeaters (e.g. adverse weather conditions) and might lack enabling conditions (e.g. functioning tools) for their success.

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<sup>18</sup> Hugh Benson outlines a number of features of Socratic *dunamis*. “For Socrates, a *dunamis* is a state or feature of a thing by which the thing [...] does what it does” (“Socratic Dynamic Theory”, 81). Each *dunamis* has a work that it produces (e.g. medicine produces health). In general, each *dunamis* has a *distinct* object and relates only to that object. While the ship captain might preserve one’s health by producing safe passage, the *dunamis* has strictly speaking not produced health because health is not its object. It only produces its object: safe passage. See Brickhouse and Smith, *Plato’s Socrates*, for the view that the work (*ergon*) of a *dunamis* is the same as the object (6).

It might seem difficult to see how we can square this reading with the passage that immediately follows at 280b1–3: “We finally agreed (I don’t know quite how) that, in sum, the situation was this: if a man had wisdom, he had no need of any good fortune in addition”. This appears to be a case of an *expert* that does not need any good fortune in addition to expertise. If this is left unqualified, Socrates seems to assert the extreme view promoted by Irwin and Russell – that experts are always successful no matter the circumstances, even though Socrates expresses awareness that this is not the case. Yet if it is qualified under a moderate reading, we are left with a gap between wisdom and success that Socrates seems intent on closing. How are we to interpret this passage under a split-level reading?

First, note that Socrates qualifies his statement with an undermining parenthetical, “I don’t know quite how”, which might signal an uneasiness with the quality its support, or with the ambiguity of ‘good fortune’, or both. I take it that there is a sense in which the conditional follows from his claims about the nature of wisdom and a sense in which it goes beyond them. Socrates has just asserted that wisdom is by nature a success–producer and that wisdom never errs. The language Socrates uses here is similar to the “most precise” account that Thrasymachus’ offers in *Republic* I 340c–41a concerning the ruler.<sup>19</sup>

No craftsman, expert or ruler makes an error at the moment when he is ruling, even though everyone will say that a physician or a ruler makes errors. It is in this loose way that you must also take the answer I gave earlier [that ruler’s aren’t infallible but are liable to error]. But the most precise (ἀκριβέστατον) answer is this. A ruler, insofar as he is a ruler, never errs... (340e–41a)

Thrasymachus contrasts this ‘most precise’ account with the kind of loose talk that everyone uses when talking about experts. Experts, insofar as they are experts (or qua–experts), never err. Of

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Rider “Wisdom, Εὐτυχία”, 4; Nawar, “Thrasymachus’ Unerring Skill”, 364-73.



course, when speaking loosely everyone says that experts err. Thrasymachus' loose talk picks out a fallible human in whom expertise is instantiated and says of this human that he errs. In this loose sense it is correct to say that individual experts err. Yet when an individual expert does err, the error is not explained by the expertise. The precise account, on the other hand, isolates an attribute of a subject (e.g. the wisdom of an expert) and specifies what results from that attribute (e.g. success in action), apart from any other considerations such as adverse circumstances.

I propose that we read Socrates' claim here in the *Euthydemus* similarly, as an instance of implicit qua-predication: "If a man had wisdom, then [insofar as he had wisdom] he had no need of any good fortune in addition."<sup>20</sup> In this Socratic claim, the two levels – the nature of wisdom and wisdom instantiated – collide and need to be disambiguated. If this is right, then it explains why Socrates qualifies his claim with an undermining parenthetical. He does so because his statement can be read in the loose or the precise way.<sup>21</sup> It is false and unsupported by what precedes it if read in the loose way, since the wise in fact err. Yet it is true and supported if read in the precise way, since the wise do not err insofar as they are wise.

Is this 'qua-ified' reading of the passage licit? Or is it unjustified by the context of the passage? In the immediately preceding textual context, Socrates refers to the nature of wisdom and what results from its nature: correctness and success (280a6-8). I take the claim that the wise-*qua*-wise need no good fortune (i.e. success) in addition to isolate the *nature* of wisdom and specify what follows from its causal power alone – success. *Insofar as* they have the success-

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<sup>20</sup> This qua-ified reading has been influenced by Rachel Barney's forthcoming paper, 'Platonic Qua Predication.' Barney argues that Platonic qua-predications (F's qua F's are G's) need not entail universal generalizations (All F's are G's). Rider embraces some version of a qua-ified reading of this passage ("Wisdom, Εὐτυχία", 4). Jones also notes the possibility of such a reading ("Wisdom and Happiness", 9 n. 23).

<sup>21</sup> Why does Socrates use provocative and paradoxical language that even a reasonably astute interlocutor cannot be expected to follow? I take the best explanation to be the dialogical context. Socrates takes Euthydemus and Dionysodorus to be performing an initiation ritual to teach Cleinias about the 'correct use of words' (277d-e). Socrates does the same; he employs ambiguous terms in his arguments to teach Cleinias the valuable philosophical skill of disambiguation. Once a polysemous term or phrase is disambiguated (e.g. good fortune is agential outcome success and not luck), Socrates' premises can be seen to appropriately support his conclusion.

producer, they need no success in addition. Since Socrates has just referred to the causal power of the nature of wisdom and has qualified his statement about wise individuals with an undermining parenthetical, the immediate textual context provides evidence that supports the qua-ified causal reading. As we shall soon see, Socrates proceeds to present a novel value theory that concerns the causal relations that hold between goods in themselves by nature (καθ' αὐτὰ πέφυκεν) (281d2–e1). This provides further evidence that Socrates has been concerned with the nature of wisdom and its causal power throughout the argument.<sup>22</sup>

### Wisdom Produces Correct Use

After quickly establishing that one becomes happy by correctly using assets,<sup>23</sup> Socrates now argues for the crucial part of the third premise of the protreptic: wisdom, or knowledge, produces correct use. This claim and the Socratic support for it are often what lead standard interpreters to attribute the necessity or sufficiency theses to Socrates. Let's consider whether the following passages require either thesis. Socrates presents the following epagoge in support of wisdom's relation to correct use.

- i) “In working and using wood there is surely nothing else that brings about right use except the knowledge of carpentry, is there?”
- ii) In making utensils, “the thing accomplishing correctness is knowledge.”

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<sup>22</sup> A passage from the second protreptic in the *Euthydemus* supports this causal, qua-ified reading. In the second protreptic Socrates and Cleinias are looking for a craft that is “the cause (ἡ αἰτία) of right action (τοῦ ὀρθῶς πράττειν) in the state” (291c10–d1). Socrates asks, “If I should ask you what result does medicine produce, *when it rules over all the things in its control*, would you not say that this result was health?” (emphasis added) Similarly, Socrates asks about Cleinias' art of farming, “*when it rules over all the things in its control*, what result does it produce? Wouldn't you say that it produces nourishment from the earth?” (291e4–292a2, emphasis added) Cf. *Rep I* 340d–e where Thrasymachus freely substitutes such a ruling condition with qua-language. The craftsman, *insofar as he is a craftsman* (or *at the very moment he is ruling*), never errs.

<sup>23</sup> Because Socrates uses the phrase ‘doing well’ (εὖ πράττειν) interchangeably with ‘being happy’ (εὐδαιμονεῖν) (280b6) and also exchanges ‘doing well’ (εὐπραγία) with ‘correct use’ and ‘correctness’ (ὀρθῶς χρῆσθαι, τὴν δὲ ὀρθότητα) in the final summary of the argument at (282a4), I take doing well, or correct use, to be necessary and sufficient for happiness.

- iii) “Was it knowledge that ruled and directed our conduct in relation to the correct use of all such things as [e.g. wealth, health, beauty], or some other thing.”

*Conclusion:* “Then knowledge seems to provide men not only with good fortune (εὐτυχία) but also with doing well (εὐπραγία) in every acquisition and action” (281a2–b4).

Irwin takes this epagoge to establish that wisdom is necessary and sufficient for correct use. As we saw in the previous section, Socrates apparently holds that correct use is necessary and sufficient for happiness. Together these premises entail both that wisdom is necessary and sufficient for happiness. Irwin asserts that, while Socrates is committed to this conclusion, this is a “more extreme conclusion than Socrates is entitled to” (*Plato's Ethics*, 56).

To see whether Socrates' is committed to this extreme conclusion, consider whether this epagoge establishes that wisdom is necessary and sufficient for correct use or merely establishes that wisdom causes correct use. First, Socrates emphasizes not necessary and sufficient conditions but the causal, governing role of knowledge as it relates to doing well (*eupragia*), or correct use. Knowledge of carpentry “brings about” right use. The thing “accomplishing correctness” is knowledge. When knowledge “rules and directs” our conduct, we correctly use our assets. Thus, the epagoge clearly aims to establish a causal claim. It seems to leave the question of whether this causal claim entails the necessity and sufficiency theses undetermined. Second, it is evident that the crucial third premise itself concerns *knowledge as such* and its product. The conclusion of this epagoge, what I am calling the crucial premise of the overall argument, is not a claim about wise individuals and their relationship to correct use (and good fortune). Therefore, since this conclusion involves a *causal* relation that holds between wisdom

itself and correct use, it does not by itself establish the necessity and sufficiency theses that claim *logical* relations hold between wise individuals and correct use of their assets.

If the necessity and sufficiency theses are not established in the previous passage, does the following passage establish either?

“Then, by Zeus”, I said, “is there any benefit from other possessions without intelligence and wisdom (ἀνευ φρονήσεως καὶ σοφίας)? Would a man benefit more from possessing many things and doing many things without sense (νοῦν μὴ ἔχων), or from possessing and doing little? Examine it this way: Doing less, wouldn’t he err less? And erring less, wouldn’t he do less badly? And doing less badly, wouldn’t he be less miserable?” “Certainly”, he said. (281b4–c3)

Russell Jones argues that *this* is the passage that establishes the necessity thesis (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 14-15). He argues that this along with the causal premises highlighted in the epagoge in support of the conclusion above “appear to be expressions of the necessity of wisdom or virtue for correct use, full stop. In the face of these claims, it is difficult to maintain that Socrates would deny that virtue is necessary for correct use” (“Felix Socrates?”, 18).

Jones assumes that the answer to Socrates’ rhetorical question – “Is there any benefit from other possessions without intelligence and wisdom?” – is simply no. He holds that Socrates thinks that if one is not wise, then one cannot benefit from one’s possessions via correct use. I read this in the precise sense that Thrasymachus outlines in *Republic* I 340e–41a: if one is ignorant (or not wise), then *insofar as one is ignorant* one cannot benefit but can only harm oneself by using one’s possessions.<sup>24</sup> This reading leaves the possibility open that those who are

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Lysis* 218a2-b1. There Socrates suggests that ignorance might lack its typical deleterious effects if one is, like Socrates, aware of one’s own ignorance: “Nor do those love [wisdom] who are so ignorant that they are bad, for no

ignorant can in fact benefit via correct use, but it denies that they benefit *insofar as they are ignorant*.<sup>25</sup>

How might one decide between these two readings? Jones' reading has the following tension. Socrates has already shown that he is sensitive to defeaters of the causal efficacy of wisdom. Wise captains at times crash and are thus unfortunate. Wise carpenters might lack necessary or properly functioning tools and thus not achieve correct use of the lathe, for example.<sup>26</sup> Socrates will soon contrast activities that are led by wisdom with those that are led by ignorance. Is ignorance also defeasible? On Jones' reading, it cannot be. If wisdom is necessary for correct use, then the novice who is ignorant of carpentry cannot correctly use the tools of carpentry.

Yet Socrates has also demonstrated sensitivity to defeaters for ignorance. The ignorant patient is cured and is thus fortunate. Can an unskilled novice carpenter correctly use a lathe? Surely one can, just not insofar as the novice is ignorant. Suppose the master led the novice carpenter through the steps of correct use as the novice imitated him. This certainly seems possible. Yet to read this passage as requiring the necessity thesis is to deny that Socrates is sensitive to this kind of defeater for ignorance. It is to insist that, although Socrates has

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bad and stupid man loves wisdom. There remain only those who have this bad thing, ignorance, but have not been made ignorant or stupid by it. They are conscious of knowing what they don't know".

<sup>25</sup> What justifies reading this particular passage as an instance of implicit qua-predication? The immediately preceding passage refers to wisdom alone and what it produces: correct use. We have seen that Socrates grounds this claim in the *nature* of wisdom (280a7–8). As wisdom *by nature* produces correct use, so the wise *qua-wise* correctly use assets and the ignorant *qua-ignorant* incorrectly use them. Further, the novel value theory that Socrates develops at 281d2–e1 exhibits a parallelism in the causal efficacy of wisdom and that of ignorance. Since Socrates' explicitly appeals to goods "in themselves, by nature" in his novel value theory at 281d2–e1, there is good textual evidence that Socrates is primarily considering the nature of ignorance (i.e. the ignorant-*qua*-ignorant) here as well.

<sup>26</sup> Socrates claims that both having *and* using assets is necessary for correct use, and this implies that one can be wise yet not correctly use assets when one fails to have them. Further, one's wisdom (or ignorance) may be present but masked (e.g. due to anesthesia) or there might be an *internal* defeater (cf. Jones, "Wisdom and Happiness", 9 n. 23). In the *Hippias Minor*, Socrates gives an example of an internal defeater: "But each person who can do what he wishes when he wishes is powerful (*dunatos*). I mean someone who is not prevented by disease or other such things, someone like you with regard to writing my name. You have the power to do this whenever you wish to" (366b7–c4). Cf. Nawar, "Platonic know-how", 10–11.

demonstrated sensitivity to defeaters for the causal efficacy of wisdom and ignorance, here he either rescinds this sensitivity or (perhaps worse) thinks that only wisdom, but not ignorance, can be defeated by circumstances adverse to its efficacy. The former increases textual tension and the latter makes ignorance more causally efficacious than wisdom. Since the precise, causal reading lacks this tension, it is preferable on this count.

### **Socrates' Novel Value Theory**

Socrates now clarifies the meaning of his extraordinary claims concerning ignorant use of assets by outlining a novel theory of value that he has just employed.

“To sum up, Cleinias”, I said, “it seems likely that with respect to all the things called good in the beginning [e.g. health, wealth, status, courage], the correct account is not that they themselves are good by nature [καθ’ αὐτὰ πέφυκεν], but rather as follows; if ignorance controls them [ἐὰν μὲν αὐτῶν ἡγήται ἀμαθία], they are greater evils than their opposites, to the extent that they are more capable of complying with a bad master; but if good sense and wisdom are in control [ἐὰν δὲ φρόνησίς τε καὶ σοφία], they are greater goods. In themselves, however, neither sort is of any value” (281d2–e1).

Here Socrates replaces the evaluative assumptions implicit in the vulgar view of happiness with a new theory of value. In doing so, Socrates considers the value of each item *in itself*. The assets that Cleinias originally considered good are of no value in themselves; they are good or bad only when they bear a certain relationship to wisdom or ignorance. If ignorance

controls or leads them, they are bad. If wisdom controls them, they are good. The only thing that is good in itself is wisdom; and ignorance is the only thing that is bad in itself.<sup>27</sup>

What exactly does Socrates mean here by ‘good in itself’ and ‘bad in itself’? Socrates is now explicitly considering the *natures* of apparent goods and the relation of their natures to the nature of wisdom and ignorance. He is not considering instantiated instances of wisdom and the relations between wise individuals and their use of assets. Considered *in themselves, by nature* (καθ’ αὐτὰ πέφυκεν), assets are neither beneficial nor harmful. Wisdom is the only thing that is beneficial by nature. The relation under which wisdom makes assets beneficial is the controlling, or ruling, relation. When wisdom is in control of an asset, it always produces correctness of use, and correctness is the positive evaluative component of what is otherwise devoid of value – use of assets. The causal role of ignorance mirrors that of wisdom. When ignorance is in control of an action, it always produces error, and incorrectness is the negative evaluative component of use of assets.

Thus, this theory is of a piece with the causal claims that Socrates has previously made about the nature of wisdom. Wisdom is the only thing that is by nature a success–producer and a correctness producer. *In this sense* is it the only thing that is good in itself. It is the only thing that makes other things good for us (and never bad) by ensuring that they are correctly used. It is the only thing that is beneficial for us by nature.<sup>28</sup> This novel value theory does not straightforwardly entail either the necessity or sufficiency thesis. These theses are about wise

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<sup>27</sup> Socrates drops the qualifier ‘in itself’ when he claims that “of the other things, no one of them is either good or bad, but of these two, wisdom is good and ignorance is bad” (281e3–5). Since he used the qualifier in the previous two lines, and since Socrates thinks assets are in fact good when ruled by wisdom, the qualifier seems to be implicit.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics*; Reshotko, *Socratic Virtue*. Wisdom’s good–making function is emphasized here, yet this need not make wisdom merely instrumentally valuable (*pace* Irwin). Rather than *deriving* the value of wisdom from its valuable results, here Socrates claims that the value of correct use of assets is derived from the value of wisdom.

individuals, whereas the novel value theory offered here concerns the nature of wisdom and ignorance as such.

We are now in a position to see how Socrates replaces the vulgar view of happiness and its implicit theory of value with the causal theory. On the vulgar view we become happy by successfully acquiring good things. Good luck, taken as success that is not within agential control, is needed to acquire good things. We are happier if we happen to be born into wealth, health, status, or to be naturally courageous, because these things are really goods, on the vulgar view.

Socrates dismantles this view piece by piece. He first replaces the vulgar idea that good luck causes success. Wisdom is the only thing that is by nature a success–producer. Good luck, in the sense of pure chance, is not a proper cause at all. Yet, one still might think that we get plenty of good things by luck that is outside of our control. Surely one is not in control of the family into which one is born and their socio–economic status. If it is better to be born into an aristocratic family or to be wealthy, then luck seems to play a major role in acquiring goods. To attack this part of the vulgar view, Socrates now argues that *everything* that luck can get you is neither good nor bad. This is because you can only obtain, but cannot correctly use, assets via luck. As such, luck is not involved in the explanation of the goodness of things. In order for one’s assets to be good, they must be used correctly.

Now it is apparent how Socrates addresses what I take to be Cleinias’ original position, the vulgar view of happiness: we need luck to get many of the good things that make us happy. Since wisdom alone is by nature a correctness–producer, it is not only the proper explanation of the achievement of the outcomes that we aim at, but it is the proper explanation of their correct use and thus of their goodness.



### **Does the split-level reading entail one of the standard readings?**

The split-level reading would entail one the standard readings if wisdom or ignorance were indefeasible when instantiated in humans. Therefore, we must see whether (i) Socrates takes ‘wisdom produces good fortune and correctness of use’ to entail the sufficiency thesis: for all humans, if they are wise, then they are fortunate and correctly use assets; and whether (ii) Socrates takes ‘when ignorance is in control of the use of assets they are used incorrectly’ to entail the necessity thesis: for all humans, if they are not wise, then they are unfortunate and incorrectly use assets. As noted above, Socrates demonstrates that he is sensitive to conditions that might defeat the efficacy of the wisdom of experts to produce outcome success and correct use, and of ignorance to produce their opposites. Let’s review the passages in which Socrates demonstrates sensitivity to such defeaters.

Consider defeaters that concern *outcome success*, or good fortune. Will the expert invariably achieve outcome success? Socrates thinks that the expert ship captain will at times fail to safely reach port, due to adverse circumstances that arise at sea (279e4–6). Can the ignorant achieve outcome success? Socrates thinks that ignorant patients often will often receive the good outcome of health and thus be fortunate when they are attended to by an expert doctor. (280a1–2) In short, Socrates demonstrates that he is aware of defeaters for the causal efficacy of wisdom to produce outcome success and of ignorance to produce failure.

Is Socrates similarly aware of defeaters (or a failure to secure the enabling conditions) for *correct* and *incorrect use*, such that the ignorant can use assets correctly or the wise can fail to use assets correctly? Socrates claims that the wise carpenter will not benefit from the correct

use of his tools when he is not supplied with the proper tools or if he does not use them (280c8–d1). Although wise, he will not achieve correct use.

The only relevant kind of case for which Socrates does not explicitly specify conditions of defeat in the *Euthydemus* is the case of an ignorant individual who incorrectly uses assets. However, he makes it clear that ignorant yet correct use is possible in the *Ion* and in the *Meno*. In the *Ion*, Socrates makes it evident that he thinks Ion does not possess the craft of the rhapsode by the end of the dialogue. However, he is thought to recite Homer well, or beautifully, at the outset of the dialogue due to his knowledge (530c4–6). Socrates never changes his evaluation that Ion speaks well, but he offers a distinct explanation for his speaking well in the final passage of the dialogue. When Socrates gives Ion two options for how to account for his ability, Socrates does not offer Ion an option in which he might deny that he performs well. Rather, the options are the following: Ion is lying and in fact has craft–knowledge that he refuse to reveal, or he lacks knowledge *but performs well anyway* by divine inspiration (541a1–b2). Ion accepts the latter explanation. Since it is evident that Socrates thinks Ion lacks knowledge, Socrates evidently accepts this as a case of doing well without knowledge.<sup>29</sup>

In the *Meno*, Socrates is similarly confounded by cases of politicians who do well and benefit the citizens without knowledge. Yet rather than rescinding the claim that they do well and benefit the citizens without knowledge, Socrates attributes this to their true belief that is a divine gift (99b–100b). In both cases, Socrates addresses the possibility of the ignorant person who nonetheless does well, and in each case the individuals are said to do well while lacking expertise.

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<sup>29</sup> Jones notes that even if there are some cases of an ignorant person doing well, one could add ‘reliably’ to the necessity thesis and this would do just as well: wisdom is necessary for reliable correct use (“Wisdom and Happiness”, 18). It is plausible that Ion reliably recites Homeric poetry well even though he is ignorant. He recites well to the degree that he is led by wisdom, not to the degree that he is wise.

How can we square the cases of the ignorant individuals doing well in the *Ion* and *Meno* with the theory of value presented here in the *Euthydemus*? In each case in which an ignorant individual does well, the ultimate explanation is found in divine wisdom inspiring or guiding action. For Socrates, wisdom ultimately explains even the correct actions of the ignorant, although true belief or a divinely given power (*dunamis*) might be the local explanation.

In sum, the standard readings come with a large philosophical and textual cost. The passages surveyed in the *Euthydemus* show that Socrates is sensitive to defeaters and a lack of enabling conditions for the causal efficacy of wisdom to produce correctness and of ignorance to produce error. Socrates similarly demonstrates sensitivity to defeaters for ignorance in the passages above in the *Ion* and *Meno*.<sup>30</sup> Since he is sensitive to conditions of defeat for the efficacy of wisdom and ignorance, he cannot also think that his causal claims about the nature of wisdom entail that wisdom is necessary or sufficient for correct use.

### **Doing Well Without Wisdom**

The conclusion of the last section showed that Socrates consistently demonstrates that he is aware of defeaters of the causal efficacy of both wisdom and ignorance. The wise can fail to do well, but not insofar as they are wise. The ignorant can do well, but not insofar as they are ignorant. They only do well insofar as they are led by wisdom. *Being wise* is therefore not equivalent to *being led by wisdom*. Much of the controversy in the literature on this argument proceeds from the view that Socrates seemed to deny this and hold that *being wise* is necessary or sufficient for happiness. Since this split-level reading highlights the causal relation between *natures*, it allows us to leave behind concerns about whether the master carpenter always succeeds and whether the novice always fails.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Lysis* 218a2-b1; *Hippias Minor* 366b7-c4.

Was Socrates a proto-Stoic? This split-level reading renders intelligible the Stoic use of Socrates' arguments in the *Euthydemus*, while denying that Socrates was in fact a proto-Stoic.<sup>31</sup> Interpretations that take Socrates to be a proto-Stoic emphasize affinities between Stoicism and this passage in the *Euthydemus*: that wisdom is the only good, that wisdom (or the Stoic sage) never errs, and that wisdom is sufficient for happiness. This split-level interpretation affirms that wisdom never errs and that it is the only good *by nature*. However, I have argued that *being* wise is not sufficient for happiness since the wisdom instantiated is defeasible. Further, wisdom is not the only good since external goods like health and wealth become good for individuals derivatively - when led by wisdom.

I noted that another unpalatable conclusion seems to follow from the necessity thesis. If wisdom is necessary for happiness, and if no one is wise (not even Socrates), then no one is happy (not even Socrates!). The reading offered here puts us in a position to see how Socrates thinks the ignorant can do well and be happy. In the *Ion* and *Meno*, those who are ignorant do well when they are guided by wisdom. According to the novel value theory offered in the *Euthydemus*, Socrates too might be happy if he is guided by wisdom. Since he spends each day discussing and seeking virtue (or wisdom), he surely aims at being guided by wisdom. Further, his daimonion helps him avoid error, which is a function that properly belongs to wisdom. This gives us some reason to think that Socrates, by his own lights, is happy.

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<sup>31</sup> See, e.g., Annas, "Virtue as the Use of Other Goods", and McPherran, "What Even a Child Would Know". The picture offered here is consistent with Annas' view that the Stoics used the *Euthydemus* as "a quarry, but not as a model" (65).

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